



ANNUAL REPORT

Training Accreditation Council

2020 – 2021



Training Accreditation Council
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Statement of Compliance

Hon Sue Ellery MLC

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In accordance with section 30 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*, I submit for your information and presentation to Parliament, the Annual Report of the Training Accreditation Council for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.



Anne Driscoll
CHAIRPERSON
TRAINING ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

13 September 2021

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Training Accreditation Council acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Disclaimer

This annual report is published on the Council's website www.tac.wa.gov.au. The report conforms to State Government requirements for ease in downloading and can be viewed in Microsoft® Word or PDF format.

Alternative formats (such as large font and translated) are available on request.

Acknowledgment: some icons designed by Freepik and Flaticon.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report fulfils the requirements of section 30(1) of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* (VET Act) by reporting on the operations of the Training Accreditation Council (the Council) to the Minister for Education and Training for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

The annual report is prepared on a financial year basis, aligns to the Council's Strategic Plan and reflects the Council's regulatory responsibilities under the VET Act and the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*.

Where possible, data for the 2020-2021 reporting period and previous reporting periods have been provided to allow a comparison of activities.

The report comprises:

Executive summary

- Chairperson's report
- 2020-2021 highlights and key activities
- Response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

Introduction – the Council at a glance

- Overview of the Council's guiding principles, membership and functions
- Context in which the Council works
- Planning and reporting framework
- Arrangements for RTO auditors and accreditation reviewers
- Fees and charges

Approach to regulation

- Overview of the Council's approach to regulation

Performance against Key Priority Areas

- Overview of the Council's performance and achievements relating to the Council's three key priority areas as outlined in its Strategic Plan 2020 to 2023:
 - a) legislation, compliance and quality assurance
 - b) communication and education
 - c) collaboration and engagement.

1.2 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

On behalf of the Training Accreditation Council, I am pleased to present the Council's Annual Report for 2020-2021.

Appointed as Chairperson on 1 April 2021, my involvement in the preparation of the 2020-2021 Annual Report has provided a great opportunity to reflect on the substantial achievements of the Council in the twelve months to 30 June 2021.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge my predecessor, Mr Ian Hill who served as the Council's Chairman for almost 18 years. On behalf of the Council, I would like to thank Mr Hill for his invaluable contribution to the VET sector and outstanding leadership and service to the Council.

During the reporting period, the Council continued provision of education and support to the sector having established itself as a key contributor to the professional development of VET staff in Western Australia. The Council's Education Program significantly expanded during 2020-2021, enabling State-wide participation through a range of accessible modes. Developed and delivered by technical experts, practical information offered by the Council helps to facilitate business improvement, support meaningful compliance practices and quality training outcomes.

In November 2020, the Council finalised its biennial survey of its RTOs and stakeholders. Feedback helps the Council to gather valuable data to measure its performance, focus its priorities and support the Council's ongoing commitment to improve its services. Survey findings were positive, with 89% of RTOs and 90% of stakeholders rating Council's performance as 'good' or 'excellent'. The surveys also confirmed RTOs and stakeholders appreciate and value direct and personal access to the Council's Secretariat who are available to assist or provide clarification on regulatory matters.

Active and constructive engagement with stakeholders is a fundamental component of the Council's Strategic Plan and Risk Framework. Combined with data and intelligence collected from a range of sources, the outcome of these activities helps Council shape its regulatory practices and ensures appropriate and timely regulatory responses are identified to address risks within the Western Australian VET sector. Key priorities and areas of focus are published in the Council's Regulatory Strategy.

During 2020-2021, the Council continued to implement the 2019-2021 Regulatory Strategy and in this reporting year commenced a strategic review into training delivery in aged care, home and community care and disability support sectors in Western Australia. The review, expected to be finalised in late 2021, will focus on areas of concern raised by the community services sector, the Commonwealth Government's *Royal Commission Report into Aged Care Quality and Safety* and State and national skills initiatives aimed at growing the sectors in response to increased demand for services.

The Council continued to proactively consult with stakeholders to strengthen information sharing and collaboration. During the reporting period, approximately 125 formal meetings were undertaken with various stakeholders to help inform the Council's 2021-2023 Regulatory Strategy, due for release later in 2021.

During the reporting period, the Council contributed to national reviews aimed at improving the quality of VET in Australia. Current Skills Reform objectives have the potential to introduce significant changes and major reforms to the VET sector. The Council will continue to participate and monitor progress of reforms and implications for RTOs regulated by the Council in Western Australia.

With support from the State Government, the Council was able to support RTOs during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing regulatory fee relief to RTOs and accredited course owners through adjusting a range of fees to zero and flexible payment arrangements in some fee categories. Fee relief extended to RTOs seeking to deliver training products developed as a direct result of the impact of the pandemic. As a result of the State Government approved initiative, 50% of Council registered RTOs directly benefited from the fee relief measures implemented. In addition to fee relief measures, the Council implemented a range of strategies to help reduce regulatory burden to RTOs impacted by COVID-19.

The Council has developed a strong reputation for its depth of knowledge, skills and quality assurance and regulation of the sector. I extend a thank you to my fellow Council Members for their contribution, collaboration and support. I would also like to acknowledge outgoing Members Janelle Dawson and Debra Goostrey and take this opportunity to welcome new Members Barbara-Anne Brown and Lyn Farrell.

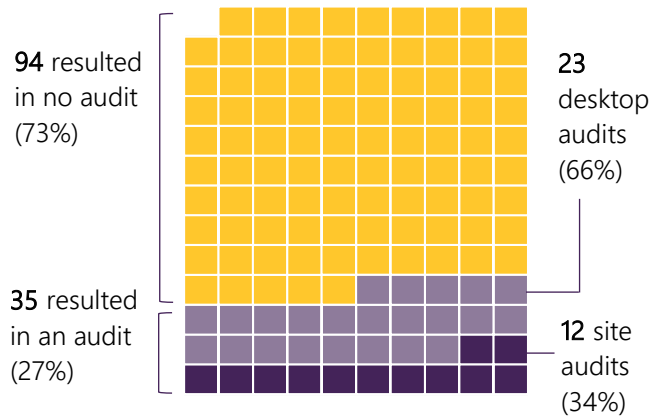
The Council would like to extend its appreciation to the Council's Secretariat provided by the Department of Training and Workforce Development for their dedication, assistance and on-going professional conduct in supporting the work of the Council.



Anne Driscoll
CHAIRPERSON
TRAINING ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

1.3 2020-2021 HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ACTIVITIES

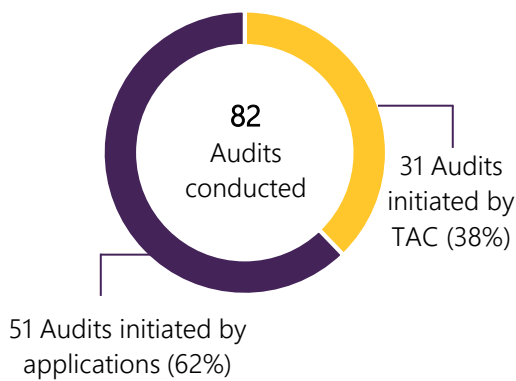
Of the 129 risk assessments undertaken on applications:



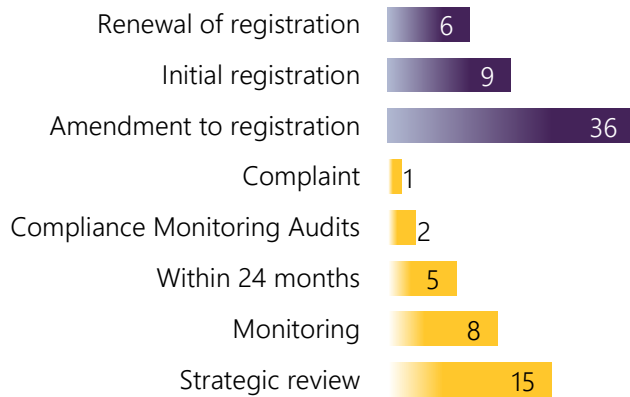
Endorsed applications



Audits conducted



Audit types



Education program

+113% increase in education program participation

17 webinars

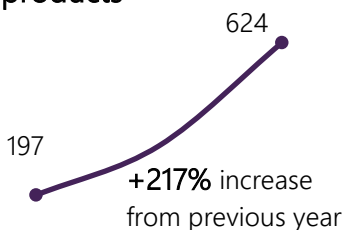
3 education workshops

3 regional workshops

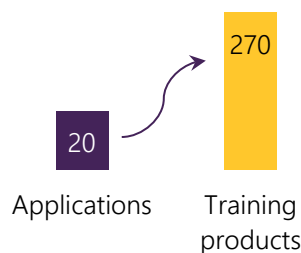
4 customised workshops for schools

TAC Talks Podcast series launched

Replacement of equivalent training products



Approved extensions to transition periods



Engagement with the sector

89% of RTOs and **90%** of stakeholders rated Council's performance as 'good' or 'excellent'

125 formal meetings with stakeholders

1.4 RESPONSE TO THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the State Government approved regulatory fee relief for RTOs and accredited course owners from **1 May 2020** to **31 October 2020**.

In supporting the **fee relief measures**, the State Government acknowledged the impact of COVID-19 on the Western Australian VET market. The fee relief measures included:

- annual RTO registration fee fixed to zero;
- Compliance Monitoring Audit charge fixed to zero;
- flexible payment arrangements available for RTO renewal applications;
- flexible payment arrangements available for course re-accreditation applications; and
- no amendment application fee for RTOs seeking to deliver training products developed as a direct result of the impact of COVID-19.

In addition to fee relief measures, the Council implemented a range of strategies to help reduce regulatory burden on RTOs impacted by COVID-19. These strategies included:

- alternative arrangements for audits in progress and postponing scheduled audits in cases where RTOs indicated they did not have the capacity to proceed;
- alternative communication methods for site audits were utilised such as video conferencing to assess facilities and resources and engage with the RTO;
- extending RTO registration and course accreditation periods;
- approving extended transition periods for multiple qualifications;
- expediting RTO amendment to scope applications to support State Government initiatives and promote skills development during COVID-19;
- inviting RTOs to contact the Council if COVID-19 was impacting on the RTO's financial viability; and
- proactively encouraging RTOs to consider alternative training and assessment arrangements and working with numerous RTOs on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, the implementation of physical distancing measures in response to COVID-19 required RTOs to adapt their training delivery. Strategies adopted by RTOs included reducing class sizes, blended delivery using a combination of online and face-to-face training, rescheduling and/or temporarily ceasing course delivery.

As a result of the State Government approved initiative, **94 (50%)** of Council registered RTOs directly benefited from the fee relief measures implemented. Council also continued to deliver its education program events, with demand increasing substantially indicating RTOs continued to seek opportunities for staff to continue to engage with the VET sector during such a challenging period.

2. INTRODUCTION – THE COUNCIL AT A GLANCE

The Council delivers a client-focussed regulatory service for the VET sector in Western Australia through quality assured registration and accreditation services.

2.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Council's guiding principles communicate to stakeholders the way in which it undertakes its business. The Council:

- is open, accountable and transparent;
- is clear on its role as a regulatory body;
- embeds an outcomes focus;
- is fair and equitable;
- maintains a culture of continuous improvement;
- communicates clearly and concisely; and
- supports the sector through education and guidance.

2.2 MEMBERSHIP

The Council has **seven members** who are appointed by the Minister for Education and Training in accordance with section 25 of the VET Act. Members are selected on the basis of their expertise, qualifications and experience relevant to the Council's functions.

For the reporting period, the members were:

Ian Hill, Chairman (1 July 2020 – 31 March 2021)

Anne Driscoll, Chairperson (from 1 April 2021)

Barbara-Anne Brown, WA Police Force

Lyn Farrell, Edith Cowan University

Neil Fernandes, Neil C Fernandes Consulting

Louise Hillman, National Disability Services

Jill Jamieson, J Jamieson Consulting

Siobhán Mulvey, Health Support Services

The Training Accreditation Council has an established **Code of Conduct** which was developed in line with the Public Sector Commission's Good Governance for Western Australian Boards and Committees. All members are provided with a copy of the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct provides guidance about ethical conduct, public duties and legal responsibilities. There were no issues in relation to the Code of Conduct during the 2020-2021 period.

2.3 FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council is an independent statutory body that assures the quality of training and assessment of RTOs registered with the Council and accreditation of courses in the VET sector in Western Australia.

The Council's functions are detailed in **Part 4 and 7A** of the **VET Act**.

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.

Provision for appeals against Council decisions is available through the State Training Board under section 58G of the VET Act.

The Council's Secretariat is hosted by the Department of Training and Workforce Development (the Department). A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Council and the Department ensures the Council's independent status. The MoU provides transparency and the framework to enable Council to perform its functions under the VET Act. Further, a direct line of reporting from the head of the Secretariat, the Director Training Regulation, to the Director General removes any perceived conflict of interest from operational areas and ensures the Council's independence over regulatory activity and regulatory decisions.

In December 2020, a review of the MoU was undertaken with a revised MoU implemented from 1 January 2021. The changes to the MoU further strengthen collaboration between the Council and the Department on national and State policy related matters. During the reporting period, the MoU operated effectively and the Council continued to meet its regulatory requirements.

2.4 THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THE COUNCIL WORKS

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) 2007 Standards for Accredited Courses;
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF);
- 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.

2.5 VET REGULATORY ARRANGEMENTS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The governance and strategic direction of VET regulation is jointly owned by State and Commonwealth Ministers through the Skills National Cabinet Reform Committee (Skills Committee).

Three VET regulators are charged with the responsibility of regulating the VET sector within their jurisdictions - the Council, the national VET regulator - the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) - and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). This arrangement resulted from the Council of Australian Government's decision in late 2009 to endorse the establishment of a national regulator for the VET sector through the referral of State powers to the Commonwealth Government. Western Australia and Victoria did not refer powers. To ensure a nationally consistent regulatory environment, the Western Australian government enacted legislation that mirrors the Commonwealth Government arrangements.

Through the Council, Western Australia has continued to regulate those providers that deliver nationally recognised training to domestic students in Western Australia, or that operate only in Western Australia and Victoria. RTOs operating in multiple jurisdictions and/or deliver to international students are regulated by ASQA.

As a State based regulator, the Council enables State Government oversight of the VET provider market, continuous improvement of the sector, responsiveness to State-based policy initiatives, priorities and risks, timely intervention and protection of the State's investment in VET.

2.6 PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

In order to carry out its functions, the Council uses an outcomes based planning and reporting framework.

The framework consists of a **Strategic Plan** that is prepared on a three-year basis and reviewed annually. The Council's Strategic Plan 2020-2023 commenced on 1 July 2020.

The framework also consists of a corresponding operational plan for the support services provided by the Council's Secretariat, and an Annual Report on the achievements of the Council.

2.7 ARRANGEMENTS FOR RTO AUDITORS AND ACCREDITATION REVIEWERS

The Council's RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers are appointed through a public tender process undertaken by the Department, with the latest RTO Auditor and Accreditation Reviewer Panels commencing on 1 July 2020. The panels were appointed for a one-year period with four, one-year extension options.

The primary role of RTO Auditors is to undertake audits of RTOs to report on compliance against the Standards for RTOs. Accreditation Reviewers assess submissions for course accreditation to ensure they reflect the requirements of the AQTF2007 Standards for Accredited Courses. RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers appointed to the panel are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Panel of RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers as at 30 June 2021

Panel	Name	Organisation
RTO Auditors	Russell Docking	Skills Resource Management Systems
	Cherrie Hawke	Torque Holdings Pty Ltd
	David Love	Workplace Skills Management Pty Ltd
	Michaela Tarpley	Aptus Solutions Pty Ltd
	Pam Vlajsavljevich	Pam Vlajsavljevich
	Claire Werner	The Meyvn Group
Accreditation Reviewers	Russell Docking	Skills Resource Management Systems
	Cherrie Hawke	Torque Holdings Pty Ltd
	Sharee Hogg	Perth Consultancy Group

The Department, through the Council's Secretariat, implements a performance management model for the panel of external RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers.

To ensure consistency in the approach to RTO audits and reviews of course accreditation applications, the Council's Secretariat facilitates moderation activities, including moderation forums, in which all contracted RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers are required to attend. Moderation forums are an important quality assurance mechanism and support consistency in audit practice and assessment of provider compliance.

During the reporting period **three** RTO Auditor and **two** Accreditation Reviewer moderation forums were conducted. In addition to moderation activities and discussions, the forums provide auditors and reviewers with the opportunity to stay up-to-date with State and national VET policy and regulatory developments, including progress on VET reforms.

2.8 FEES AND CHARGES

In Western Australia, fees and charges apply for the registration of training organisations and accreditation of VET courses with the Council. For activities regulated by the Council, fees and charges have not been amended since 2014. The approved schedule of fees and charges is provided at Table 2.

Table 2: Fees and charges as at 30 June 2021

INITIAL REGISTRATION FEES		
Application Lodgement Fee	Payable on application	\$800
Application Assessment Fee Base fee includes up to 4 qualifications, up to 20 units of competency and up to 2 delivery sites. <i>Total application fee, including lodgement and assessment, is capped at \$50,000.</i>	Base fee plus: - each additional qualification - each additional unit of competency - each additional delivery site	\$8,000 \$145 \$50 \$1,395
RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION FEES		
Application Lodgement Fee	Payable on application	\$900
Application Assessment Fee Base fee includes up to 4 qualifications, up to 20 units of competency and up to 2 delivery sites. <i>Total application fee, including lodgement and assessment, is capped at \$50,000.</i>	Base fee plus: - each additional qualification - each additional unit of competency - each additional delivery site	\$7,000 \$145 \$50 \$700
AMENDMENT TO REGISTRATION FEES		
Amendment to Scope Application	One qualification plus: - each additional qualification	\$920 \$135
<i>*For transition to equivalent training package qualifications or units of competency, no application is required and no fees apply</i>	First seven units of competency plus: - each additional unit	\$240 \$135
	Transition to equivalent accredited course(s)	\$240 per application
ANNUAL FEES		
Annual RTO Registration Fee (includes any number of units of competency)	0-4 qualifications 5-10 qualifications 11-60 qualifications 61 or more qualifications	\$1,130 \$3,220 \$6,975 \$10,730

Note: Applications for Skill Sets are charged per unit of competency.

COMPLIANCE MONITORING AUDIT (CMA) CHARGES		
Costs and expenses incurred in conducting the audit	First 4 hours (minimum charge)	\$1,100
	plus:	
	- each additional hour	\$275
	plus:	
	- official travel costs	If applicable

Note: CMA charge includes GST.

ACCREDITATION FEES		
Application for accreditation/ re-accreditation of a course	Includes: Courses at AQF Level 1 and above Short courses below AQF Level 1	\$8,070
Amendment to accredited course	Per course <i>Note: excludes where the amendment involves updates to imported units from training packages deemed equivalent</i>	\$2,290

Note: All registration and accreditation fees exclude GST.

Regulatory Fee Relief in Response to the Impact of COVID-19

During the period 1 May to 31 October 2020, the Council was able to provide regulatory fee relief to RTOs and accredited course owners through support from the State Government.

Fee relief details are provided below:

FEE RELIEF MEASURE	APPLICABLE FEE OR CHARGE
Fee categories fixed to zero for fees and charges due 1 May to 31 October 2020 inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual RTO registration fee Compliance Monitoring Audit charge Amendments to scope only for RTOs seeking to deliver training products* developed as a direct result of the impact of COVID-19
Flexible payment arrangements for applications submitted 1 May to 31 October 2020 inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RTO renewal of registration fee** Course re-accreditation fee

*training product/s must be published on the national VET register – training.gov.au

**flexible payment arrangement applies to the renewal application 'assessment fee' only

3. APPROACH TO REGULATION

As a VET regulator, the Council applies consistent and proportional responses to levels of risk affecting the quality of VET outcomes.

Underpinned by its Risk Framework, the Council delivers an integrated and balanced regulatory approach that supports provider business improvement and delivery of quality VET outcomes.

The Risk Framework outlines Council's approach to risk based regulation and how it manages and responds to risk. The Framework also outlines Council's commitment to an education program.

Risk Based Regulation

The Risk Framework outlines the Council's approach to regulation and how it identifies and evaluates risks to the quality of VET delivery. This Framework ensures that regulatory responses are risk based, evidence based, targeted and proportionate.

The Council applies regulatory responses in the management of risk at two levels – **provider** and **systemic risk**. RTOs demonstrating patterns of poor compliance present a high risk to quality training and assessment outcomes. Systemic risks identify particular training products or industry areas of concern.

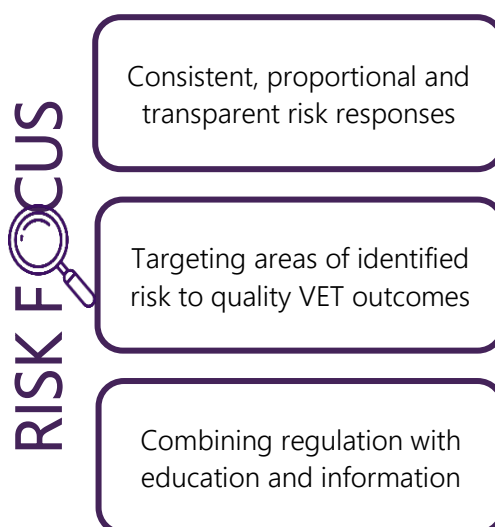
In line with the Risk Framework, Council directs its focus and resources to RTOs deemed to pose the highest risk to quality outcomes while allowing those with a history of consistent compliance to operate with reduced regulatory scrutiny. The Council applies a range of proportionate regulatory strategies to respond to systemic risks, such as strategic reviews and educative strategies.

The Risk Framework outlines a range of regulatory responses available to the Council which vary according to the nature and severity of the risk and their potential impacts.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Council has a close and ongoing engagement with its stakeholders, which includes industry regulators, peak industry bodies, Western Australian training councils, State and Commonwealth Government agencies and Council regulated RTOs.

Stakeholder engagement is a key component of the Council's Risk Framework and ensures Council is informed of issues that impact on the quality of VET in Western Australia. The Council's active and consultative approach ensures the ability to develop appropriate and timely regulatory responses.



Regulatory Strategy

The Council's Regulatory Strategy is prepared in line with the Council's Risk Framework and conveys the Council's commitment to responding to State-based priorities and risks.

It informs stakeholders about priorities the Council has identified as posing risks to the quality of VET and the planned regulatory action to monitor and minimise those risks.

During the previous reporting period, the Council endorsed and published a two-year strategy titled [Focus on Quality: TAC Regulatory Strategy 2019-2021](#). In publishing this document, the Council seeks to engage and motivate RTOs to achieve quality VET outcomes for Western Australia through compliance with the Standards for RTOs.

Education Program

A well-established feature of the Council's regulatory approach is its commitment to an education program to encourage and support compliance. The Council's Education Program aims to build capability and understanding of RTOs and their staff to meet their obligations in regard to the Standards.



During the reporting period, the Council continued to strengthen its commitment to providing education and guidance to the sector through significant expansion of the program.

4. LEGISLATION, COMPLIANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE- Key Priority 1

Outcome Indicators

The Council's success in achieving **Key Priority 1** is demonstrated by the extent to which the following indicators have been achieved:

Outcome 1	The Council's governance requirements are met.
Outcome 2	Council regulates training providers in accordance with the <i>Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO) 2015</i> , <i>Standards for VET Regulators 2015</i> , <i>Vocational Education and Training Act 1996</i> and <i>Vocational Education and Training (General) Regulations 2009</i> .
Outcome 3	Council accredits courses in accordance with the AQTF2007 Standards for Accredited Courses, <i>Standards for VET Regulators 2015</i> , <i>Vocational Education and Training Act 1996</i> and <i>Vocational Education and Training (General) Regulations 2009</i> .
Outcome 4	Council delivers consistent and transparent processes and services.

Work undertaken by the Council to progress these priorities and to achieve Key Priority 1 is detailed as follows.

4.1 THE COUNCIL'S GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

4.1.1 Council Membership 2020-2021

Membership of the Council complied with the requirements of the VET Act during the reporting period, with seven members appointed by the Minister for Education and Training. In June 2020, Janelle Dawson and Debra Goostrey completed their terms of appointment. From 1 July 2020, the Minister appointed Barbara-Anne Brown and Lyn Farrell to the Council.

The Minister appointed Anne Driscoll as the Council Chairperson commencing 1 April 2021 replacing outgoing Chairman Ian Hill whose appointment ended on 31 March 2021.

4.1.2 Operations of the Council

During the reporting period the Council was supported by the Department of Training and Workforce Development through the services of the Council's Secretariat located in West Perth, Western Australia.

In supporting the Council, key roles of the Council's Secretariat are to implement the Council's Strategic Plan and Risk Framework, including its Regulatory Strategy, Education Program and to process applications for registration of training providers and accreditation of courses for consideration by the Council.

The Council's Secretariat provides high level advice and substantial support to the work of the Council on State and national VET regulatory and policy matters.

The Council holds meetings on a monthly basis to consider registration and accreditation applications, various regulatory related matters, and to consider key strategies to progress the work of the Council. The Council formally met **11** times over the 12 months to 30 June 2021, which consisted of **10** Council meetings and **one** Executive Committee meeting.

The Council also considers matters 'Out of Session' ensuring matters are considered in a timely manner. During the reporting period Council considered **6** items Out of Session.

4.1.3 Remuneration

Section 63 of the VET Act provides that Training Accreditation Council members are entitled to receive remuneration in the form of sitting fees. During the 2020-2021 reporting period, Council members received remuneration as outlined in Table 3.

Table 3: Council remuneration

Position	Name	Type of remuneration	Period of membership	Base salary/ sitting fees	Gross/actual remuneration
Chairman	Ian Hill	Annual	9 months	\$39,442	\$29,582
Chairperson	Anne Driscoll	-	3 months	\$0	\$0 ^(a)
Member	Barbara-Anne Brown	-	12 months	\$0	\$0 ^(a)
Member	Janelle Dawson	-	-	\$0	\$1,846 ^(c)
Member	Lyn Farrell	-	12 months	\$0	\$0 ^(b)
Member	Neil Fernandes	Annual	12 months	\$22,150	\$22,150
Member	Debra Goostrey	-	-	\$0	\$1,846 ^(c)
Member	Louise Hillman	Annual	12 months	\$22,150	\$22,158 ^(d)
Member	Jill Jamieson	Annual	12 months	\$22,150	\$22,150
Member	Siobhán Mulvey	-	12 months	\$0	\$0 ^(a)
					\$99,732

(a) Not eligible for remuneration in 2020-2021.

(b) Eligible for remuneration in 2020-2021, Member declined.

(c) Not eligible for remuneration in 2020-2021, payment relates to remuneration for 2019-2020 paid in 2020-2021.

(d) Overpayment of sitting fees in 2020-2021, remuneration will be adjusted for 2021-2022.

4.1.4 Compliance with the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*

The *Standards for VET Regulators 2015* outlines the national framework for the approach to be taken by VET regulators to ensure:

- the integrity of nationally recognised training by regulating RTOs and VET accredited courses using a risk-based approach that is consistent, effective, proportional, responsive and transparent;
- consistency in the implementation and interpretation of the national Standards for RTOs and accredited courses; and
- accountability and transparency in undertaking its regulatory functions.

During the 2020-2021 period, a review of the existing MoU between VET regulators was undertaken. The review resulted in the development of a revised MoU, endorsed by the Council, ASQA, and the VRQA in June 2021. The MoU ensures efficient and effective regulation across all jurisdictions including the application of the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*.

The revised MoU has been updated to:

- reflect current regulatory requirements;
- changes to VET at a national and State level implemented since 2012; and
- provide further clarity on the transition of RTOs between VET regulators.

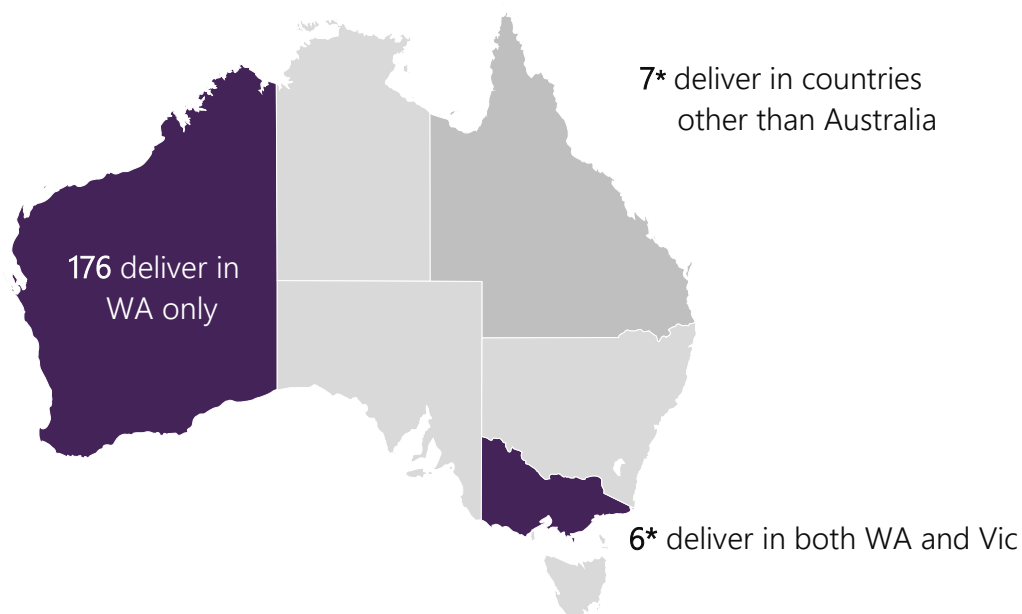
The MoU also confirms the arrangements for the accreditation of courses, collaboration and the exchange of data and information between VET regulators.

During the reporting period, the Council, in addition to the implementation of the revised MoU progressed a range of initiatives to ensure compliance with the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015* and these are detailed throughout the report.

4.2 OVERVIEW OF THE REGULATORY MARKET

4.2.1 Registered Training Organisations as at 30 June 2021

186 RTOs registered with the Council



*Includes three RTOs in both categories

During the 2020-2021 year:

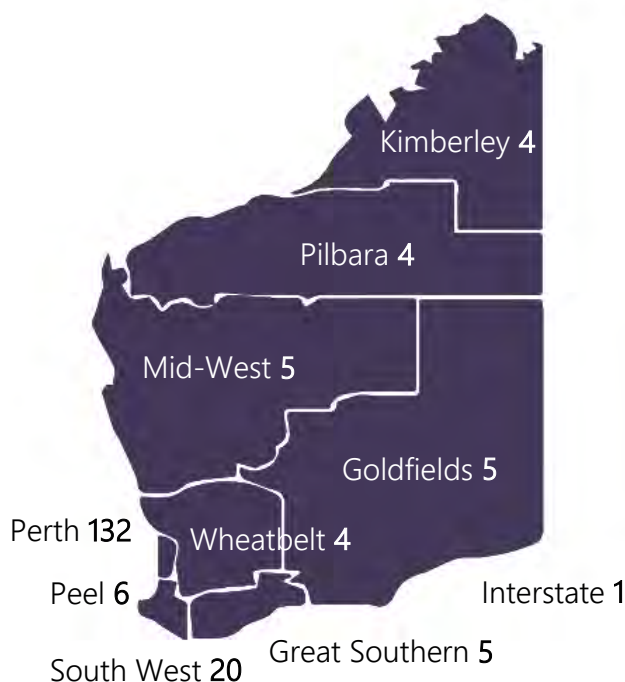
- 4 RTOs voluntarily relinquished registration
- 2 RTOs' registration expired following unsuccessful renewal of registration applications**
- 0 RTOs had a sanction (cancellation or suspension) imposed on their registration

** Audits occurred in 2019-2020 with Council decisions on the applications finalised in 2020-2021.

4.2.2 Demographics of RTOs

The following provides an overview of the Council’s regulated VET market in Western Australia for the 2020-2021 reporting period.

Figure 1: RTOs by location



The location is based on the RTO’s head office.

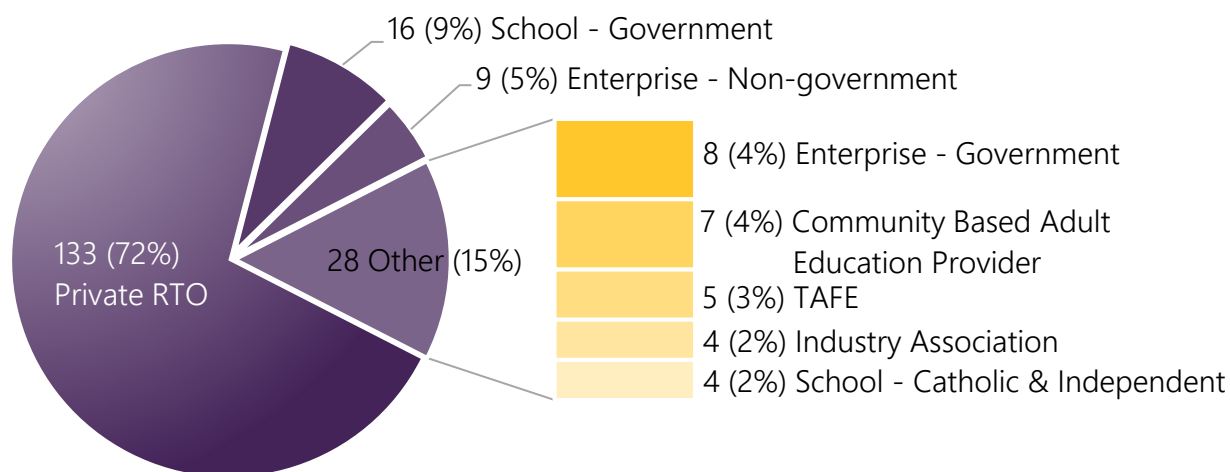
Of the 186 RTOs registered with the Council, **132 (71%)** were located in the Perth region and the remaining **54 (29%)** are in regional Western Australia and one Interstate.

The distribution of RTOs by location remained stable during the reporting period.

RTOs by Type of Business

133 (72%) of the **186** RTOs registered with the Council at 30 June 2021 were private RTOs. The remaining **53 (28%)** RTOs included a range of business types as presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: RTOs by type of business

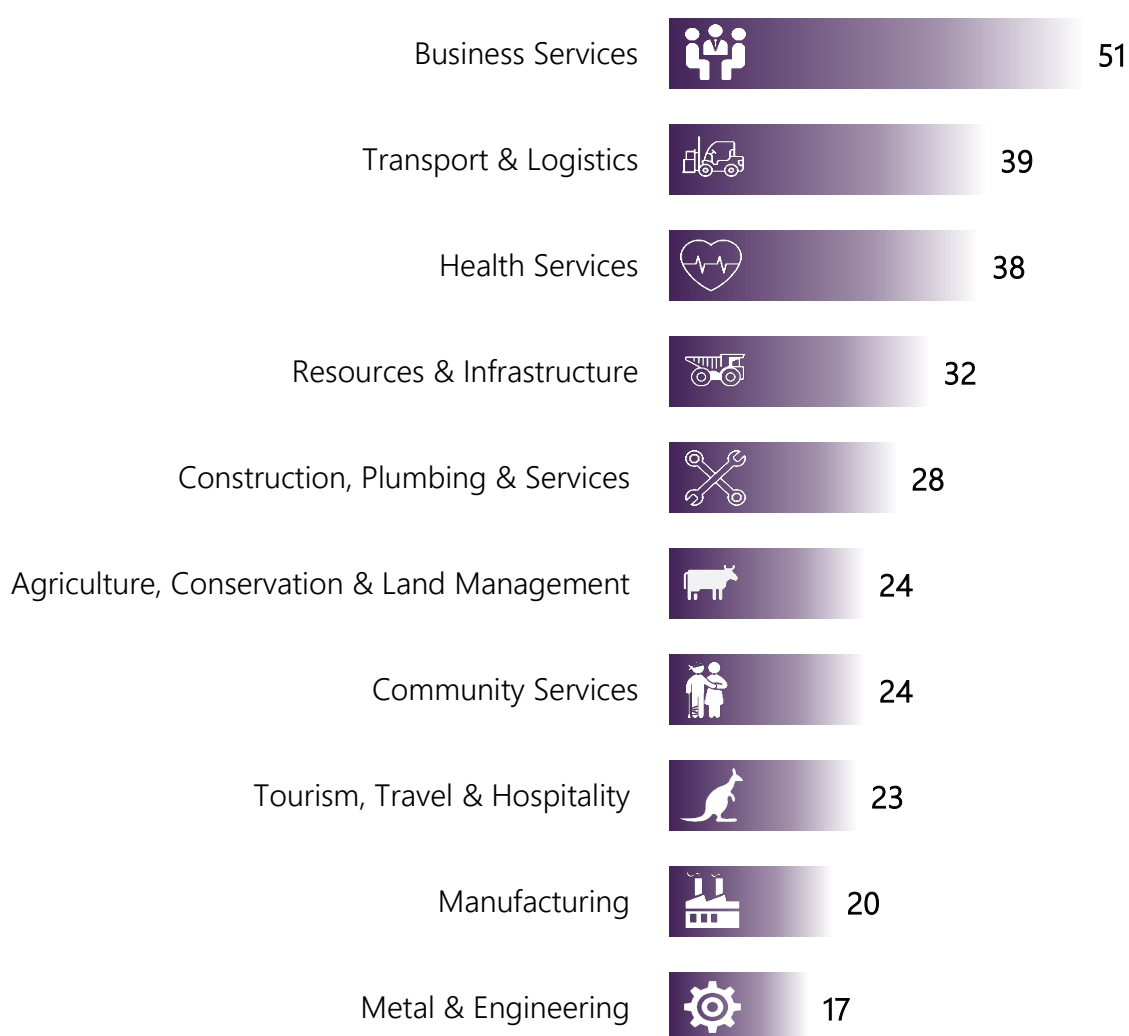


Top 10 Industry Areas of Training Delivery

Of the **186** RTOs registered with the Council, **51** (27%) had Business Services on their scope of registration, followed by **39** (21%) in Transport and Logistics and **38** (20%) in Health Services.

Figure 3 provides a summary of the top 10 industry areas of training delivery.

Figure 3: Top 10 industry areas of training delivery - based on the number of endorsed national training packages on the scope of registration of Council registered RTOs.



4.2.3 Accredited Courses

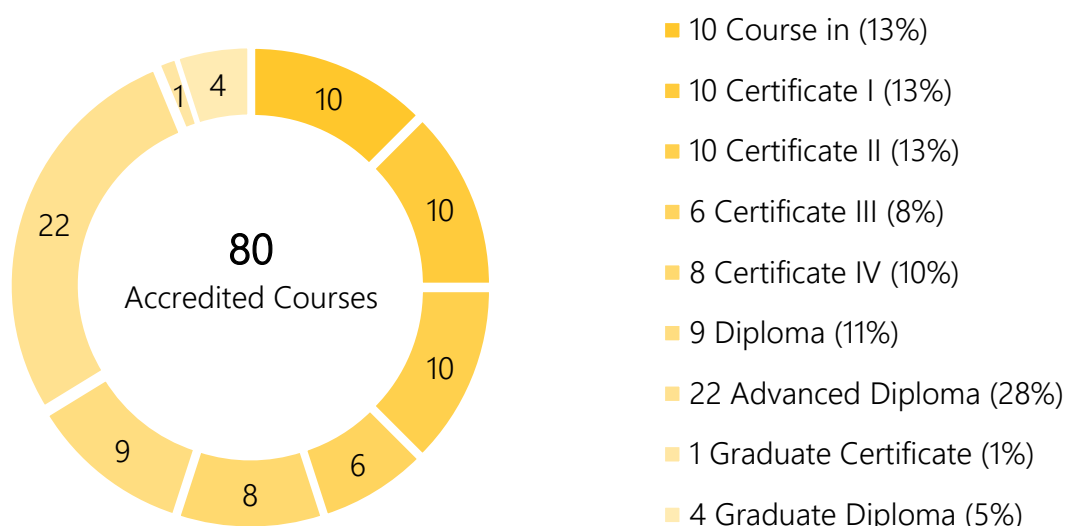
In its capacity as a VET regulator, the Council accredits courses in line with the requirements of the AQTF2007 Standards for Accredited Courses to meet training needs not addressed in training packages.

Through its accreditation function, the Council is able to accredit locally developed courses driven by local needs, in a timely manner. This includes accrediting courses that meet new industry requirements and State Government priorities such as employment and training initiatives.

At 30 June 2021 there were **80** courses accredited with the Council. During 2020-2021 **31** accredited courses expired, **20** of which were re-accredited.

Figure 4 shows courses accredited by the Council by AQF level.

Figure 4: Accredited courses by AQF level as at 31 June 2021



* Percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding

4.2.4 Regulatory Activity

During the reporting period the Council continued to regulate the Western Australian VET sector in accordance with the requirements of the VET Act and the Standards.

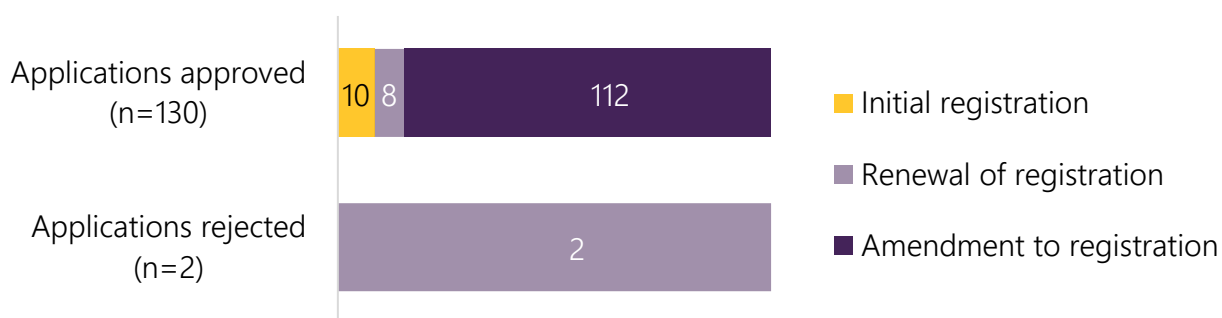
The following section provides an overview of the Council’s regulatory activity for the reporting period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

Registration Activity

During the 2020-2021 year the Council approved a total of **130** new registration applications of which **10** were initial registrations, **112** were amendment to registration applications and **eight** were renewal of registration applications.

Figure 5 provides an overview of registration applications approved and rejected during the reporting period.

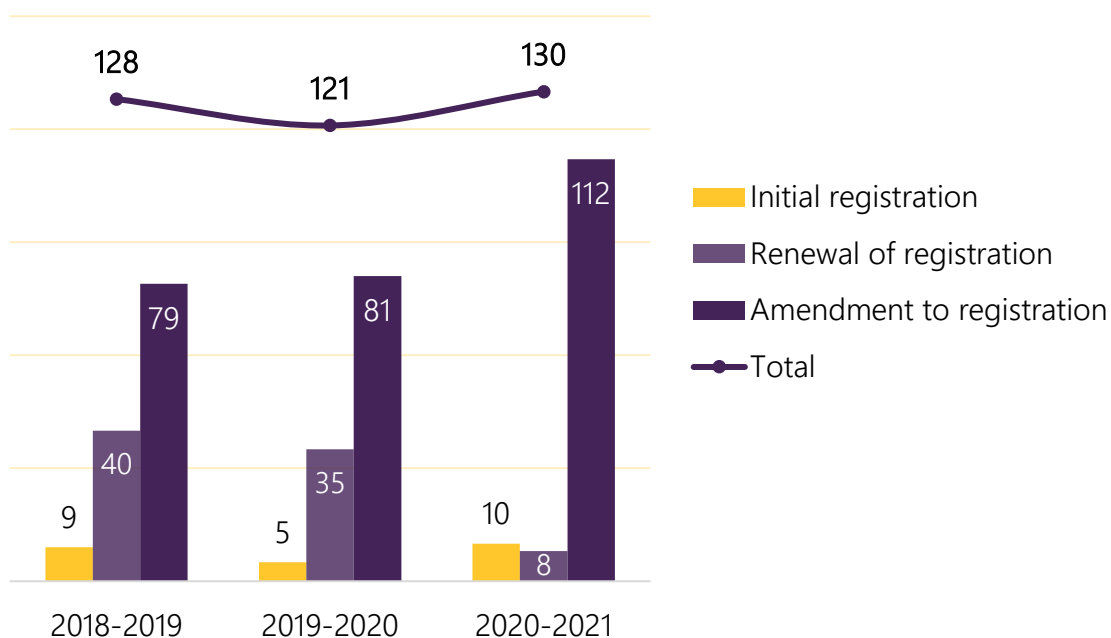
Figure 5: Registration activity for 2020-2021



Applications Endorsed

Figure 6 provides an overview of applications endorsed by the Council for the 2020-2021 period and the two previous reporting periods.

Figure 6: Registration activity – applications endorsed



The number of applications for renewal of registration varies based on the cyclic nature of training provider registration periods. Amendments to registration are initiated by the training provider and the increase could be attributed to RTO business requirements, delivery focus and changes to training products.

Replacement of Equivalent Training Package Products

Equivalent training package products (qualifications and/or units of competency) are automatically added to an RTO's scope of registration without requiring an application or a fee.

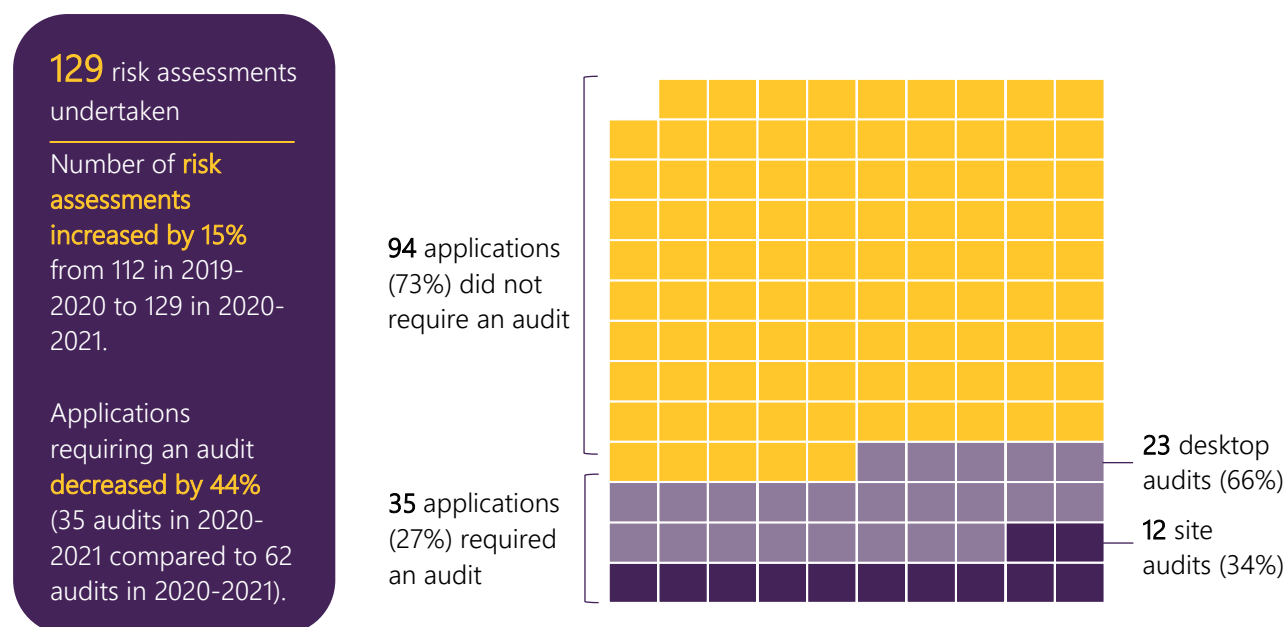
During the 2020-2021 period, **624** training products were processed by the Council through the replacement of equivalent training package products, a significant increase from the **197** processed in the 2019-2020 period. The increase in the number of training products processed can be attributed to the increase in equivalent training package products endorsed by the Australian Industry and Skills Committee during the period.

Risk Management of Applications

The Council implements a systematic risk management approach to assessing all applications submitted by training providers. To determine the appropriate regulatory response to be applied, the risk assessment considers individual provider risk, broader systemic risks and the relevant regulatory response identified in the Council’s Regulatory Strategy. This assessment determines if a training provider is required to undergo an audit and the appropriate audit method.

Figure 7 provides an overview of the risk assessments conducted on renewal and amendment to registration applications received during the reporting period. Amendment to registration applications account for the majority of risk assessments undertaken. An RTO will seek to amend its scope of registration in response to changing business requirements and changes to training products.

Figure 7: Risk assessments conducted on applications received



4.2.5 Total Audit Activity

Overview of Audits

Audits offer a point-in-time insight into the quality of the training and assessment services being provided and inform the Council’s regulatory decisions. Audits are undertaken in accordance with the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*, the Standards for RTOs and the Council’s Risk Framework. During the reporting period the Council audited **65** RTOs conducting a total of **82** audits. The **65** RTOs represents **33%**¹ of all providers registered with the Council over the reporting period.

¹ While there were 186 RTOs registered with the Council at 30 June 2021, the percentage of RTOs audited represents the total number of providers that were registered with the Council over the reporting period (198 RTOs).

Audits may include multiple audit types for individual training organisations during the reporting period. During a 12-month period, a training organisation may have submitted several amendment to scope applications related to proposed new delivery. The Council may also have initiated an audit in its capacity as the VET regulator, such as a strategic review audit.

Figure 8 provides an overview of audits undertaken during the reporting period and includes audits where applications were risk assessed in the previous reporting period and the audit occurred in this period.

Figure 8: Total audits for 2020-2021

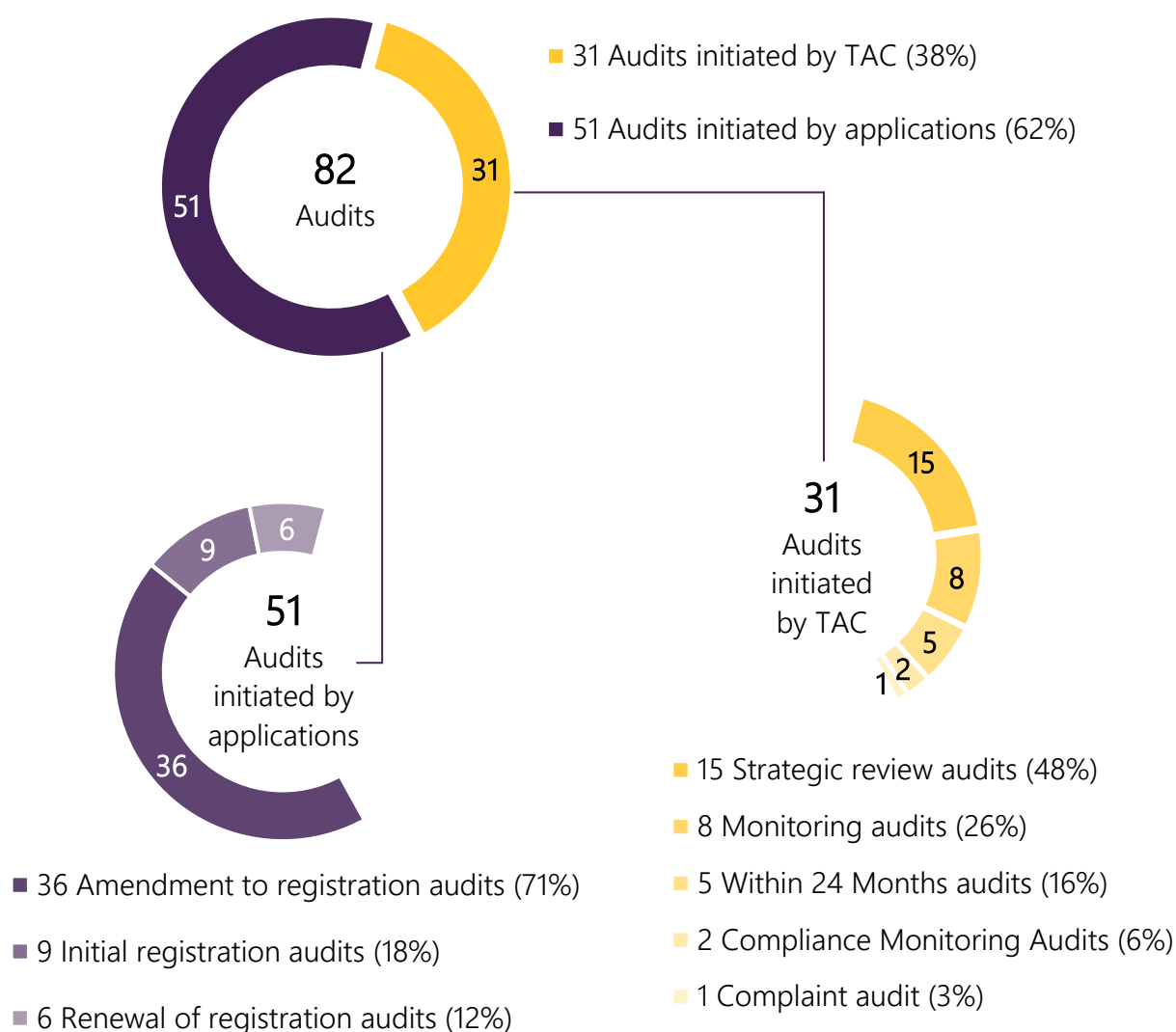
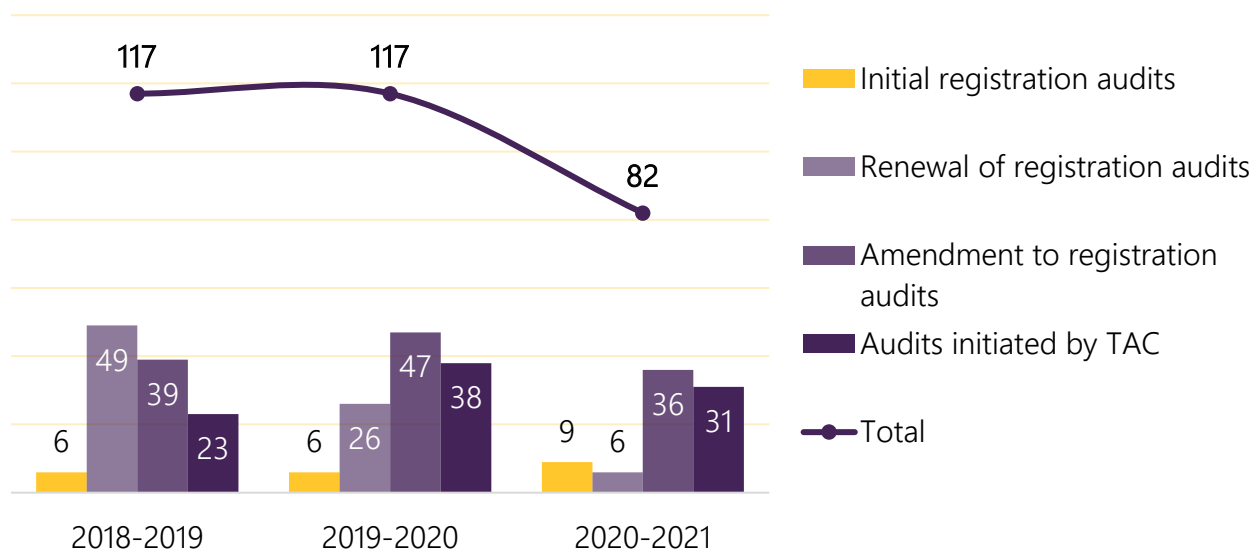


Figure 9 provides a comparison of the type and number of audits conducted in the 2020-2021 period and the two previous reporting periods.

Figure 9: Total number of audits by financial years



Note: Data for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 have been updated to reflect amended figures.

The decrease in renewal of registration audits can be attributed to the cyclic nature of training provider registration periods and this is reflected in the variances across the reporting periods.

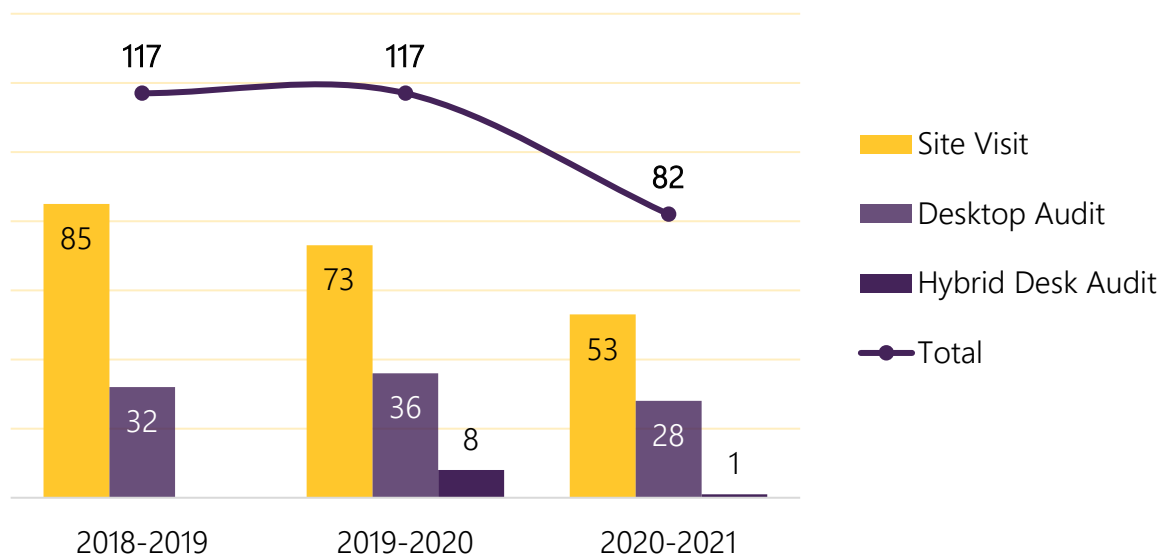
Audits by Method

The Council utilises its Regulatory Strategy and the outcome of the application risk assessment process to determine the appropriate regulatory response to be applied. The outcome could result in no audit being required, or either a desktop or site audit being conducted.

A new audit approach was applied for site audits during the height of COVID-19 in Western Australia. Where RTOs agreed to proceed with the site audit, the audit was undertaken as a 'hybrid desk audit'. During these audits, Auditors utilised alternative communication methods such as videoconferencing to engage with the RTO and to review facilities and resources. This approach applied to audits conducted between May to October 2020.

Figure 10 provides a comparison of the audit method between the current and the previous reporting periods.

Figure 10: Total number of audits by method



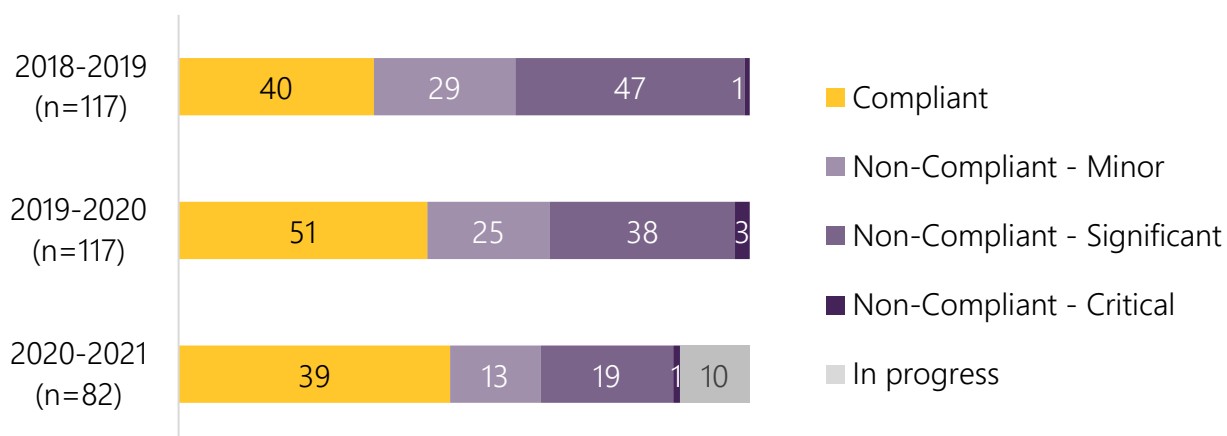
Note: Data for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 have been updated to reflect amended figures.

Audit Outcomes

The level of compliance identified at audit is considered by the Council in line with established processes. If the outcome of the main audit is that the training organisation is non-compliant, they are provided with an evidence review period of 20 working days to address outstanding issues. RTOs must demonstrate compliance with the Standards for RTOs in order to continue to operate within the Western Australian VET market.

Figure 11 provides a breakdown of the outcome of audits conducted during the 2020-2021 period (based on overall level of non-compliance identified at the main audit).

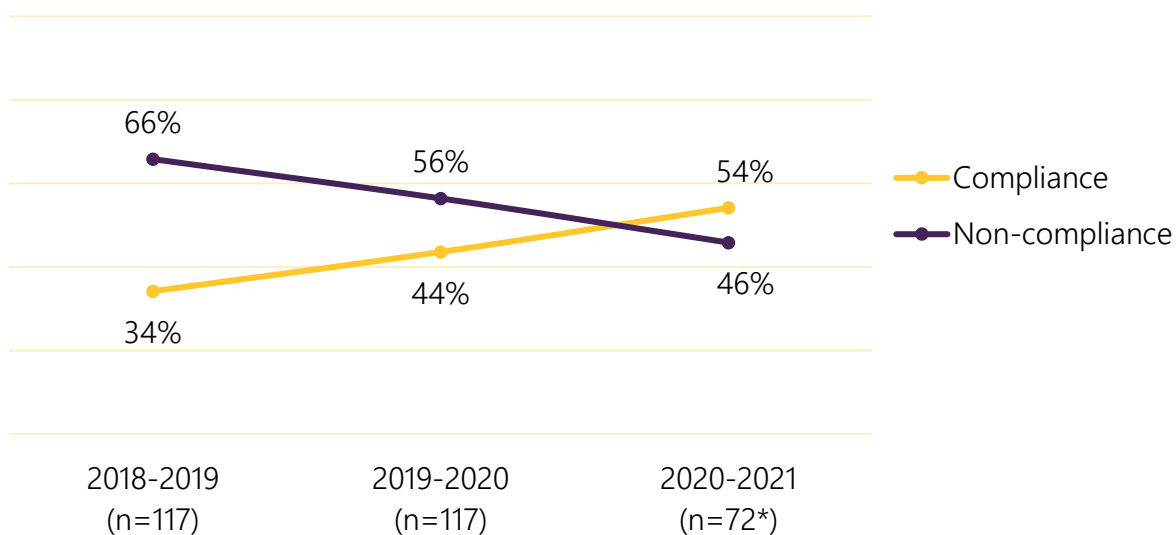
Figure 11: Audit outcome at main audit



Note: Data for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 have been updated to reflect amended figures.

Figure 12 shows the compliance trend at main audit over three reporting periods and indicates an increase in compliance levels and a decrease in overall non-compliance outcomes.

Figure 12: Compliance trend at main audit

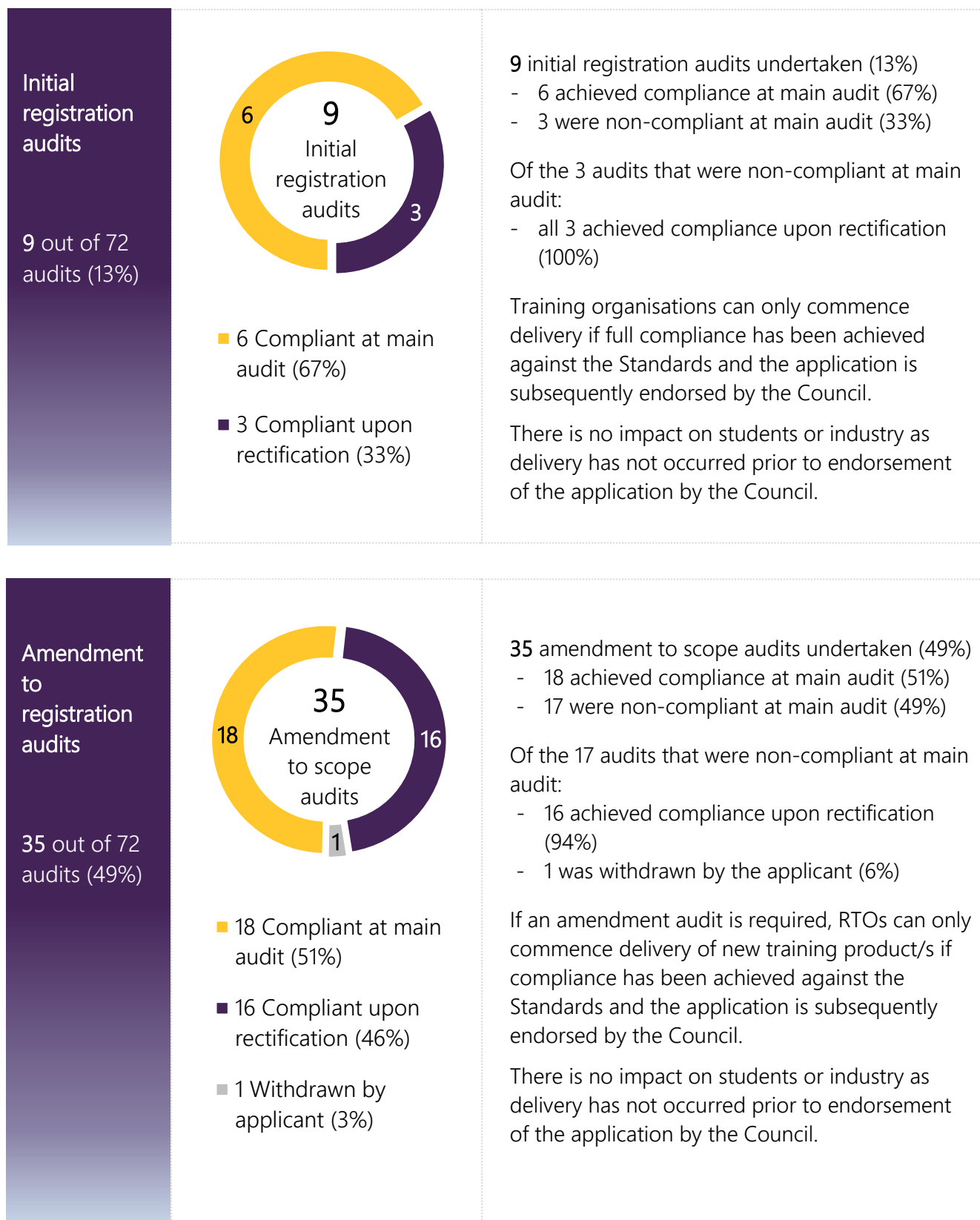


* As at 30 June 2021, there were 10 audits in progress. These audits were excluded when calculating the overall percentage of compliance at main audit.

Note: Data for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 has been updated to reflect amended figures.

An overview of the 72 audits (main audit) conducted and completed by Council during 2020-2021 is provided at Figure 13.

Figure 13: Overview of audits conducted (based on main audit outcome)



Renewal of registration audits

5 out of 72 audits (7%)



- 2 Compliant at main audit (40%)
- 3 Compliant upon rectification (60%)

5 renewal of registration audits undertaken (7%)

- 2 achieved compliance at main audit (40%)
- 3 were non-compliant at main audit (60%)

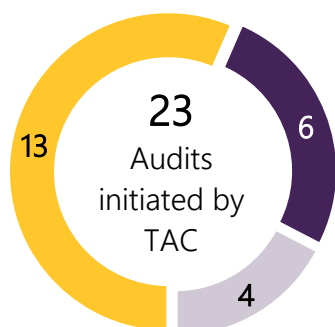
Of the 3 audits that were non-compliant at main audit:

- all 3 achieved compliance upon rectification (100%)

RTOs applying to renew their registration with the Council must demonstrate compliance against the Standards in order to be re-registered and enable delivery to continue.

Audits initiated by TAC

23 out of 72 (32%)



- 13 Compliant at main audit (57%)
- 6 Compliant upon rectification (26%)
- 4 In progress during rectification (17%) at 30 June 2021

23 audits initiated by Council (32%)

- 13 achieved compliance at main audit (57%)
- 10 were non-compliant at main audit (43%)

Of the 10 audits that were non-compliant at main audit:

- 6 achieved compliance upon rectification (60%)
- 4 were in progress during the rectification stage (40%) at 30 June 2021

Audits initiated and endorsed by Council are audits that respond to identified provider or systemic risk. These audits include monitoring, compliance monitoring, within 24 months, strategic review audits and complaint audits.

These audits may have minimal disruption to an RTO's operations unless the audit outcome warrants further regulatory actions. For example, further actions may result in the Council imposing sanctions on the RTO's registration including suspension or cancellation.

4.2.6 Annual Declaration on Compliance

Clause 8.4 of the Standards for RTOs requires RTOs provide the Council with an annual declaration on compliance.

The declaration is in relation to whether the RTO:

1. currently meets the requirements of the Standards for RTOs across all its scope of registration and if not, action taken or planned to address the non-compliance; and
2. has met the requirements of the Standards for RTOs for all AQF certification documentation issued in the last financial year.

By submitting the annual declaration, the RTO's legally responsible person is confirming that the RTO systematically monitors and evaluates training and assessment strategies and practices, and uses the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation to inform improvements in business and educational practice.

The annual declaration covers the RTO's entire scope of operations, including all services provided on its behalf by other organisations under third party arrangements, and for all locations where the RTO operates in Western Australia, Victoria or overseas. RTOs were required to submit the 2019-2020 Annual Declaration on Compliance by 30 September 2020 with **all active RTOs meeting this requirement**.

4.2.7 Extension to Transition Periods for Training Products

Clause 1.26 of the Standards for RTOs states the time allowed for RTOs to transition to new training products. Upon request from stakeholders, the Council may consider and approve an extension to the transition period for training products where it can be demonstrated that there would be a genuine disadvantage to students or industry without the extension.

During the 2020-2021 period, the Council approved **20** applications for extension to the transition period for **270** training products.

4.2.8 Compliance Recognition Program

The Council's Compliance Recognition Program (CR Program) is designed to provide RTOs that consistently demonstrate compliance, with a degree of flexibility, by removing the requirement to submit applications or fees to the Council for amendment to scope activity.

Inclusion in the CR Program is premised on RTOs undertaking an internal verification process to determine that training and assessment meet compliance with the Standards, AQF and requirements of registration as an RTO under the VET Act. The Council retains the overall authority to approve the amendment.

Participation in the CR Program is granted by the Council and does not indicate or imply that the RTO is of a higher standard, or of a lower risk than other RTOs. As at 30 June 2021, **five** RTOs maintained CR program status.

4.2.9 Regulatory Strategy

During the previous reporting period, the Council endorsed and published a two-year strategy titled *Focus on Quality: TAC Regulatory Strategy 2019-2021*. The Strategy informs stakeholders about the priorities the Council has identified as posing risks to the quality of VET and the planned regulatory action to monitor and minimise those risks.

Monitoring of Systemic Issues linked to the Standards for RTOs

The Strategy focused on a number clauses in the Standards for RTOs including:

- **Amount of Training (Clauses 1.1 and 1.2)** – these clauses remain important in ensuring quality VET outcomes and continue to be included in the scope of audits conducted by the Council. Of the **320** instances² where amount of training was audited during the year, **81%** were found to be compliant at main audit.

To support RTO compliance, TAC education program workshops conducted during the year included topics related to the design of an RTO's training and assessment strategy and amount of training. The Council also published new Fact Sheets providing additional guidance information including *Developing Training and Assessment Strategies* and *Distance and Online Training and Assessment*.

- **Assessment System (Clause 1.8)** – the prime responsibility of an RTO is to certify the competence of individuals and certification must only be issued to a learner whom the RTO has assessed as meeting the requirements of the relevant training product. Credible assessments are an integral element of the VET system and therefore it is essential that RTOs undertake their assessments as per the Standards for RTOs. Ensuring RTOs conduct assessment according to the *Principles of Assessment* and *Rules of Evidence* is critical to the assessment process. Of the **160** instances where this clause was audited during the reporting period, **74%** were compliant at main audit.

The Council's Education Program continued to offer workshops and webinars on developing assessment tools and systems, and assessment validation. All assessment workshops were heavily subscribed throughout the year. The Council also published a new Fact Sheet providing additional guidance information related to *Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)*.

- **Trainer and Assessor Competencies (Clauses 1.13 – 1.16)** – the Standards for RTOs recognise the importance of a highly skilled VET workforce by requiring those that deliver and/or assess nationally recognised training are vocationally competent and hold a training and assessment credential. The focus on trainer and assessor competencies remained throughout this period. Audit results indicate a high level of RTO compliance against all four clauses related to trainer and assessor competencies. Of the **158** instances where Clause 1.13 was audited, **82%** were compliant, and of the **153** instances where Clause 1.14 was audited, **99%** were compliant at main audit.

² 'instances' refers to the number of times the clause is reviewed across the scope of audits. In the majority of cases, multiple training products are reviewed at audit which results in Standard 1 clauses being assessed multiple times.

Monitoring of Systemic Risks linked to Training Products

The Strategy also focused on a number of training products to provide additional Council oversight of RTOs entering the related industry 'market' by specifying that those RTOs seeking to add the relevant training product to their scope of registration will be audited. Many of the training products listed in the Strategy are also subject to occupational licensing. Focus areas identified in the Strategy included:

- Certificate IV in Training and Assessment;
- CPCCWHS1001 Prepare to work safely in the construction industry (Construction Industry White Card);
- units of competency linked to heavy vehicle licences;
- qualifications in the security industry linked to licenced occupations including crowd controller, unarmed bodyguard, security officer/cash in transit, investigator and alarm/CCTV installer; and
- units of competency leading to the issuance of High Risk Work Licenses (HRWL).

The number of RTOs submitting applications over the second year of the strategy were very low, with three RTOs submitting applications to amend their scope of registration of which two RTOs were subject to a site audit.

VET Delivered in Secondary Schools

VET delivered in secondary schools is the most common education pathway for Year 11 and Year 12 public school students and continued to be an area of attention. Audits of RTOs delivering qualifications through this pathway continued to focus on amount of training, assessment and trainer/assessor competence and industry skills.

The Council's Education Program is a key strategy to support compliance and increase quality of VET delivered to secondary school students. In the reporting period, **four workshop presentations** '*RTO Governance*', '*Managing and Amending RTO Scope*' '*Designing Assessment Tools*' and '*Making the Assessment Decision*', were adapted for vocational education and training in schools and delivered to the RTO Schools network.

4.2.10 Strategic Reviews

Strategic reviews provide an in-depth analysis of systemic issues affecting the quality of VET outcomes faced by a particular industry area, and enable the Council to respond to quality issues in Western Australia in a timely manner. The aim of reviews are to ascertain whether RTOs providing training and assessment services are meeting the requirements set out in the Standards for RTOs, the nationally recognised training products and in line with industry expectations.



Strategic reviews are managed by the Council's Secretariat with the guidance of industry stakeholders who provide invaluable input to the process. Review reports are published on the Council's website www.tac.wa.gov.au.

Strategic Review into Health and Community Services

The Council's 2019-2021 Regulatory Strategy identified health and community services qualifications as an area of focus. In this context, the Council endorsed a strategic review of RTOs that deliver qualifications in aged care, home and community care and disability support including *CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support*, *CHC42015 Certificate IV in Community Services*, *CHC43015 Certificate IV in Ageing Support* and *CHC43115 Certificate IV Disability*.

Key considerations for the review included the release of the report from the Commonwealth Government's *Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety*, the Western Australian State Training Board's *Social Assistance and Allied Health Workforce Strategy* (2018) and the Department of Training and Workforce Development's report on the *Review of the Skills, Training and Workforce Development* (2020).

In May 2021, site audits were commenced and considered:

- RTOs that delivered the identified qualifications in secondary schools and traineeships; and
- clauses related to the RTO meeting the requirements of the training package, amount of training, assessment, vocational competency and industry currency of trainers and assessors, third party arrangements (where applicable), information provided to prospective learners and marketing.

A final report on the outcomes of the strategic review and recommendations will be published on completion of the strategy which is expected later in 2021.

While the Council's 2019-2021 Regulatory Strategy identified early childhood education and care as an area of focus, revised *CHC30121 Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care* and *CHC50121 Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care* were due for release later in 2021. The endorsement of revised qualifications in the early childhood education and care sector meant a separate regulatory strategy for RTOs with these qualifications on their scope of registration was better timed for later in 2021-2022.

First Aid Strategic Review

The Council's 2019-2021 Regulatory Strategy identified First Aid training as an area of risk. Training and assessment practices, trainers and assessors contemporary industry knowledge and online delivery were some of the concerns expressed by industry stakeholders.

During the reporting period, work commenced on stakeholder consultation, research and data analysis to determine the scope and scale of a strategic review into First Aid training delivery. While the Council's Secretariat undertook some early analysis, the finalisation of scoping for a draft Strategic Review was postponed due to the release of eight revised units of competency in 2020 of which seven were deemed non-equivalent.

Consultation with stakeholders during the next financial year will inform further development of this strategy in 2021-2022.

4.2.11 Course Accreditation

At 30 June 2021 there were **80** courses accredited with the Council.

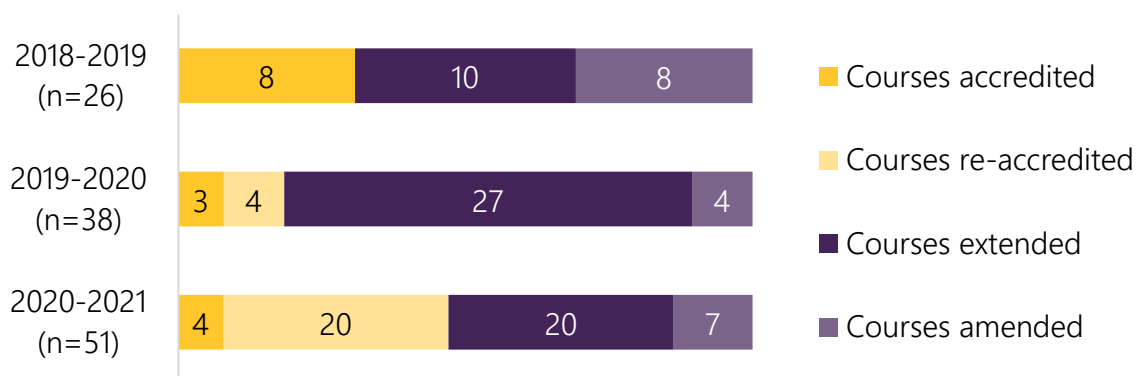
During the reporting period, the Council considered and approved a total of **51** course accreditation applications. These included **four** applications for accreditation of a new course, **seven** course amendment applications, **20** applications for re-accreditation and **20** applications for extension of course accreditation.

Extension to course accreditation applications are considered by the Council on a case-by-case basis. Reasons for extensions include cases where an application for re-accreditation is in progress, or transition from an accredited course into a training package qualification is pending.

The number of applications for re-accreditation varies based on the cyclic nature of course accreditation periods.

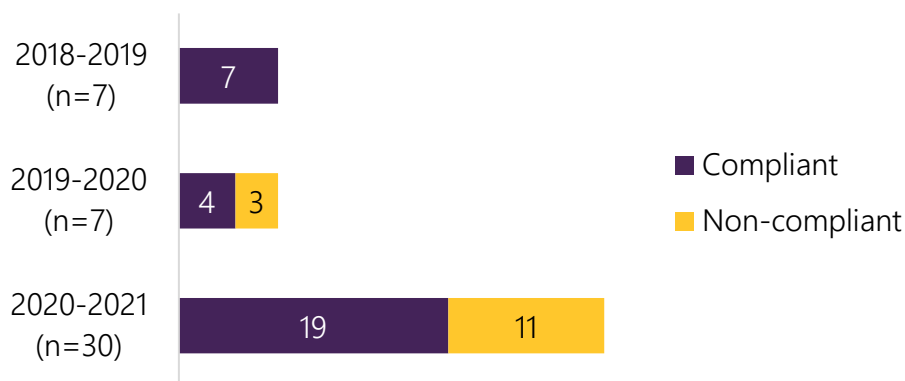
Figure 14 summarises accreditation activity undertaken in the reporting period.

Figure 14: Accreditation applications endorsed



The following chart (Figure 15) sets out the outcome of each accreditation review undertaken against the AQTF2007 Standards for Accredited Courses during the reporting period.

Figure 15: Outcome of accreditation reviews (main review)



Accreditation reviews are undertaken when a course owner submits an application for course accreditation, course re-accreditation or, in some cases, course amendment.

In line with Council processes, if the outcome of the initial review is non-compliance, the applicant is given an opportunity to provide evidence during an evidence review period of 20 working days.

Of the 11 non-compliant applications, **ten** demonstrated compliance at evidence review and **one** was still in progress at the rectification stage.

AQTF2021 Standards for Accredited Courses

In December 2020, following a review of existing standards for accredited courses, Skills Ministers' endorsed the *Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021* (ASQA) and the AQTF2021 Standards for Accredited Courses (the Council and VRQA). The changes to the Standards were minor, will have minimal impact on the VET sector, and will ensure consistency across VET regulators. Changes to the Standards include: the addition of monitoring and evaluation processes; alignment of assessment and unit of competency requirements; updating the course document and unit of competency template; and updating outdated references and aligning definitions.

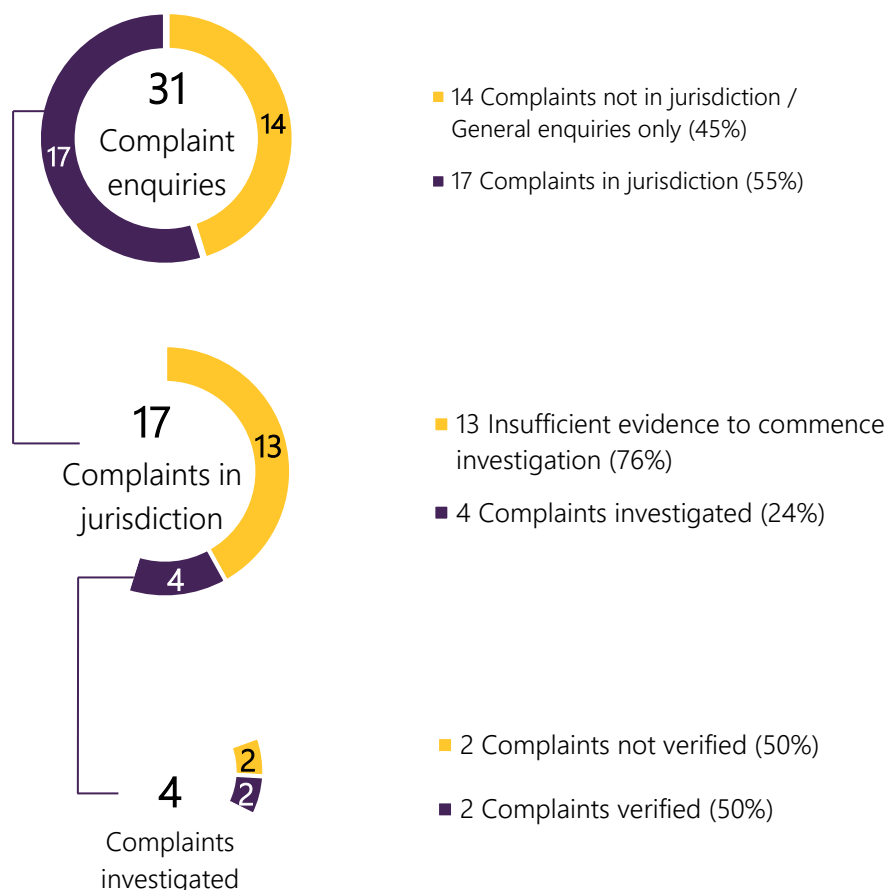
In order to give effect to the new AQTF2021 Standards for Accredited Courses, a legislative amendment is required, which will allow Council to accredit courses under the new Standards. At the time of reporting, the legislative amendment was yet to be finalised and it is anticipated the new Standards will apply from 2021-2022. A review of course accreditation policy, procedures and application forms has been undertaken to ensure alignment with the new Standards.

4.2.12 Complaints Management

The VET Act and the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015* require that the Council implements a policy to manage and respond to stakeholder complaints. The Council can only investigate complaints if they relate to the ongoing compliance of RTOs with the Standards for RTOs and the VET Act. Monthly complaint reports specify the number of complaints received, closed and outcomes during the defined reporting period.

During 2020-2021, the Council’s complaints management included a total of **31** closed complaint enquiries. Of these, **14** were not in jurisdiction or considered enquiries only and **17** complaints were formalised (in jurisdiction). Non-jurisdictional issues are referred to other agencies as appropriate. Figure 16 provides an overview of complaint matters closed within the reporting period.

Figure 16: Complaints activity



A verified complaint refers to non-compliances that have been identified following a complaint investigation. Of the two verified complaints, one required audit for which the complaint was substantiated.

A complaint may include issues associated with more than one clause in the Standards for RTOs. Of the two verified complaint matters, one related to an organisation purporting to be an RTO when not registered (VET Act). The second matter related to training and assessment strategies failing to meet the requirements of the training package, and the AQF certification issued contrary to the requirements of the Standards.

Complaints management is an integral component of the Council’s Risk Framework and the data collected from complaints helps to inform consideration to areas of highest risk and appropriate regulatory responses on an ongoing basis. While the number of complaints to Council are generally low, these continue to provide useful insights into issues experienced by stakeholders.

4.3 REVIEW OF COUNCIL POLICIES AND OPERATIONS

As part of its role in supporting the business of the Council, the Council's Secretariat maintains a quality system that underpins the day-to-day operations and processes of the Council. The quality system is designed to support the Council's functions as a VET regulator and ensure compliance with a range of State and national requirements.

The Council monitors the implementation of operational processes and procedures on an ongoing basis with refinements made when required.

During the reporting period, an extensive review of the quality system was undertaken. The review considered adjustments to reflect regulatory changes or for continuous improvement purposes. The following outlines reviews undertaken:



- The Council continually monitors the sector in line with its risk management approach. This led to adjustments to the amendment to registration application and amendment to registration audit processes.
- The Council conducted a review of its course accreditation policy, procedures and application forms to align with the requirements of the AQTF2021 Standards for Accredited Courses.
- Following the Strategic Review into RTO Third Party Arrangements, the Council amended the Notification of Third Party Agreement Form and Third Party Register to capture additional information regarding third parties and ensure the Register's accuracy and currency.
- In the reporting period, a review of feedback collected from RTOs following the completion of site audits was conducted. The surveys were updated and the process amended to include surveys of RTOs following the completion of desk audits and course owners following the completion of accreditation reviews, which will be reflected in the next reporting period.
- In response to the appointment of a new Panel for RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers, the Council created an Audit Handbook to assist the Auditors and Reviewers in understanding the requirements of the panel contract and the Council's policies and processes.

4.4 APPEALS AGAINST COUNCIL DECISIONS

Under the requirements of section 58G of the VET Act, RTOs can appeal against Council decisions. Appeals must be lodged with the State Training Board in line with established processes.

During the reporting period the Council, in line with the Standards and the VET legislation, made a range of decisions including the rejection of **two** renewal of registration applications and the cancellation of **15** AQF certificates conferred to students, by **one** RTO, in contravention of the VET Act.

As a result of **one** of the renewal of registration application rejections, an appeal was lodged with the State Training Board against the decision of the Council. The State Training Board disallowed the appeal on the basis that the appeal did not meet the conditions for appeal required by section 58G(2) of the VET Act.

At the time of reporting, an appeal lodged with the State Training Board against a decision of the Council had not been finalised. The appeal was in relation to Council applying a variation to an RTO's scope following non-compliance identified following a Compliance Monitoring Audit.

5. COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION - Key Priority 2

Outcome Indicators

The Council's success in achieving **Key Priority 2** is demonstrated by the extent to which the following indicator has been achieved:

Outcome	The Council effectively communicates and provides an educative service to stakeholders and gathers appropriate information to enhance its regulatory functions.
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Work undertaken by the Council to progress this priority and to achieve Key Priority 2 is detailed as follows.

5.1 EDUCATION PROGRAM AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Council's Risk Framework and Regulatory Strategy 2019-2021 outlines Council's commitment to an education program to encourage and promote compliance. The Council's Strategic Plan also identifies provision of educative services as a key priority.

The Council has established itself as a key contributor to RTO professional development in Western Australia, and there has been significant expansion in its program of delivery.

The Council's Education Program in 2020-2021 proved highly successful with **1,001** participants attending workshops either in person or online. This is a **113% increase** in the number of participants from the previous period (469 participants). The Education Program continued to offer workshops free of charge, through a variety of mediums including face-to-face and online (webinar) presentations facilitating State-wide participation.

To enable RTOs the flexibility of accessing resources, the majority of workshops were recorded and made available to view on YouTube. Since the Council's YouTube account went 'live' in November 2020, there have been **1,293** views of workshop recordings.

The design of the Education Program and key topics for delivery are based on the analysis of a range of data obtained from audits, complaints, the biennial RTO and stakeholder surveys, workshop participant feedback and stakeholder consultations.

Post workshop surveys undertaken with participants indicated a high level of satisfaction with the presenter's knowledge and expertise, delivery mode, topic selection and the areas of focus in the 2020-2021 Education Program. The feedback indicated significant support on the effectiveness of the program in increasing the capability and understanding of participants in relation to the role of the Council, and in meeting the requirements of the Standards for RTOs.

During July 2020 to June 2021, **27** workshops were conducted as a webinar, face-to-face workshop or a combination of the two. In this period, Council expanded its Education Program from offering traditional workshops, webinars, and factsheets to include a wider range of approaches in the form of podcasts, instructional video clips and a breakfast event.

Education Program initiatives undertaken during the reporting period are detailed below:



Three workshops were delivered through a combined face-to-face/webinar providing RTOs with practical information to support compliance against the Standards for RTOs. Target areas included '*Understanding RTO Responsibilities in RPL*', '*RTO Governance*' and '*Designing Training & Assessment Strategies*'.



Three regional face-to-face workshops were conducted in Port Hedland, Geraldton and Albany covering assessment and designing training and assessment strategies.



17 webinars were conducted covering topics such as '*Designing Training and Assessment Strategies*', '*Making an Assessment Decision*' and '*Distance and Online Training and Assessment*' and information about '*Preparing for Audit*' and '*Becoming an RTO*'. All webinar sessions were recorded and made available on the Council's website.



Four workshop presentations, '*RTO Governance*', '*Managing and Amending RTO Scope*' and '*Making the Assessment Decision*' were adapted for RTO schools.



One Breakfast Event for third parties who provide services on behalf of RTOs was held to acknowledge the valuable role these organisations play in the delivery of VET and to provide information about Council and our role as the VET regulator.



TAC Fact Sheets provide training providers with guidance about the Standards for RTOs. Of the **24** Fact Sheets available, **14** were either reviewed and updated or newly developed during the reporting period.



Episode 1 in the podcast series 'TAC Talks' was launched covering the topic '*Do Units of Competency have an Australian Qualifications Framework level?*'.



Two instructional video clips in the series 'TAC Clips' were published on topics such as '*How to keep up to date with Training Package changes*' and '*Completing an RTO2 Amendment to Registration Application Form via the RTOPortal*'.



Council published its latest edition of the **Users' Guide to the Standards for RTOs** which provides detailed guidance on the Standards for RTOs and supports existing RTOs and organisations seeking initial registration as an RTO.

The Education Program will continue to be a major focus during 2021-2022, with the Council continuing to consult with stakeholders to inform the provision of relevant education program opportunities and delivery that supports RTO business improvement and compliance practices.

5.2 COMMUNICATIONS WITH CLIENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

5.2.1 Provision of Consumer Information

The Council actively provides information to its clients and stakeholders, including guidance material to promote and support the delivery of quality services in the sector.

TAC Website

The website is the Council's major communication portal and the most frequently accessed information and communication tool. The website contains all Council policies and documentation in relation to the Standards for RTOs, course accreditation and other key information relevant to the sector.

The Council's website includes access to the RTO Portal, registration and course accreditation application forms, complaints handling information and forms, published newsletters and an extensive selection of education and guidance material. The website also includes the Council's Education Program calendar of events.

During 2020-2021, the website had **128,237** page views with the most frequently visited pages being in relation to *Fact Sheets*, the *Professional Development Calendar* and the *Standards for RTOs*.

This is a **12% increase** in page views from the previous period.

The Council's website is updated regularly to include relevant and up-to-date information. In this period, the *audits* section of the website was substantially updated to assist RTOs in understanding the audit process including what to expect prior, during and after the audit.

TAC Newsletters

During 2020-2021, the Council published and distributed:

10 TAC Updates
3 TAC Special Bulletins

The Council continues to produce regular newsletters including the TAC Update and TAC Special Bulletin, which are a key mechanism to communicate timely information to stakeholders.

Newsletters contain announcements on Council initiatives and policy matters, updates on State and national VET policy and regulatory matters and reminders to RTOs about mandatory reporting requirements.

Since November 2020, the TAC Update is released monthly, has been re-branded and includes articles with a focus on Council's education program topics provided in each edition. The TAC Update readership remains high with **1,822** subscribers.

Social Media

Council actively promotes quality in the VET sector by providing RTOs with timely and practical information to support their business and improve compliance with the Standards for RTOs through the Council's YouTube channel and LinkedIn account. The Council's **YouTube** channel was created in December 2020 and during the reporting period offered **19** videos. The Council's **LinkedIn** account went live in June 2021.

RTO Portal

The Council's RTO Portal, an electronic client management system, provides RTOs with direct access to information linked to their registration.

RTOs can view their registration details with the Council including their contact details and scope of delivery. RTOs must submit applications through the portal and are able to track the progress of their application through the system.

Organisations intending to become an RTO can gain access to the system in order to lodge an initial registration application.

Western Australian Training Awards

The Council continues to support the Western Australian Training Awards as a sponsor. Given the Council's functions under the VET Act, sponsorship of the awards reinforces the Council's on-going commitment to quality training and assessment in the VET sector.

5.3 FEEDBACK FROM RTOs AND STAKEHOLDERS

A key priority of the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan requires that the Council communicates effectively, provides an educative service on its functions to stakeholders and gathers appropriate information to enhance its regulatory functions. One of the strategies is that the Council considers stakeholder feedback to inform its regulatory services and functions, and that Council gathers reliable data to measure its performance and inform its planning, policies and services.

The *Standards for VET Regulators 2015* also require VET regulators to evaluate and improve their regulatory performance in regulating RTOs and accrediting courses.

2020 survey of RTO and Stakeholder Perceptions of Performance

A key strategy for Council to achieve this outcome has been the Council's RTO and Stakeholder surveys conducted on a biennial basis. Information gained from RTOs and VET stakeholders through the surveys informs ongoing review and improvements. In November 2020 the Council finalised the fifth survey of its RTOs and stakeholders.

The survey was undertaken by a Western Australian based organisation and conducted between August and September 2020, consisting of two separate surveys - one targeting RTOs via an online survey, and the other on stakeholders via a telephone survey. Responses were received from **147 RTOs (75% of all Council registered RTOs)** and **22 stakeholders (100% participation)** in the survey.

89% of RTOs and **90%** of stakeholders rated Council's performance as 'good' or 'excellent'

- **Overall responses**
 - Overall perceptions of the Council's performance by both RTOs and stakeholders was very positive with **89%** of RTOs and **90%** stakeholders rating the Council's performance as good or excellent.
 - Both RTOs and stakeholders rated the Council's overall communication via email and telephone as good or excellent (**93%** of RTOs and **95%** of stakeholders).
- **RTO feedback**
 - The Council continues to record high levels of satisfaction from RTOs.
 - RTOs who were subject to audit were very positive overall in their response, with over **80%** of RTOs indicating audits are a worthwhile experience.
 - Over **86%** of RTOs also rated the audit as good or excellent.
- **Stakeholder feedback**
 - Stakeholder ratings were very positive. No stakeholders gave the Council a poor or very poor response for its performance overall.
- **Education Program**
 - Over **51%** of RTOs surveyed indicated they had attended a Council education workshop either in person or via webinar, with **95%** of RTOs rating their experience as good or excellent.
 - RTOs were asked to suggest topics they would like considered as part of Council's Education Program. Over 70 responses were received covering a broad range of topics. This feedback assists the Council to determine future educative priorities.

80% of RTOs indicated audits are a worthwhile experience.

Over **86%** of RTOs rated the audit as good or excellent.

The survey findings assist in focussing Council priorities over the short to medium term and support the Council's ongoing commitment to:

- continually review and improve its systems and regulatory practices; and
- enhance its interactions and communications with RTOs and stakeholders.

In particular, the survey outcomes have contributed to the development of the Council's regulatory strategy and helped shaped the Council's Education Program.

The Council will conduct its next surveys of RTOs and stakeholders in 2022.

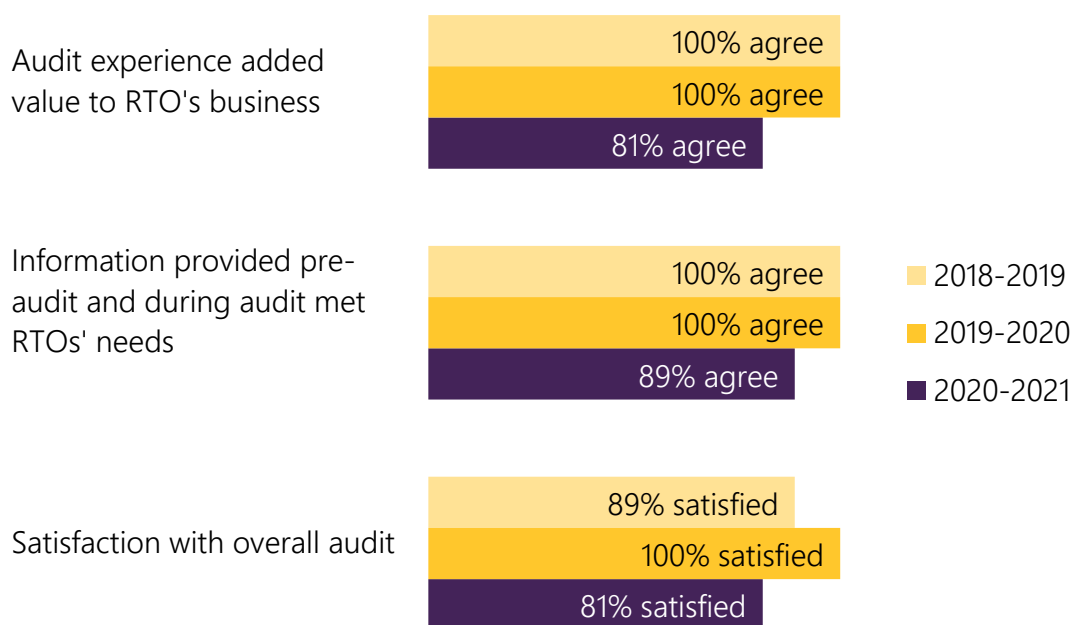
Feedback from RTOs following Audit

In addition to the Council’s external RTO and stakeholder surveys, feedback is collected from RTOs via audit surveys and auditor feedback.

This feedback is incorporated into the Council’s continuous improvement processes and is reported on an annual basis.

The Council collects feedback from RTOs following completion of site audits, noting responses are voluntary. During the 2020-2021 period, a response rate of 30% was achieved, which may reflect variations in survey outcomes.

Figure 17: Feedback from RTOs following audit



6. COLLABORATION AND ENGAGEMENT - Key Priority 3

Outcome Indicators

The Council's success in achieving **Key Priority 3** is demonstrated by the extent to which the following indicator has been achieved:

Outcome

Council collaborates with stakeholders in the provision of VET regulatory services to ensure confidence in VET outcomes.

Work undertaken by the Council to progress and achieve Key Priority 3 is detailed as follows.

6.1 ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Engagement with stakeholders is a fundamental component of the Council's Strategic Plan and Risk Framework. The intelligence gathered through stakeholder engagement ensures appropriate and timely regulatory responses are identified to address risks within the Western Australian VET sector.

During the reporting period, the Council continued to proactively engage with stakeholders to strengthen information sharing and collaboration. Approximately **125 formal meetings** were undertaken with various stakeholders including Western Australian training councils, Skills Service Organisations, VET and industry regulators, State and Commonwealth Government agencies, industry associations, employer groups and RTOs.

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

125 formal meetings



Key stakeholder engagement included:

- Engagement with industry regulators in State Government agencies on industry specific issues for qualifications and units of competency linked to licensed or regulated outcomes – including high risk work licences, the Construction Induction Training (White) Card, security, heavy vehicles, and education and care.
- Consultation with over 45 industry and VET stakeholders to identify areas of systemic risk for the development of the Council's 2021-2023 Regulatory Strategy.
- Consultation with a range of industry stakeholders regarding the development of the Community Services Strategic Review for qualifications linked to aged care, home and community care, early childhood education and care and disability support sectors.
- Engagement with the Department of Transport as the industry regulator for heavy vehicle licences and the Logistics and Defence Skills Council regarding outcomes of the Heavy Vehicle Industry audits.
- Engagement with the Department of Training and Workforce Development, the Community Skills WA and Utilities, Engineering, Electrical and Automotive Training Councils to explore strategies for increasing the capability of the VET workforce.

- Engagement with the Financial, Administrative and Professional Services Training Council (FAPSTC) and the WA Police Licensing Enforcement Division, to discuss quality of security training and licensing requirements.
- Engagement with various government agencies and industry regulators with whom the Council has established MoUs for information sharing on VET issues, including apprenticeships and traineeships, training contracts, training packages, and national VET policy implementation.
- Established a new MoU with the Department of Communities, Education and Care Regulatory Unit for information sharing on matters associated with VET delivery and regulation in early childhood education and care.
- Participated in information sessions hosted by Skills Service Organisations to provide updates on training package reviews, streamlining and implementation issues.
- Presented at the Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA) *WA VET Business Summit* on the role of Council, Council's Risk Framework and Regulatory Strategy, the education program and RTO compliance.

6.2 PARTICIPATION AT A STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL

During 2020-2021, the Council worked collaboratively with the State and Commonwealth Governments, VET regulators and national stakeholders in the regulation of the VET sector and in progressing discussions regarding skills reform.

Working With Other VET Regulators

The Council continued to engage with ASQA and the VRQA. VET regulators met formally **four** times during the reporting period to discuss issues such as quality reform, strategic reviews, review of the MoU, and VET regulatory updates. Additional meetings occurred during the reporting period to discuss:

- the *Standards for VET Regulator 2015*;
- principles relating to mandatory work placement in training packages;
- revised course accreditation standards;
- the national VET regulator's reform agenda and implementation of its Rapid Review outcomes; and
- financial viability risks for the VET sector.

The Council participated in tri-partisan meetings between VET regulators and the Department of Training and Workforce Development to discuss issues relevant to each stakeholder.

Government Agency Interactions

Engagement with State and Commonwealth Government agencies is critical to the development and progression of VET policy and reform matters. As a key VET stakeholder, the Council continued to provide input into strategic policy and regulatory matters including:

- skills reform discussions regarding VET quality and RTO excellence;
- review of the Australian Qualifications Framework;
- review of the *Disability Standards for Education (2005)* focussing on issues related to reasonable adjustment in RTO training and assessment strategies;
- impact of COVID-19 on mandatory work placements identified in training packages and the development of national principles;
- discussions with the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) on national teacher registration initiatives and VET trainer and assessor requirements to support senior secondary pathways;
- engagement with the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (Commonwealth Government) Data Design and Governance Working Group (chaired through the National Centre for Vocational Education Research) advising Skills Senior Officials' Network on issues relating to VET data, sharing innovative practice, raising emerging data and information issues and opportunities, and VET data policy; and
- a research project considering investment in the development of resources and tools for quality induction processes for new trainers and assessors and compliance guidance resources to support RTOs towards best practice.

The Council reviewed and where required, updated MoUs held with industry regulators, the Department of Training and Workforce Development and with the VET regulators, ASQA and VRQA.

The Council works closely with the Department of Training and Workforce Development on matters impacting VET in Western Australia including public funding, information sharing in relation to areas of risk to the sector, professional development opportunities and Training Package implementation particularly where decisions intersect or impact on VET regulatory activities and the requirements of the Standards for RTOs.