

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The effectiveness of the vocational education and training sector in developing the educational skills of the Australian people and the skills formation and productivity of the Australian workforce, including:

**(a)** an evaluation of the place of the new apprenticeships scheme within the national priorities set for Australia's vocational education system and the appropriateness of those priorities, with particular reference to:

- (i)** resource allocation across the sector, between the states and territories, and within program priorities,
- (ii)** demographic distribution and equity of structured training opportunities,
- (iii)** opportunities for youth and for older people, and
- (iv)** the respective obligations of industry and government;

**(b)** an evaluation of claims that the key objectives of the original new apprenticeships scheme, as agreed by the states and territories, are not being met, and specifically whether:

- (i)** training outcomes are of diminishing quality,
- (ii)** older people rather than younger people and new entrants to the workforce are the main beneficiaries of new apprenticeships,
- (iii)** the system is more rather than less complex, and
- (iv)** the system is being driven by financial incentives and targets rather than the needs of industry;

**(c)** an assessment of the quality of provision of technical and further education (TAFE) and private providers in the delivery of nationally recognised and non-recognised vocational education and training (VET) services and programs, including:

- (i)** the adequacy of current administration, assessment and audit arrangements for registered training organisations and the credentials they issue,
- (ii)** processes for the recognition of registered training organisations, the effectiveness of compliance audits and validations of registered training organisations, operations, and sanctions for breaching the conditions of registration,
- (iii)** the level and quality of VET occurring within registered training organisations, including TAFE, private providers, workplaces and schools,
- (iv)** the extent to which employers of apprentices and trainees are meeting their obligations to deliver training on the job, and the adequacy of monitoring arrangements,
- (v)** the range of work and facilities available for training on the job,
- (vi)** attainment of competencies under national training packages, and
- (vii)** the reasons for increasing rates of non-completion of apprenticeships and traineeships;

**(d)** an examination of the impact on the quality and accessibility of VET resulting from the policy of growth through efficiencies and user choice in VET, with particular reference to the:

- (i)** viability of TAFE, particularly in regional Australia,
- (ii)** quality of structured training,
- (iii)** quality of teaching,
- (iv)** appropriateness of curriculum and learning resources,
- (v)** range and availability of student services, and
- (vi)** effects of fees and charges on TAFE;

**(e)** an evaluation of the provision of Commonwealth and state employers' subsidies, including:

- (i)** the effectiveness of existing subsidies arrangements in meeting national VET needs,
- (ii)** the impact of changes to the new apprenticeships policy, which broadened employer trainee subsidies to include existing workers, and
- (iii)** accountability and audit procedures within the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, the Australian National Training Authority and state training authorities;

**(f)** an evaluation of the growth, breadth, effectiveness and future provision of vocational education in schools, including:

- (i)** the quality of provision of VET in both government and non-government schools,
- (ii)** the relationship between vocational education in schools, and accredited training packages,
- (iii)** the effectiveness and quality of curriculum materials and teaching,
- (iv)** accountability provisions for the funding of vocational education in schools, and
- (v)** school-to-work transitional arrangements; and

**(g)** an assessment of the consistency, validity and accessibility of statistical information on the performance of national VET systems, especially relating to apprenticeships and traineeships.