

Training Accreditation Council membership information

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Training Accreditation Council (the Council)?

The Council is an independent statutory body established by Part 4 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* (VET Act). The Council delivers a client-focused regulatory service for the vocational education and training (VET) sector in Western Australia through quality assured registration and accreditation services.

In undertaking its role, the Council is responsible for assuring the quality of training and assessment of training providers registered with the Council and accreditation of courses in the VET sector in Western Australia, and provides expert advice to the Minister for Training and Workforce Development on matters relating to the quality of VET in Western Australia. The Council is committed to providing practical, efficient and responsive support for the State Government, key stakeholders, and the community.

The Council operates within an agreed national VET regulatory framework defined in a set of standards, guidelines and policies aimed at achieving national consistency in the way RTOs and accredited courses are registered and monitored.

The Council's operating framework includes:

- *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*;
- *Vocational Education and Training (General Regulations) 2009*;
- *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*;
- *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* (Standards for RTOs);
- *Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) 2021 Standards for Accredited Courses*;
- *Australian Qualifications Framework*;
- Fit and Proper Person Requirements as outlined in the Standards for RTOs;
- Data provision requirements as outlined in the Standards for RTOs; and
- Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements as outlined in the Financial Viability Assessment Guidelines for the Registration of Training Providers 2017 issued by the Minister for Education and Training under section 13 of the VET Act.

What are the functions of the Training Accreditation Council?

The Council's functions are detailed in Part 4 and 7A of the VET Act. The focus is on quality assurance, registration of training providers and the accreditation of courses in respect to VET in Western Australia.

Under the VET Act, the functions of the Council are to:

- register training providers; and
- accredit courses.

In discharging its functions, the Council may also:

- inquire into training providers and courses;
- vary, suspend or cancel registration;
- vary, suspend or cancel accreditation; and
- cancel qualifications.

In undertaking its functions, the key responsibilities of the Council include:

- **Registration** – RTOs are registered by the Council in accordance with the VET regulatory framework. The Council assures the quality of training and assessment provided by RTOs enabling public confidence in VET in Western Australia.
- **Course Accreditation** – Courses are accredited by the Council in accordance with the national framework for VET course accreditation. Accredited courses address skill requirements for industry, enterprise and the community where they are not covered by training packages.
- **Professional Development** - The Council proactively supports the VET sector through its Education Program providing specialised and practical professional development opportunities. The Council's Education Program aims to build RTO and VET practitioner capability to meet regulatory obligations and improve RTO quality assurance systems.
- **Stakeholder Engagement** – As a key VET stakeholder, the Council undertakes a critical role in working collaboratively and extensively with State and national governments, VET regulators and other stakeholders on VET policy and regulatory matters. This strategic engagement informs and influences current and future directions of the VET sector and ensures State-based issues are prioritised.
- **Policy Advice** – The Council provides expert advice to the Minister for Training and Workforce Development on regulatory and other VET policy matters relating to the quality of VET in Western Australia.

What are the VET regulatory arrangements in Western Australia?

In Western Australia two VET Regulators, the Council and the national VET regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), have responsibility for the regulation of providers. This arrangement resulted from the COAG decision in late 2009 to endorse the establishment of a national regulator for the VET sector through the referral of State powers to the Australian Government. Western Australia and Victoria did not refer powers.

The Council is one of three bodies regulating VET in Australia. The three regulators are ASQA, the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority and the Council in Western Australia.

As a State based VET regulator, the Council, regulates those providers that deliver nationally recognised training to domestic students in Western Australia, or that operate only in Western Australia and Victoria. To ensure a nationally consistent regulatory environment the Western Australian government enacted legislation that mirrors the Australian Government arrangements.

Does the Training Accreditation Council have a strategic plan?

Yes, the Training Accreditation Council has a Strategic Plan. The Plan outlines Council's strategic focus and key priority areas. The [2020-2024 Strategic Plan](#) includes the following key priority areas:

- Legislation, compliance and quality assurance;
- Communication and education; and
- Collaboration and engagement.

The Strategic Plan also includes the Council's guiding principles which communicate to the Council's stakeholders the way in which the Council undertakes its business.

The Strategic Plan is reviewed annually.

What is the relationship between the Training Accreditation Council and the Department of Training and Workforce Development?

The Training Accreditation Council is supported by the Department of Training and Workforce Development through the services of the Council's Secretariat.

In supporting the Council, key roles include:

- Implementing the Council's Strategic Plan and Risk Framework, the Regulatory Strategy, Education Program and to process applications for registration of training organisations and accreditation of courses for consideration by the Council; and
- provide high level advice and substantial support to the work of the Council on State and national VET regulatory and policy matters.

To maintain the Council's independence as a statutory body, safeguards have been established including a Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the Department to provide transparency around the relationship, ensuring the independence of the Council and provides the framework to enable Council to perform its functions under the VET Act. Further, the head of the Council's Secretariat, the Director Training Regulation, reports directly to the Director General to maintain independence over regulatory activity and decisions.

The Council as the VET regulator in Western Australia has developed a strong working relationship with the Department in its role as the State Training Authority. The Chairperson meets with the Director General on matters related to State Government priorities, the broader VET system, and issues impacting VET regulation in Western Australia.

How are members of the Training Accreditation Council appointed?

In accordance with section 25 of the VET Act, the Training Accreditation Council has seven members appointed by the Minister for Training and Workforce Development of whom one is appointed as the chairperson.

Members are appointed by the Minister based on their expertise, qualifications or experience relevant to the functions of the Council.

What is my role as a member of the Training Accreditation Council?

As a member of the Training Accreditation Council you have a duty to act in the best interests of the Council in the discharge of your duties. Council members have a duty to comply with the Training Accreditation Council Code of Conduct and in doing so put public interest first, ahead of any personal or pecuniary interests, and act with honesty, loyalty, in good faith, ethically and with integrity.

The activities Council members are involved with includes (but not limited to):

- participate in Training Accreditation Council meetings (approximately 12 meetings per year) including sitting on sub-committees (Executive Committee) and consider matters 'Out of Session', if required;
- consider registration and course accreditation related matters and contribute to the decision making process;
- consider State and national VET regulatory and strategic policy matters;
- contribute to State and national reviews related to VET regulation including reading reports and providing comment/feedback;
- represent Council at internal and external events, meetings and forums, as required; and
- participate in the WA Training Awards, as required.

Am I personally liable for Training Accreditation Council decisions?

As a Training Accreditation Council member you are not personally liable as long as you acted in good faith, in the performance of your functions, as outlined in section 64 of the VET Act.

What do I need to know about potential or existing conflicts of interest?

Training Accreditation Council members must declare any conflict of interest (real or perceived) they may have in any matter coming before the Council or its committees, or in any aspect of the Council's operations. The Council has well established mechanisms to deal with actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest including a Code of Conduct and disclosure requirements at meetings. The Council also has a Register of Interest and Council members are required to disclose all relevant interests and update as required.

Where a Council member's private interests (such as investments, relationships, voluntary or paid work, membership of other groups) may conflict or even perceived to conflict with the Council members' public duty, then the Council member must declare the matters to the Council and record such issues in the Register of Interest and at Council meetings to ensure they are transparent and capable of review.

Where a Council member has any doubt, they must disclose the nature of the interest at a meeting of the Council prior to consideration of the matter. If a conflict is confirmed, the Council member is required to leave the meeting prior to Council consideration and decisions on the matter.



Similarly, Council members will not accept gifts or other benefits such as fees, favours, hospitality, rewards, gratuities or any form of remuneration which are likely to place members under an actual or perceived financial or moral obligation to other organisations or individuals.

A Council member who does have a material personal interest in a matter being considered or about to be considered by the Council, but who does not disclose this interest is liable for a fine of \$10,000.

How much time is involved?

Training Accreditation Council members spend approximately 10 hours per month on Council related activities.

The Training Accreditation Council meets on a monthly basis and meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month. Meetings commence at approximately 3.00pm and last between two and three hours. The Council also has established an Executive Committee consisting of three members including the Chairperson, and members may be involved with the Committee. Executive Committee meetings are scheduled when needed and typically last for less than one hour.

Additional Council meetings are held, and out of session items considered, as required.

Meeting papers are provided in advance of meetings (electronically) and members are expected to have read agenda papers before the Council meeting. The Council uses board specific software for meetings and members will be required to use their own electronic device during meetings to view/access meeting papers.

How long is my term of office?

The term of appointment for Council members can vary and members may be appointed for a period of up to three years.

Council members may be eligible for reappointment.

Can I be removed from the Training Accreditation Council?

While this is not a common occurrence, under the VET Act the Minister has the power to terminate the appointment of a Training Accreditation Council member at any time.

You may also forfeit your membership if you are an undischarged bankrupt or your property is subject to an arrangement under the laws relating to bankruptcy, or if you are convicted of an indictable offence.

Are members of the Training Accreditation Council remunerated?

Yes, Training Accreditation Council service is remunerated in accordance with section 63 of the VET Act.

Eligible Training Accreditation Council members receive sitting fees. Per annum rates as at February 2024 are as follows: Chairperson \$39,442 and Members \$22,150.

Note: sitting fees are paid to members on a monthly basis.

If I am a Government employee, do I receive remuneration as a member of the Training Accreditation Council?

The Premier's Circular 2023/02 confirms that a member of the Council may not be eligible to receive remuneration (other than reimbursement for travel expenses) if they:

- are being paid from public monies including:
 - current full time local, State and Australian Government employees;
 - current Members of Parliament;
 - current and retired judicial officers (except magistrates);
 - current non-academic employees of public academic institutions; or
- were a Member of Parliament within the last 12 months.

Persons who may be eligible for remuneration include:

- Local, State and Commonwealth Government employees who are:
 - part time and where the relevant Minister is satisfied that the work relating to the board occurs outside their employment and all other potential conflicts of interest are appropriately managed; or
 - not currently being paid from public monies such as those on leave without pay and volunteers;
- university academics (defined as those engaged primarily for the purpose of providing education services and not administrative or other services); and
- elected Local Government councillors.

Where can I obtain further information on the Training Accreditation Council?

Further information about the Training Accreditation Council can be obtained via the Council's website at www.wa.gov.au/tac .