

Registered Training Organisation

User Choice Skills Assure Supplier

2021-23 Policy

Policy owner:	Deputy Director-General Investment Division
Approval date:	16 May 2022
Effective date:	1 July 2021
Related policies and documents:	1. <i>User Choice 2021-23 Policy</i> 2. <i>Vocational Education and Training (VET) Skills Assure Supplier Agreement</i> 3. <i>SAS Third Party Arrangements Directive 2022-2023</i>
Version control:	Version: 1.1

All documents are available online at: www.desbt.qld.gov.au/training.
[For definitions, refer to Appendix 1.](#)

Background

In July 2010, the Queensland Government introduced the Pre-qualified supplier (PQS) system as a new methodology for funding User Choice training and assessment services in Queensland. Skills Assure, the next evolution of the PQS system, commenced from 1 July 2020.

The Skills Assure Supplier (SAS) system provides a comprehensive central register of VET providers that have met Queensland's entry requirements. It provides performance requirements and guidelines for the selection of training and assessment providers for the delivery of vocational education and training (VET) services funded by the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training.

Skills Assure approval applies to all registered training organisations (RTOs) directly contracted by the department to deliver User Choice training and assessment services.

There are no application or annual registration fees directly associated with the SAS system.

Based on national standards and department-specific requirements in quality management, the SAS process aims to provide industry, apprentices, trainees and their employers with a level of assurance that their chosen supplier is able to deliver quality training and assessment services in Queensland.

Scope

User Choice Skills Assure Supplier policy framework

The SAS process operates under the following policy framework:

- RTOs that wish to deliver publicly-funded User Choice training and assessment services in Queensland must apply for, and be granted, SAS status by the department.
- The department reserves the right to revoke an RTO's SAS status subject to the terms and conditions of the *Vocational Education and Training (VET) Skills Assure Supplier Agreement*.



Eligibility requirements

- Only RTOs who have an active registration status in Queensland are eligible to apply for SAS status.
- RTOs must have a Head Office in Queensland to be eligible to apply for SAS status. DESBT may allow RTOs to apply for SAS status in exceptional circumstances where it is necessary to source alternative RTOs in areas of thin markets to meet the skilling needs of Queenslanders at DESBT's discretion.
- RTOs must be registered to deliver full qualifications under their scope of registration to apply for SAS status.
- RTOs must meet, and agree to adhere to the requirements of the relevant funding program and its policies, to be granted SAS status.
- To be eligible for SAS status, the RTO must meet the requirements of the SAS application process and agree to terms and conditions contained within the *VET Skills Assure Supplier Agreement*.
- RTOs will only be approved as a SAS where the department assesses there is a need in the market for additional SAS. As part of this assessment, the department will assess whether there is a gap in the training market (i.e. whether existing suppliers are sufficient to meet demand for training).

Skills Assure supplier responsibilities

VET Skills Assure Supplier Agreement

- SAS will be subject to the terms and conditions of the *VET Skills Assure Supplier Agreement*.

Maintenance of records

- RTOs can make the following requests for correction and variation to a SAS application after submitting it:

- Correcting errors in your application after submission, but prior to departmental approval. Submitted applications can only be modified by contacting the department in writing and requesting the specific changes you require.

- Variations to approved applications.

Variations to applications which have been approved by the department can be made online through the department's Variations Online (VOL) system. SAS can access VOL at <https://rtovariations.desbt.qld.gov.au/VPSONline/framework/security/auth/login.aspx>.

POL enquiries, such as password resets and requests for assistance in accessing the POL system, should be made to:

Email: purchasingonline@desbt.qld.gov.au

Phone: (07) 3025 6626

VOL enquiries, such as how to add or remove a qualification from your delivery schedule, should be made to:

Email: programdesign@desbt.qld.gov.au

Phone: (07) 3025 6626

All correction and variation requests are subject to written approval by the department.

More information on variations to agreements can be found at <http://www.desbt.qld.gov.au/training/providers/sas/contract/variations>.

- A SAS who makes application to delete their SAS status will be subject to departmental approval and any other standard or regulation relating to the transition of any existing students.
- SAS must agree that the department will take no responsibility for, and will not accept liability for, publishing any incorrect business contact or qualification information.
- Only RTOs with SAS status can make a claim for payment for the delivery of training and assessment services. The SAS status must be current at the time the training and assessment services are delivered and at the time funding is claimed in relation to that delivery.
- SAS must maintain full registration for each qualification they are approved to deliver.

Skills Assure supplier performance

- SAS will be subject to key performance indicators (KPIs) detailed in the *User Choice 2021-23 Policy*.
- Failure to meet the KPIs required for the funding program may result in termination of the *VET Skills Assure Supplier Agreement* and removal of SAS status.
- The department will undertake performance monitoring and evaluation activities, including SAS compliance audits, to ensure SAS are complying with the User Choice 2021-23 Policy, the VET Skills Assure Supplier, and any other guidelines or documents as published by the department. The selection of SAS for audits may be done randomly, target SAS perceived to be higher risk, or be initiated in response to complaints made to the department or to the Queensland Training Ombudsman. Evidence requirements to be met are stated in the Department's *Audit Evidence Requirements (User Choice)*, including those requirements which will result in a recovery of funds and other action if non-compliances are identified during audit activities.

Appendix 1. Definitions that apply

Act means the *Further Education and Training Act 2014*.

DELTA means the department's Direct Entry Level Training Administration database system.

department means the Queensland Government Department of Employment, Small Business and Training. Prior to 2017 machinery-of-government changes, it was the Department of Education and Training.

funding program means a departmental program for funding training and assessment services (for example, the User Choice 2020-21 program).

new student means a student:

- (a) recorded on DELTA as having an active registration number commencement date on or after 1 July 2010, or
- (b) who recommences an apprenticeship or traineeship on or after 1 July 2010.

QTIS means the Queensland Training Information Service.

RTO means a registered training organisation, as defined in the *Further Education and Training Act 2014*.

Skills Assure supplier or **SAS** means an RTO approved by the department as a Skills Assure supplier to deliver publicly-funded User Choice training and assessment services.

training and assessment means:

- (a) **training** is the process used by the Skills Assure Supplier to facilitate learning.
- (b) **assessment** is the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace, as expressed by the relevant endorsed industry/enterprise competency standards of a training package or by the learning outcomes of an accredited course.

Assessment must include confirmation from the employer as to whether the student has consistently demonstrated competent performance in the workplace tasks relevant to the unit of competency/module.

Assessment must be conducted in accordance with the Training Contract and a training plan developed for the student.

VET means vocational education and training.