

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

ASQA response to QUESTION ON NOTICE

Enquiry into vocational education and training in South Australia

Public hearing 2 February 2018

Senator CAMERON: Or whatever maintains profit.

Mr Paterson: Yes, or whatever maintains profit. If it's a for-profit organisation—we're talking in relation to the senator's question in relation to a publicly funded registered training organisation. That's not necessarily an incentive, in that circumstance, but whether it's public or private people will make decisions in relation to the allocation of resources that are available to them. A mere reduction in funding available to it does not, of itself, mean that there's an increased risk, because they may well concentrate their effort in a smaller number of courses.

Senator PATRICK: Mr Garner looked like he was looking for a profile of how the course numbers have changed. Was that the case?

Mr Garner: The institute, since amalgamating into a single body, has, in the last two years of data, in 2015-16—in 2015 they used their delegation to add or remove courses 43 times. In 2016 it was 99 times. That later number would likely be higher because it was a period of a lot of courses being superseded and updated, so they would have had to add a number of courses.

Senator PATRICK: Surely, it's changing. Are these adding courses or subtracting courses?

Mr Garner: I'm sorry, that's a number of delegation decisions. It could be adding, it could be removing. I would suggest that it's mostly adding.

Senator PATRICK: Could you find that out, on notice, please?

Answer

For the 2015, 2016 and 2017 calendar years TAFE SA exercised its ASQA delegation to add 43, 99 and 17 training products respectively to its scope of registration. Over that period TAFE SA did not use its delegation to remove any products from its scope of registration.

Qualifications are superseded by new, equivalent qualifications (where a training package product supersedes another and is determined to be equivalent), and the new qualification is automatically added (by ASQA) to the RTOs scope of registration.

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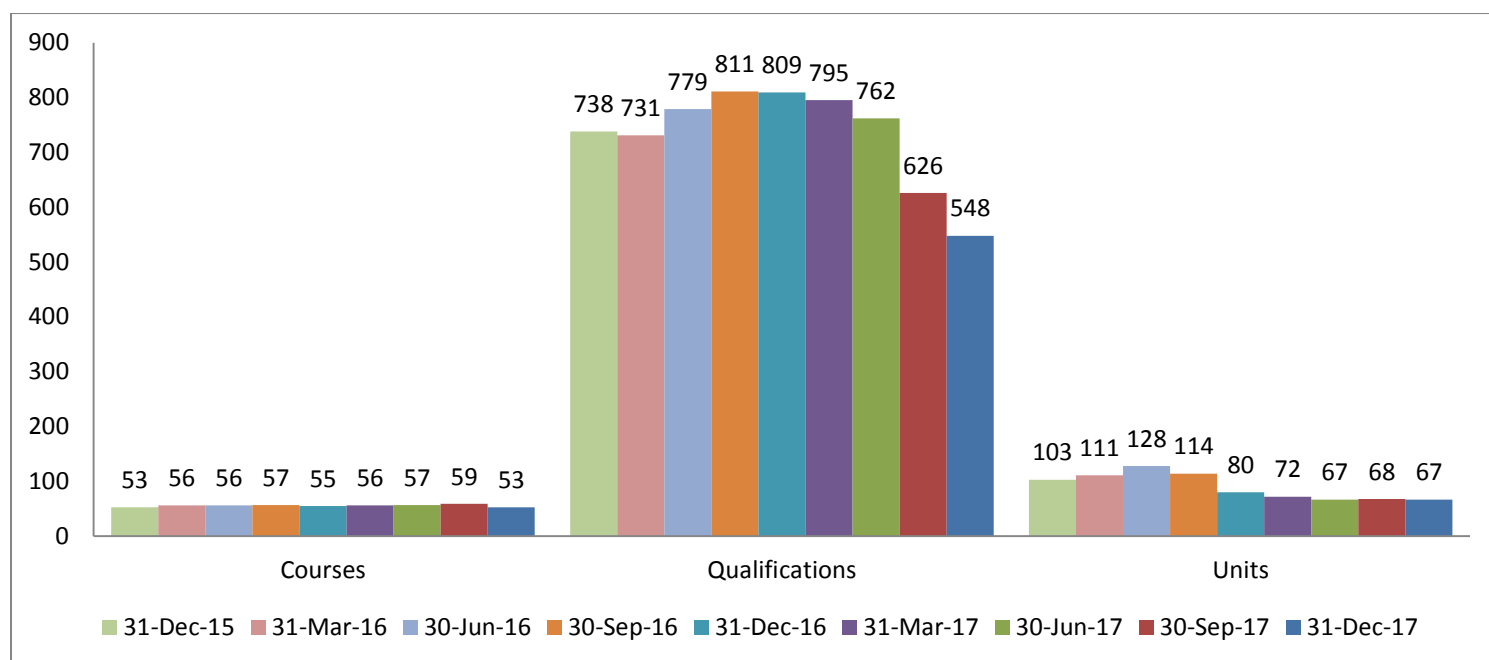
Senator PATRICK: Just on notice. Just to clarify, we know there's been a reduction in funding. TAFE has said that in their submission. In fact, they did acknowledge it in their parliament inquiry—the profile of how their courses changed as a function of time across those two years of 2012-13 through to 2015-16, I think it was. I just want to see how the profile of training changed. Were they taking on more with less money or were they actually shrinking the number of courses they were doing as the money dried up?

Mr Paterson: We wouldn't be able to relate it to a money position, but we can examine the material that we've got, where we've got a gross number of decisions taken in each of those years, and we can seek to break that down, if we've got the information available to us, as to whether they were additions or deletions. I'm happy to take on notice.

Senator PATRICK: I'd be grateful, thank you.

Answer

While ASQA does not have information as to the actual number of courses delivered by TAFE SA, the chart below provides the number of courses, qualifications and units of competency on TAFE SA's scope of registration for each quarter from the formation of the current entity to the end of 2017*.



* These figures are indicative only, for a precise recording of scope items a report must be run on the National Register on the last day of the relevant reporting period.