The VET Regulatory Landscape: *Key Reforms and Quality Implications*

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VET Regulatory Framework

The Big Picture

National VET Regulator Act 2011 (NVR Act)

- The Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021 are a legislative instrument made under the NVR Act.
- Only Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) can deliver nationally recognised VET accredited courses (including AMEP courses).
- The NVR Act obliges RTOs to comply with the VET Quality Framework (a set of standards and requirements) as a condition of registration.

VET Quality Framework

- Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2025
- Data Provision Requirements 2020
- Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements 2021
- Australian Qualifications Framework

RTOs delivering accredited courses must comply with both the Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021 and the requirements of the VET Quality Framework.

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)

The National VET Regulator

ASQA's Shift From Compliance to Quality

"In addition to our own monitoring and oversight, promoting and supporting providers to self-assess their performance in delivering quality VET outcomes and to plan for continuous improvement is the foundation of our approach to compliance."

- ASQA 2023 Regulation Report

This concept is now reflected in the 2025 Standards for RTOs (Outcome Standard 4.4).

2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)

Overview of Reforms

Key Changes

Structural

- The 2025 Standards have been separated into **three instruments**:
  1. Outcome Standards
  2. Compliance Requirements
  3. Credential Policy

Operational

- Strengthened focus on quality outcomes and integrity
- Less prescriptive
- More flexibility and opportunity for innovation in training delivery
- Allow a differentiated approach to compliance across diverse RTO settings
- Greater clarity
- Embedded continuous improvement

Outcome Standards

Purpose

Set out the quality outcomes providers are expected to achieve.

Structure

- 4 Quality areas
- 14 Focus areas
- 23 Standards
- Performance Indicators

Official Title

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations) Instrument 2025

Compliance Requirements

Purpose

Set out the compliance, governance and fit-and-proper-person requirements that RTOs must meet to support quality, integrity and accountability across the VET sector.

Structure

- 3 Divisions
- 2 Schedules

Official Title

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Compliance Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations and Fit and Proper Person Requirements) Instrument 2025

Credential Policy

Purpose

Specifies the qualifications and credentials required for individuals delivering, assessing and validating nationally recognised training.

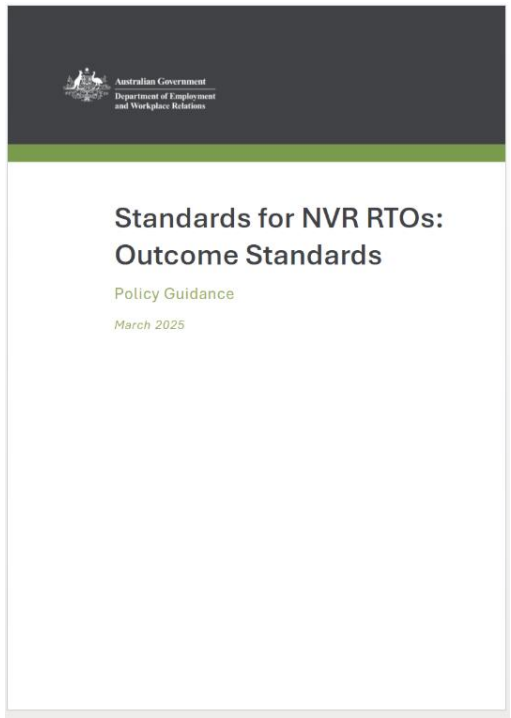
Structure

- 3 Sections

Key Support Documents

DEWR

Outcome Standards intent and interpretation



ASQA

Understanding of the 2025 Standards and regulatory expectations

Outcome Standard 4.4

Continuous Improvement

Continuous Improvement

Standard 4.4

Standard

An NVR registered training organisation undertakes systematic monitoring and evaluation of the organisation to support quality delivery and the continuous improvement of services.

An NVR registered training organisation demonstrates:

(a) it has a system in place for monitoring and evaluating its performance with the requirements set out in this instrument [these Standards] and any other instrument [the Compliance Requirements] made under section 185 of the Act, as in force from time to time;

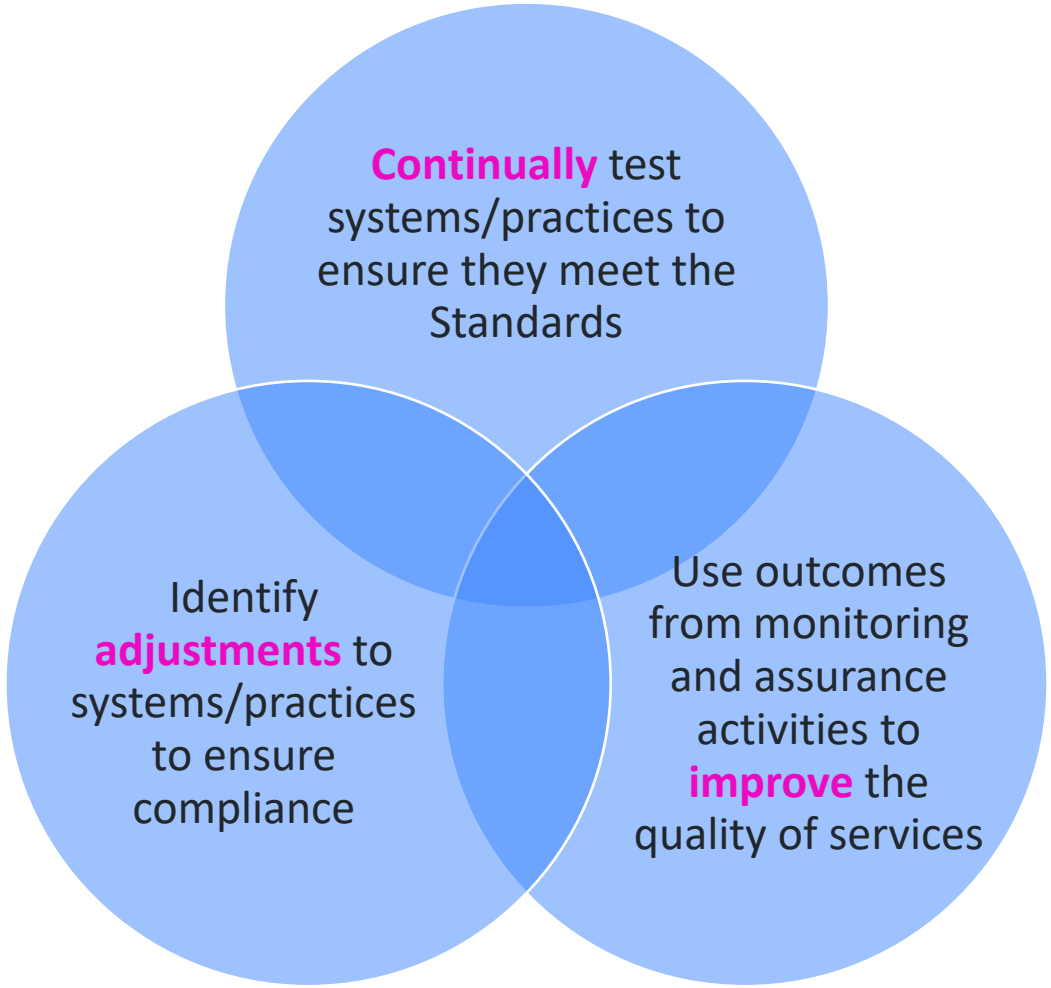
(b) how outcomes derived from monitoring and evaluating its performance are used to inform continuous improvement; and

(c) it has mechanisms in place to lawfully collect and analyse data including any feedback received from VET students, staff, industry, VET regulators, state and territory training authorities and employers of current or former VET students.

Performance Indicators

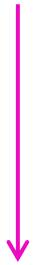
Intent of Outcome Standard 4.4

RTOs are expected to continually self-assure – they need to demonstrate how they:



FOCUS SHIFT

Standards for RTOs 2015:
Quality Assurance



Outcome Standards for RTOs 2025: *Continuous Improvement*

KEY ELEMENTS

Systematic monitoring and evaluation of performance

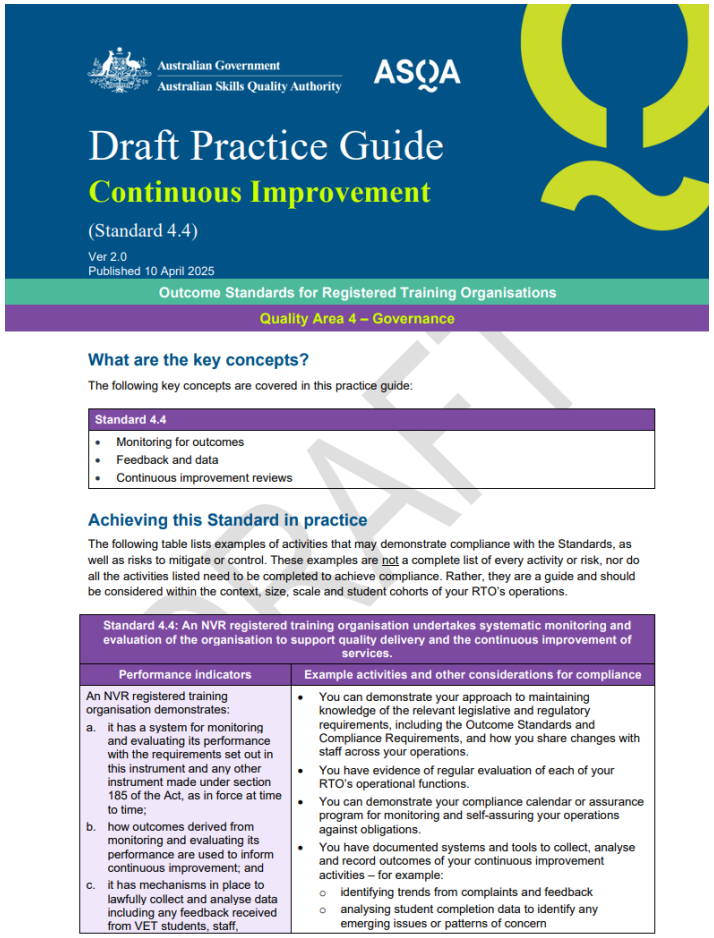
against the Standards

to support quality delivery

and inform continuous improvement

ASQA Practice Guide

Examples to Demonstrate Compliance with Outcome Standard 4.4



Australian Government
Australian Skills Quality Authority

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Draft Practice Guide

Continuous Improvement

(Standard 4.4)

Ver 2.0
Published 10 April 2025

Outcome Standards for Registered Training Organisations

Quality Area 4 – Governance

What are the key concepts?

The following key concepts are covered in this practice guide:

Standard 4.4
• Monitoring for outcomes • Feedback and data • Continuous improvement reviews

Achieving this Standard in practice

The following table lists examples of activities that may demonstrate compliance with the Standards, as well as risks to mitigate or control. These examples are not a complete list of every activity or risk, nor do all the activities listed need to be completed to achieve compliance. Rather, they are a guide and should be considered within the context, size, scale and student cohorts of your RTO's operations.

Standard 4.4: An NVR registered training organisation undertakes systematic monitoring and evaluation of the organisation to support quality delivery and the continuous improvement of services.	
Performance indicators	**Example activities and other considerations for compliance**
An NVR registered training organisation demonstrates: a. it has a system for monitoring and evaluating its performance with the requirements set out in this instrument and any other instrument made under section 185 of the Act, as in force at time to time; b. how outcomes derived from monitoring and evaluating its performance are used to inform continuous improvement; and c. it has mechanisms in place to lawfully collect and analyse data including any feedback received from VET students, staff,	• You can demonstrate your approach to maintaining knowledge of the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, including the Outcome Standards and Compliance Requirements, and how you share changes with staff across your operations. • You have evidence of regular evaluation of each of your RTO's operational functions. • You can demonstrate your compliance calendar or assurance program for monitoring and self-assuring your operations against obligations. • You have documented systems and tools to collect, analyse and record outcomes of your continuous improvement activities – for example: ○ identifying trends from complaints and feedback ○ analysing student completion data to identify any emerging issues or patterns of concern

- Establish an assurance activity calendar to regularly assess operations against obligations and maintain evidence
- Have documented systems and tools to collect, analyse and record outcomes of CI activities, eg:
  - identifying trends from complaints and feedback
  - analysing student completion data to identify emerging issues or patterns of concern
  - CI responses consider sector risks and operational risks
- Regular review of services delivered by third parties
- Proactively disclose self-identified compliance issues and rectification measures to ASQA
- Address emerging issues and implement improvements in a reasonable timeframe (proportionate to risk to students and sector)
- Incorporate validation outcomes into the CI system to ensure that issues identified are addressed effectively.
- Conduct post-implementation monitoring of practice and how that changes as part of an ongoing cycle
- Maintain staff knowledge of regulatory requirements and changes

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Outcome Standard 4.4: Known Risks to Quality Outcomes

- Not understanding legislative and regulatory obligations and requirements and how they apply to your operations.
- Failing to have systematised approaches to self-assurance and monitoring and only implementing improvements when there is an upcoming regulatory activity.
- Not documenting or actioning areas for improvement identified from self-assurance, monitoring and analysis.
- Failing to identify and implement CI opportunities across your entire scope of operations.
- Not providing staff with the opportunity to contribute to issues identification, continuous improvement activities and potential solutions.
- Relying on generic evaluation templates without contextualising the review to your RTO's operations.
- Not using multiple data collection and feedback points from stakeholders.
- Not ensuring that the collection and use of data (including feedback) complies with legislative and regulatory obligations.

Closing Remarks

- The RTO Standards 2025 challenge us to think differently about quality.
- Compliance remains essential and provides the minimum quality standard expected of all RTOs.
- Quality goes beyond compliance, focusing on student outcomes, experience and continuous enhancement.
- The RTO Standards 2025 provide greater flexibility for providers to determine how they achieve the required outcomes.
- Continuous improvement is the pathway to best practice, informed by evidence, self-assurance and stakeholder feedback.
- The goal is not simply to demonstrate compliance, but to continually improve the quality of education and training we provide and exceed compliance expectations.

Thank you

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