



2 August 2005

The Committee Secretary

Joint standing Committee on Migration

Parliament House

Canberra 2600

Submission No. 88

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BY: MKC

Inquiry into skills recognition, licensing and upgrading

Allied Educational Services Pty Ltd trading as Pivot Point Australia is responding to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration.

Pivot Point Australia distributes educational materials for the hairdressing industry in Australia and New Zealand. Our business has 25 member schools in Australia and New Zealand who use such materials. Some of our resources are mapped to the current hairdressing training package and marketed as a noted resource in both the public and private sectors. Pivot Point Australia owns and operates a corporate school in Melbourne (CRICOS No. 00723J) with a campus in Bendigo.

Investigation and Report

Under the Terms of Reference we would like to comment on the following areas. There are other areas of these Terms of Reference we believe we could make a valuable contribution to; however, we believe these areas are the most crucial:

- Point No.1: Temporary resident who need skills assessment and recognition
- Point No.3: Communication of processes to users
- Point No.3: Early identification and response to persons needing skills upgrading

Response to Point No. 1

Qualified but not Skilled (A concern to our country)

In our opinion it seems that some education providers are not meeting their responsibilities in terms of providing appropriate training and assessment, and are issuing qualifications to students who do not meet the required level of skills. Issues include providers who lack appropriate resources (eg. insufficient classrooms and equipment for hairdressing), providing little or no opportunity for development of practical skills, and issuing the qualification based on inappropriate or non-existence assessment.

Disparity in hours of face-to-face training delivery:

- The hours is a state issue. Delivery for the same course is ranging from 350 hours up to 1800 hours.
- There is no national agreement for training packages to provide hours against each unit of competency.

- The hairdressing training package has provided this loophole and some RTOs have exploited this opportunity by not delivering adequate hours, in our opinion, for students to gain competency.
- Certificate III in Hairdressing (WRH 30100) can be obtained by the institutionalised pathway (considered the fast track mode); the other option being the 3 years' apprenticeship. To rectify this anomaly of disparity in hours, Skills council Victoria met with the quality RTOs and it was agreed the minimum face-to-face delivery hours required for Certificate III in Hairdressing (WRH 30100) is 1600 hours (Refer to Appendix 1). Quality RTOs made commitment to deliver the 1600 hours minimum.

Recommendations:

- Encourage the regulators to monitor the minimum hours of delivery for Certificate III in Hairdressing (WRH 30100) for Fast Track courses.
- Ensure providers deliver the "on job hours" of practical skills.
- Ensure that the hairdressing training package which is currently under review includes the Salon component.

Response to Point No. 3

Communication of processes to users: vague information

In the TRA website, particularly the FAQ sheet (Refer to Appendix 2), some areas are not clearly discussed and there are suggestions that some training providers "abuse" the clauses/ information presented in the FAQ. For example, "TRA is aware many Registered Training Organisations run retail and or commercial operations which enable students to practice their skills in a realistic working environment". This clause/ information has been used as a selling point by some irresponsible training providers that do not have sufficient retail and commercial operations to promote their course that they "guarantee" providing 900 hours work experience during the course. Education agents also prefer to promote hairdressing colleges who "guarantee" 900 hours work experience.

Recommendation:

- TRA should immediately issue clear and precise information pertaining to 900 hours work experience to stop confusion
- That TRA consult with all stakeholders for a uniform approach

Response to Point No. 3

Non-enhancement to the Australian labour force

With the introduction of new regulations, it is also evident that some overseas students are undertaking Australian courses solely to gain permanent residency status, with no intention of gaining permanent employment in the industry. This will eventually affect the hairdressing industry in this country where these overseas students use hairdressing qualifications solely for the stepping stone to obtain permanent residency. If the applications do not have "job market ready skills", this could be considered a non-enhancement scenario to the Australian labour market. The skill shortage will not be met. Early identification and response to persons needing skills upgrading can be identified immediately via a skills assessment. Counselling for further training can be immediate.

Recommendations:

- Applicants for skilled migration having completed fast track courses must pass the hairdressing industry skills assessment
- The Australian hairdressing industry is opposed to under delivery as demonstrated in the Victorian Hair and Beauty Association monthly journal (Refer to Appendix 3)
- That the National Skills council be embraced in the decision making process ensuring these issues are placed on the "Industry Action Agenda" as soon as possible.

If you require any further information or clarification on any aspect on this submission please do not hesitate to contact Ruth Browne, The General Manager – Schools Division at (03) 9604 3305.

Your sincerely,



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Pivot Point Australia