

**Senate Committee: Education and Employment**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE  
Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016**

**Outcome: Skills and Training**

**Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ16-000545**

Senator Carr, Kim provided in writing.

*Also refer to previous hearing Question No. SQ15-000815 and SQ15-000819.*

***Revocation of VET FEE-HELP provider approvals (SQ15-000815 and SQ15-000819)***

**Question**

The Department has advised that, while 24 VET FEE-HELP provider approvals have been revoked by the Commonwealth since January 2013, in no case was the revocation initiated by the department (ref SQ15-000815, 819). Who initiated each of these revocations?

Please describe the respective roles of the Department and ASQA in assessing and monitoring providers for approval as VET FEE-HELP providers.

**Answer**

In the case of the 24 VET FEE-HELP providers mentioned in SQ15-000815, the approved VET FEE-HELP providers initiated the revocations.

Since the tabling of SQ15-000815 there has been one additional revocation which was initiated by the Department of Education and Training. Training and Development Australia's registration as an approved VET provider was revoked with effect on 6 February 2016.

The department is responsible for assessing applications for VET FEE-HELP approval against the requirements set out in the *Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA)*. Table A provides a breakdown of the respective roles of the department and the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) in assessing applications and monitoring approved providers within the VET FEE-HELP programme.

Table A - Respective roles of the Department and ASQA in assessing applications and monitoring approved providers within the VET FEE-HELP programme.

AGENCY	ROLE	
	ASSESSING FOR APPROVAL	MONITORING AFTER APPROVAL
Department of Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessing and determining approval or non-approval of VET FEE-HELP applications against the requirements set out under HESA and the Higher Education Support (VET) Guideline 2015.</li> </ul> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Receipting applications from registered training organisations (RTO).</li> <li>- Assessing eligibility of entity, RTO trading and course history.</li> <li>- Conducting integrity checks of persons of influence and entities associated with RTOs applying to become an approved VET FEE-HELP provider.</li> <li>- For RTOs for which ASQA is the relevant regulator, requesting advice from ASQA about each RTO's suitability for approval based on history of compliance with RTO quality standards and assessing the advice from ASQA.</li> <li>- Assessing the financial viability of each applicant against the Financial Viability Instructions (FVI).</li> <li>- Assessing VET FEE-HELP policies and procedures against requirements under HESA and associated guidelines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As administrator of the VET FEE-HELP scheme; receive, manage and respond to complaints and other issues regarding approved providers.</li> <li>• Receive and analyse data reported by providers.</li> <li>• The department works closely with AQSA and the ACCC to enhance its scrutiny of providers.</li> </ul>

AGENCY	ROLE	
	ASSESSING FOR APPROVAL	MONITORING AFTER APPROVAL
ASQA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receipting request for advice on suitability from the Department.</li> <li>• Analysing RTO compliance history and risk profile.</li> <li>• Identifying whether RTO is subject to current regulatory activity that may impact on risk profile.</li> <li>• Providing Department with profile report on RTO's regulatory history and current regulatory activity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulating RTOs under the <i>National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011</i> (NVETR Act) and the VET Quality Framework (which includes the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015).</li> <li>• ASQA is currently working with the Department to coordinate its scrutiny of RTOs which are of concern under the NVETR Act and VET Quality Framework, which are also of concern under the Higher Education Support (VET) Guideline 2015 (administered by the Department).</li> <li>• It is important to note that while ASQA is not the programme administrator of the VET FEE-HELP scheme, in many instances failure by an RTO to meet some of the provisions of the Higher Education Support (VET) Guideline 2015 also constitutes a breach of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015.</li> </ul>