
Noting Process Evaluation

Final Report

Report to the Department of Education, Employment
& Workplace Relations

May 2009



SIMPLIFYING GOVERNMENT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

GLOSSARY	IV
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	V
1 PURPOSE & METHODOLOGY	1
2 THE NOTING PROCESS.....	5
2.1 BACKGROUND	5
2.2 THE CURRENT PROCESS	6
3 FINDINGS.....	8
3.1 VALUE PROPOSITION.....	9
3.2 GOVERNANCE.....	10
3.3 PRODUCT SPECIFICATION	13
3.4 PROCESS	17
3.5 COMMUNICATION	21
4 WAY FORWARD	23
4.1 HOW WILL IT WORK?.....	23
4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	24
4.3 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.....	28
ATTACHMENT A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES.....	29
ATTACHMENT B: QUESTIONNAIRES	32



Glossary

Term	Definition
AFLF	Australian Flexible Learning Framework
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DEST	Department of Education, Science and Training
ISC	Industry Skill Council
NARA	National Audit & Registration Agency
NQC	National Quality Council
QAC	Quality Assurance Consultant
RFQ	Request for Quote
RTOs	Registered Training Organisations
STA	State/Territory Training Authority
TP	Training Package
VET	vocational education and training
WELL	Workplace English Language and Literacy

Executive Summary

In December 2008 the National Quality Council (NQC) decided that the Training Package support materials Noting Process would be reviewed in early 2009.

The Noting Process was introduced by the then Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) in 1998.

When ANTA was abolished in 2005, responsibility for the Noting Process was transferred to the then Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) now the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). There had been no holistic review of the Noting Process since the inception of the process and the quality principles upon which evaluations are based were approved in 2002.

The current Noting Process involves a training resource developer selecting a Quality Assurance Consultant (QAC) from a Panel (established by ANTA), who evaluates the resource against five quality principles and, if compliant, advises DEEWR accordingly. DEEWR then prepares a monthly return of Noted resources which it transmits to NQC Secretariat. The NQC Secretariat emails NQC members, who approve the resource by absentia, and then advises DEEWR that the Noted resource is approved. DEEWR in turn advises the developer and provides an electronic copy of the Noted logo.

The Noting Process is not mandatory, either with regard to having training resources Noted or publicising the Noted resources. A lack of reliable qualitative data has made it difficult to determine the number of Noted resources in the market place. It was identified that some VET programs viz., Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) Program and Australian Flexible Learning Framework (AFLF), require training resources used in their programs to be Noted.

Stenning & Associates were appointed by DEEWR to undertake this evaluation. The requirements for the evaluation were to:

- evaluate the Noting Process;
- evaluate the quality criteria, including an analysis of whether the criteria meet the objectives of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) and Training Packages (TPs);
- review of the Noting Quality Assurance Consultant's Panel (the Panel); and
- prepare recommendations to the NQC on the future operation of the Panel and an implementation plan, if appropriate.

The evaluation was conducted in two phases during the period 24 February to 30 April, 2009. The first phase concluded with an interim report to DEEWR on 20 March, 2009. A total of 52 individuals/organisations were consulted during the two consultation periods.

Stenning & Associates identified that there were three threshold issues to address through this evaluation. These were:

1. Does the Noting Process add value to the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system?
2. Does the Noting Process provide access to quality products?
3. Do the quality criteria for Noted resources meet the objectives of the Australian Quality Training Framework and Training Packages?

The evaluation found that there is general support for the Noting concept rather than support for the specifics of the existing Noting Process. Further, there is recognition that significant improvements are required to administration processes, with a number of recommendations being put forward to make it a more rigorous and transparent.

The evaluation finds that the current Noting Process is of limited value, but has potential to become more significantly valued as a tool to support quality training outcomes.

The extent of changes required suggests that the best way forward is to terminate the current process and implement a new approach which captures the improvements suggested throughout this report.

In establishing a new Noting Process, the challenge into the future is to ensure that it is easily understood, simplistic in administration and governance, cost effective¹ and which contributes to the delivery of quality training outcomes. Inevitably, to improve rigour and the quality of outcomes, some additional investment of effort and resources will be required.

A summary of the evaluation findings is shown in the table below:

Components	Findings
Value Proposition	<p>The Noting Process concept (although not necessarily the current Noting Process) is of high value to the majority of stakeholders.</p> <p>The value is different for different stakeholders depending on their expectations.</p> <p>Although the overall the value of the current Noting Process is low at present, it has the potential to move to high value if changes are made.</p>
Governance	<p>Governance arrangements are not well understood by all stakeholders.</p> <p>There is the potential to streamline current governance arrangements.</p>
Product Specification	<p>Noted resources do not necessarily meet AQTF objectives & TP requirements.</p> <p>The Noted logo is not universally used and understood within the VET system.</p> <p>The quality of Noted resources is variable.</p> <p>Indefinite product 'life' and the potential for the use of outdated Noted resources are concerns.</p>
Process	<p>The Noting Process lacks transparency and sufficient rigour in relation to the currency of Noted resources and requirements in relation to the QACs.</p>

¹ DEEWR advised at the project initiation phase and subsequently that it was their expectation any revised option/s could be implemented in a cost efficient manner

Components	Findings
Communications	<p>Need to be streamlined and improved.</p> <p>There is confusion over the meaning of the Noted logo, resulting in confused expectations on the part of stakeholders.</p> <p>Poor accessibility and discoverability of Noted resources is an issue.</p>

The evaluation concludes that there is value in the concept of the Noting Process, but there are significant issues with the current arrangements that need addressing to ensure Noted resources facilitate quality training delivery outcomes.

The following table details the summary findings and accompanying recommendations for consideration in the establishing of a new quality process for training resources.

Component	Findings	Recommendations
Value proposition	<p>No.1</p> <p>There is a high level of support for the concept of the Noting Process and Noted resources.</p>	<p>No.1</p> <p>That a Noting Process continues, subject to the recommendations of this evaluation.</p>
	<p>No.2</p> <p>Changes are required to the Noting Process to ensure it delivers high value to the training system.</p>	<p>No.2</p> <p>A new Noting Process be developed.</p>
Governance	<p>No.3</p> <p>That the NQC's role in the Noting Process should focus on strategic planning and policy development.</p>	<p>No.3</p> <p>The NQC endorse a new Noting Process and consider an annual report on the Process focused on the value being delivered, the quality of the Noted resources and any recommendations for continuous improvement to the process.</p>
	<p>No.4</p> <p>Administrative arrangements should be streamlined.</p>	<p>No.4</p> <p>That a process administrator be appointed by NQC to manage the operations of the new Noting Process.</p>

Component	Findings	Recommendations
	<p>No.5</p> <p>That the current administration of the Noting Process is minimal in nature and causes concern to stakeholders because it lacks rigour and transparency.</p>	<p>No.5</p> <p>That the process administrator undertakes an active administrative role in the new process, including management of the QAC Panel and responsibility for ensuring a robust and transparent process.</p>
<p>Product Specification</p>	<p>No.6</p> <p>The current product specifications do not mandate industry input, which is inconsistent with AQTF and TP requirements.</p>	<p>No.6</p> <p>That the Noting Process specifications mandate industry input in the development of resources.</p>
	<p>No.7</p> <p>Given the changes to TPs because of the continuous improvement process, and the fact that Noted resources are not currently subject to review or “shelf life”, it is likely many of the Noted resources are out of date.</p>	<p>No.7</p> <p>That the Noted resources contain reference to the TP version for which they were developed.</p>
	<p>No.8</p> <p>The Noting Process needs to be improved through regular reviews that ensure the Noted resources continue to remain current and relevant to TPs.</p>	<p>No.8</p> <p>The process administrator develops and implements auditing requirements for the new Noting Process.</p>
	<p>No.9</p> <p>Noted resources need to carry a fixed term endorsement to avoid them continuing to be used when they no longer relate directly to the relevant version of the TP.</p>	<p>No.9</p> <p>That Noted resources have a “shelf life”, at the expiration of which time the quality endorsement no longer prevails. The resources are then deemed to be out of date and have to be re-evaluated and re-Noted.</p>

Component	Findings	Recommendations
	<p>No.10</p> <p>Noted resources need to be aligned with the units of competencies contained in TPs and mapped against the assessment requirements of the units.</p>	<p>No.10</p> <p>That the quality training resources be cross-referenced to particular units of competency and, for assessment resources to be mapped against the TP assessment requirements.</p>
	<p>No.11</p> <p>The focus of the five quality principles should be recast to improve their ability to ensure resources are of adequate quality. In doing this, the principles also need to be aligned with and made complementary to the requirements of the ATQF and TP quality principles. The recast principles should be more descriptive and detailed to facilitate consistent interpretation.</p>	<p>No.11</p> <p>Having regard to the outcomes of relevant current reviews, that the quality principles for Noting be recast to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve their ability to ensure resources are of adequate quality; and • ensure consistency with ATQF requirements and TP quality principles.
<p>Process</p>	<p>No.12</p> <p>The current Noting Process is not perceived as being transparent and accountable and that better quality resources could be achieved by undertaking a number of procedural changes.</p>	<p>No.12</p> <p>That the existing Noting Process be terminated and replaced by a new Noting Process.</p> <p>No.13</p> <p>That the new arrangements be promulgated to all stakeholders.</p>
	<p>No.13</p> <p>There has been no change to the QAC panel since its inception. The performance of some QACs in the Noting Process was of concern to some stakeholders.</p>	<p>No.14</p> <p>That the existing Panel arrangements be terminated and a new Panel established.</p>

Component	Findings	Recommendations
	<p>No.14</p> <p>Selection criteria, performance standards, management and audit arrangements and conditions of tenure should be developed for the Quality Assurance Panel.</p>	<p>No.15</p> <p>That the selection criteria, performance standards, management and audit arrangements and conditions of tenure for the new QAC Panel be determined by the process administrator in consultation with key stakeholders.</p>
Communication	<p>No.15</p> <p>The roles of the various participants in the Noting Process are not well publicised or understood.</p>	<p>No.16</p> <p>That the roles of the various participants in the new process are clarified and promulgated.</p>
	<p>No.16</p> <p>Noted resources are not easily discoverable.</p>	<p>No.17</p> <p>That clear communications about the new quality resources be developed and implemented.</p> <p>No.18</p> <p>That one authoritative repository be identified to enable discovery of quality training resources.</p>
	<p>No.17</p> <p>The Noting Process needs to be re-badged and conditions of use developed and incorporated into the training resource.</p>	<p>No.19</p> <p>That the name of the Noting Process be changed and a revised logo be developed.</p> <p>No.20</p> <p>That Noted resources have conditions of use imbedded in them.</p>

In undertaking this evaluation, it was identified that two other reviews were either underway or about to commence, although due to complete later. The outcomes of these reviews may have implications for the Noting Process into the future. The two reviews are:

- VET Training Products for the 21st Century, and
- Evaluation of Training Package Development & Endorsement Processes.

Despite the possibility of the outcomes of these reviews having implications for the Noting Process, the recommendations and 'way forward' have been, through necessity, shaped in the context of the current training framework.

1 Purpose & Methodology

In December 2008 the National Quality Council (NQC) decided that the Training Package support materials Noting Process would be reviewed in early 2009. The review was managed by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) for the Council. There had been no holistic review of either the process or the Quality Assurance Consultants (QACs) panel since the inception of the process and the quality principles upon which evaluations are based were approved in 2002.

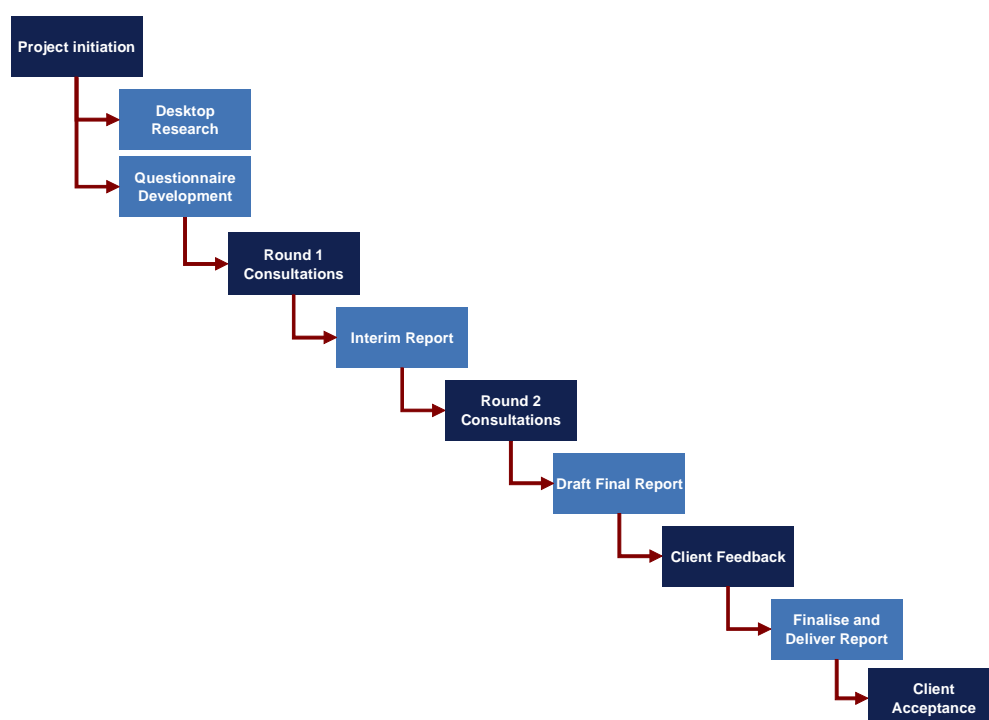
Stenning & Associates were appointed by DEEWR to undertake this evaluation. The scope of the project was to undertake:

- an evaluation of the process – including sourcing the views of resource developers, the QACs and DEEWR (the Program Manager), State/Territory Training Authorities and Industry Skills Councils to determine whether the process adds value to the national Vocational Education and Training (VET) system and provides access to quality products;
- an evaluation of the quality criteria, including an analysis of whether the criteria meet the objectives of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) and Training Packages (TPs);
- a review of the Noting Quality Assurance Consultant's Panel (the Panel); and
- preparation of recommendations to the NQC on the future operation of the Panel, including whether the process should be auspiced by the NQC or elsewhere and an implementation plan if appropriate.

The project commenced on 24 February 2009, with a meeting between representatives of Stenning & Associates and DEEWR. An interim report was delivered to DEEWR 20 March 2009 and a modified interim report incorporating changes suggested by DEEWR was delivered on 27 March, 2009.

The methodology we applied is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Methodology



The following is a list of stakeholder groups and the numbers DEEWR indicated in its Request for Quote (RFQ) who should be consulted:

- Quality Assurance Consultants (all 14);
- Resource developers who regularly use QACs (at least 10);
- NQC members (at least 4);
- State/Territory AQTF Auditors (at least one from each state/territory and two from National Audit & Registration Agency (NARA) (10);
- State/Territory Training Authorities (STA) and Registering Bodies (one from each state/territory representing either STA or Registration functions) (8);
- Industry Skills Councils (at least 5); and
- TVET Australia Ltd (operates the NQC Secretariat).

In responding to the RFQ, we suggested that representatives of Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) Program and Australian Flexible Learning Framework (AFLF) Toolboxes be added because of their requirement for training resources to comply with the Noting Process. This was accepted by DEEWR and brought the total number of individual consultations to 52 for this evaluation. During the course of the evaluation further variations to the stakeholder consultations were agreed with DEEWR, specifically the inclusion of some Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).

Twenty seven (27) consultations were undertaken prior to the submission of an interim report and the remainder in the second phase of this project. However, some stakeholders contacted to participate in the second round of interviews were more difficult to contact and/or ascertain agreement to participate. We made at least one attempt to follow up non-responses subsequent to the initial contact. This meant that the number of consultations by category listed in the RFQ was not met in all instances.

However, it was balanced by the inclusions of additional RTOs, thus achieving close to the required number of total consultations required by DEEWR.

During Phase 2 a further 25 stakeholder individuals/groups were scheduled for consultation interviews as well as formal consultations with DEEWR representatives to formally record their views on the Noting Process. Two stakeholders, however, were unavailable at the time mutually agreed due to illness and last minute unavailability. The final breakdown of consultations is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 - Consultations undertaken

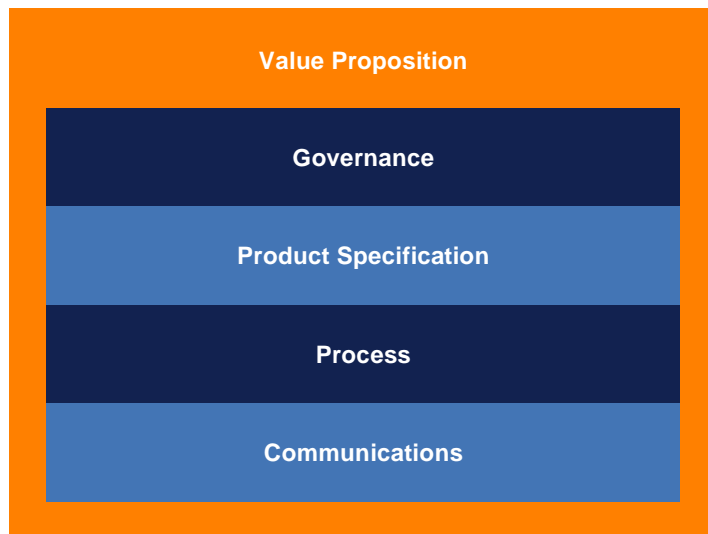
Stakeholder Group	Number of Consultations
DEEWR	2 separate consultations.
Quality Assurance Consultants	10 consulted. Two no longer operate as QACs and two did not respond to consultation requests.
Resource developers	9 consulted. One interviewee was ill at the time of the scheduled interview, therefore it did not proceed. There was no response to other requests for interview.
NQC members	2 consulted. Others did not respond to consultation requests.
State/Territory AQTF & NARA Auditors	5 (2 Auditors covered individual State/Territory as well as being a NARA Auditor).
State/Territory Training Authorities and Registering bodies	7 consulted (1 unavailable at appointed time).
Industry Skills Council	6 consulted.
RTOs	8 consulted.
TVET	1 consulted (involved 3 stakeholders representing TVET and NQC Secretariat).
WELL	1 consulted.
AFLF Toolboxes	1 consulted.
Total Consulted	52 consulted.

In undertaking this evaluation, we identified that there were three threshold issues to address. These were:

1. Does the Noting Process add value to the VET system?
2. Does the Noting Process provide access to quality products?
3. Do the quality criteria for Noted resources meet the objectives of the AQTF and TPs?

To best address these threshold issues we have considered them against the key components outlined in Figure 2 and elaborated further in Section 3 of this report.

Figure 2 - Components of Noting Process



2 The Noting Process

2.1 Background

The Noting Process was originally introduced by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) in 1998 to provide quality resources to support the delivery of TPs. In effect, the Noting Process is a third party quality assurance product that involves granting the rights to use the Noted logo (see Figure 3) on training resources that are assessed as meeting the standards for Noting.

Figure 3 - Noted logo



When ANTA was abolished in 2005, responsibility for this activity was assumed firstly by the then Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and now DEEWR.

DEEWR officials indicated at the project initiation meeting that documentation relating to the initiation of the Noting Process by ANTA was not readily available. Therefore the background information has essentially come from two individuals who were working with ANTA at the time. Given the passage of time, neither of these people could guarantee total reliability of their information. However, the information gathered from them and others involved in the process at that time, essentially correspond.

When the Noting Process was introduced, ANTA was in the process of implementing a broad and intensive reform program that involved initiating a number of projects in a very short space of time. ANTA decided that a panel of individuals with general vocational education and training expertise should be established to validate the production of quality training resource materials.

According to one of the contacts, an advertisement was placed inviting submissions for the establishment of a Quality Assurance Consultant (QAC) Panel, but there was little or no response. As a result ANTA either made contact directly with potential QACs or requested State Training Agencies to approach qualified people to put forward a nomination for the Panel. The appointments were based on the individual's knowledge and experience in the VET sector. From what can be established through consultations, all those who nominated were appointed to the Panel. Currently, it seems, there are twelve QACs active in the sector, most of whom were appointed within the first two years of the commencement of the Noting Process.

During the period that ANTA managed the Noting Process, it held regular (annual) meetings with the QACs, which provided QACs with an opportunity for moderation and to share experiences and seek clarification of issues. They were also informed by ANTA of broader developments in the VET sector, thus enabling the QACs to retain currency of knowledge in relation to VET policy development. There have been no formal meetings since ANTA's functions were passed to the then DEST (now DEEWR). However, in one state, QACs meet informally to discuss issues and share experiences.

An important shift in the Noting Process from when it was first introduced to the present time has been the costing arrangements. Initially the costs, including payment to QACs,

were covered by ANTA. This was subsequently changed to a private provision model prior to the abolition of ANTA, in which developers pay for the services of a QAC.

2.2 The Current Process

To achieve the Noted status, QACs must confirm that the training resources meet the following five quality principles:

- Foundation – TP support materials must identify and support units of competency from endorsed TPs;
- Scope – TPs support materials must specify and be appropriate for their purpose, audience and coverage;
- Structure and design – TP support materials must promote effective learning and assessment strategies and use easily accessible formats;
- Flexible delivery – TP support materials must provide for variations in learners' needs, preference and starting points; and
- Access and equity – TP support materials must be inclusive and actively challenge stereotypes.

It was established through consultation with QACs and developers that QACs either get involved at a concept stage or are engaged once the training resource has been developed. Some of these stakeholders saw merit in involvement at the early stage of development of the training resource in order to prevent wasted effort in producing material that did not meet the quality principles.

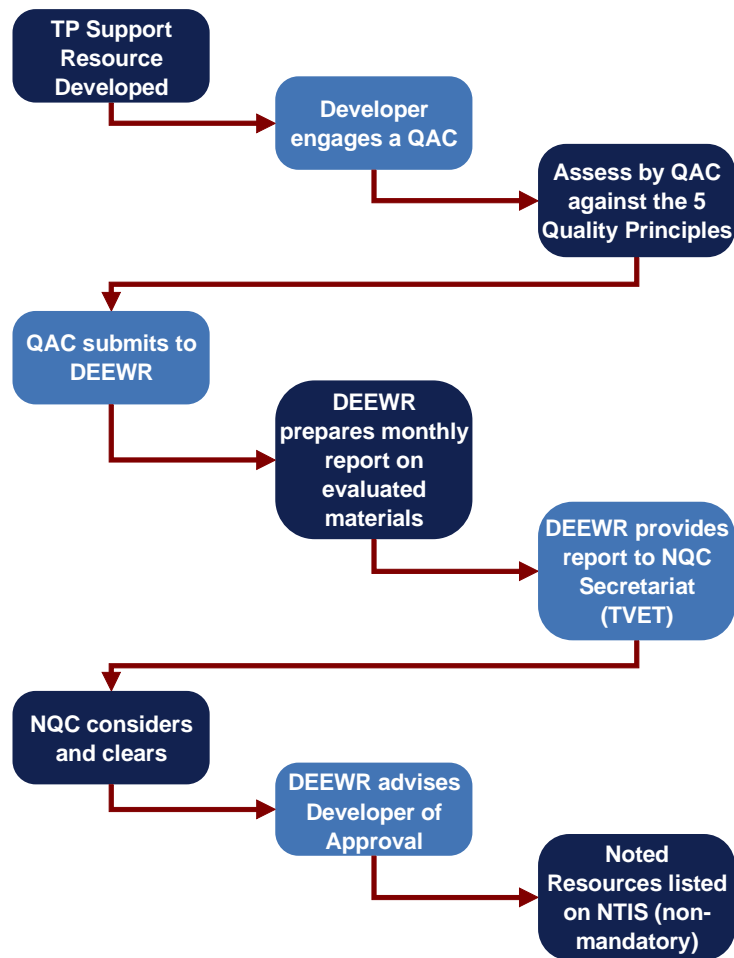
Originally, QACs provided three reports to ANTA to substantiate the Noting of a resource, viz:

- A 'proof of concept' report – initiated before the resources were developed;
- An interim report – prepared somewhere before the resources were finalised; and
- A final report – this confirmed that the evaluation by the QAC had taken place and that the resources met the quality criteria.

DEEWR now only requires the final report to be submitted by QACs to substantiate the Noting of a resource². The current process is described in Figure 4.

² All steps are still required where the noting process is a contractual requirement for DEEWR funded programs, such as the Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) program.

Figure 4 - Current Noting Process



The current Noting Process does not include any revisiting of Noted resources or ongoing evaluation of the role and performance of the QACs. Therefore, in the event of significant change to individual TPs, it is conceivable that previously Noted resources will continue to be used in training delivery, despite lacking currency and/or relevance to revised versions of TPs/units of competency. In fact, this was borne out through the consultation process, especially in discussions with auditors and some State/Territory Training Authority representatives.

Due to the non-mandatory requirement for listing Noted resources on a central repository, coupled with DEEWR's inability to readily access ANTA's historical records we have been unable to identify reliable quantitative data in respect of Noted resources. However, DEEWR advised that it records between 8 -16 each month that it forwards to NQC. TVET advised that during 2008 approximately 40% of all the resources sold were Noted. Responses from QACs relating to the number of Noted resources they reviewed or evaluated, respectively, varied from providing a numerical estimate, to time taken, to discussion about number depending on the nature of the resource.

3 Findings

The basis for these findings is the underpinning premise that investment in support resources must add value to the training system by improving the quality learning outcomes for clients of the system. Whilst the parameters of this project have not permitted the testing of these outcomes direct with training clients, we have used the proxy of testing with stakeholders (RTOs & auditors), whether in their view, the Noted resources support the delivery of quality training and assessment.

Findings in relation to the threshold issues are summarised by evaluating them against the various components on the Noting Process as outlined in the table 2 below.

Table 2 - Component and Findings table

Components	Findings
Value Proposition	<p>The Noting Process concept (although not necessarily the current Noting Process) is of high value to the majority of stakeholders.</p> <p>The value is different for different stakeholders depending on their expectations.</p> <p>Overall the value of the current Noting Process is low at present, it has the potential to move to high value if changes are made.</p>
Governance	<p>Governance arrangements are not well understood by all stakeholders.</p> <p>There is the potential to streamline current governance arrangements.</p>
Product Specification	<p>Noted resources do not necessarily meet AQTF objectives & TP requirements.</p> <p>The Noted logo is not universally used and understood within the VET system.</p> <p>The quality of Noted resources is variable.</p> <p>Indefinite product 'life' and the potential for the use of outdated Noted resources are concerns.</p>
Process	<p>The Noting Process lacks transparency and sufficient rigour in relation to the currency of Noted resources and requirements in relation to the QACs.</p>
Communications	<p>Need to be streamlined and improved.</p> <p>There is confusion over the meaning of the Noted logo, resulting in confused expectations on the part of stakeholders.</p> <p>Poor accessibility and discoverability of Noted resources is an issue.</p>

At a high level DEEWR requested that the Noting Process be analysed to determine if it is perceived to be of no value, limited value or high value. Even in its current form, the

majority of stakeholders value the process, therefore we cannot say that it has no value. The majority opinion expressed is that the Noting Process is conceptually a good one, but improvements are needed for it to deliver to expectations in practice. Therefore we assess that currently the process is of limited value, but has potential to become more significantly valued as a tool to support quality training outcomes. Our recommended changes to the Noting Process are outlined in Section 4.

3.1 Value Proposition

The value proposition deals with how the Noting Process and Noted resources are perceived in terms of their role in delivering quality training outcomes. Fundamental to making this determination was the requirement to provide analysis on whether the quality criteria met the objectives of the AQTF and TPs. The AQTF is the national set of standards which assures nationally consistent, high-quality training and assessment services for the clients of Australia's VET system.

These requirements are primarily met through the use of TPs in training delivery. TPs are flexible, national products developed by industry to ensure quality training outcomes and meet current and emerging vocational skill needs. They form one of the foundation stones of the national training system. Designed to support a range of training pathways, including workplace and school-based, and to provide for a more flexible approach to training delivery, they also play a critical role in underpinning Australian Apprenticeships. The TPs are built on four quality principles, viz., responsiveness recognition, flexibility and functionality.

The questionnaires (Attachment B) for each stakeholder group included questions about whether the Noted resources were aligned with the AQTF objectives and the TPs' quality principles. The responses, for the most part, indicated that there were some parallels, but the five Noting Process quality principles were not sufficiently specific. This issue is examined in detail in Section 3.3.

Through consultations, it was established that the Noting Process was reasonably well recognised across some stakeholder groups and that, of those who were aware of the Noting Process, there was consistent support for the concept of Noting, although the strength of support varied between and, to some extent, within stakeholder groups.

This is understandable because there are different roles the stakeholder groups play in the process.

- There is a demand for the Noting of resources by the developers of Noted resources. This demand is derived from the demand for quality training resources by learners (who were not included in consultations for this evaluation), RTOs, ISCs and funding bodies requiring Noted resources, e.g. WELL and AFLF.
- On the supply side are the QACs who provide input to the process and who, in the current process, are the key link in the chain to assuring quality resources.
- Oversighting the Noting Process are those involved in governance of Noting Process and TP implementation i.e. DEEWR, NQC, auditors & STAs.

The Commonwealth funded programs that stipulate training resources must be Noted are of the view that investment in Noted resources results in more rigour and a higher quality training resource. In fact, WELL was of the opinion that the quality had improved in recent years. It should be noted, however, that there are key differences in the Noting Process applied to WELL products which are likely to have contributed to this view. This is because QACs are engaged at concept stage in resource development and required to provide several reports during and at the completion of the development process. In

addition the WELL program itself invests in the more rigorous process by paying for the services of the QACs.

Most stakeholders saw value in continuing the Noting Process subject to changes outlined further in this report. Specifically, there is broad support for continuing with a concept (of Noted resources) which tells the market that the materials have been subject to a set of quality standards and meet certain specifications. There was one stakeholder group, ISCs, who were divided on the issue.

Consultations with State Training Authorities/Registering Bodies revealed that in most jurisdictions the Noting Process was perceived to be of some value. However, one jurisdiction had little knowledge of the Noting Process and could not give a definitive view.

RTOs consulted also had mixed views on the value of the Noting Process depending on their experience with it. Those who used the Noting Process outputs were complimentary, but others who did not use these resources either could not comment or, in one case, chose to use resources subject to their own in-house quality processes. The lack of awareness of the Noting Process is possibly a marketing issue which is discussed further under Section 3.5.

Whilst auditors do not have a direct role in the Noting Process, their input has been valuable in contributing to the debate about whether Noted resources contribute to quality training outcomes. To this end all, but one expressed a view that many of the Noted resources (and other non-Noted resources) did not support assessment activities when purporting to do so. The main concern was that RTOs tended to interpret that once a resource was Noted, then by using that resource it met assessment and learning outcomes requirements. However, like other key stakeholders, auditors were supportive of improving the Noting Process and aligning it with AQTF and TP requirements.

We concluded that those using the Noting Process saw value in so doing, whereas those not participating had or were in the process of developing their own quality processes and resources.

Despite the widespread support for the concept of the Noting Process, there was almost unanimous agreement that the mechanics of the process required significant attention to ensure that the process adequately supported quality training outcomes.

Finding #1: There is a high level of support for the concept of the Noting Process and Noted resources.

Finding #2: Changes are required to the Noting Process to ensure it delivers high value to the training system.

3.2 Governance

This section reviews and evaluates the strategic management and administrative roles played by bodies currently involved in the Noting Process and have considered other possibilities. It was determined that current governance arrangements for the Noting Process are not visible or well understood. In examining governance, there are two levels viz. a management and sponsorship role and an administrative role. Currently, the NQC performs the former, but it also is involved in the latter and DEEWR performs an administrative role.

Whilst for all intents and purposes NQC endorses Noted resources, in reality, NQC members receive an email summary of support materials from the NQC Secretariat and there is no expectation that they need reply. In fact, once the Secretariat sends the email to NQC members, DEEWR is advised that the resources are 'Noted' and it in turn advises the developer. We observe that the current process strongly relies on the clarity of the product specifications and the quality of the evaluations done by the QACs as the key underpinnings to achieve the outcome of quality resources.

DEEWR's current role is essentially administrative in nature; once the QAC has 'signed off' on the resources as having met specifications, the evaluation is accepted without further review. Some Stakeholders indicated that some 'moderation' of evaluations should occur to ensure a consistent interpretation and application of the product specifications.

A number of stakeholders indicated that whilst they did not know exactly what DEEWR and NQC did in the process, their involvement (especially NQC) gave the Noting Process credibility. There was a strong sense that NQC should not get involved in the detail of Noting individual resources but, rather, endorse a process which it was satisfied met best practice standards and incorporated appropriate risk management approaches.

In relation to the administration of a revised Noting Process, stakeholders' views included:

- Rationalising the administration and bringing control of the total process under the auspices of the NQC, and
- ISCs taking over responsibility to strengthen links to the development of TPs.

The QACs were unified in the view that they felt isolated in the process since ANTA was abolished. Specifically, they would like to see the administering body play a more active role in managing the Noting Process, including arranging moderation forums for QACs and providing sector development updates for them. There was one suggestion put forward that QACs undertake periodic quality reviews of each other's work in order to reduce administrative effort by DEEWR (or its replacement). However, this suggestion would not meet a need expressed by QACs that they wanted more active management and support.

There is a majority view that the NQC should be engaged in the Noting Process on a strategic management basis, whereas there are other options for the administration that are canvassed below.

Table 3 - Options for administration of revised Noting Process

Options	Comments
<p>Option No 1</p> <p>NQC's role be confined to approving the structure of the Noting Process and withdraw from its current administrative role.</p> <p>DEEWR to continue to administer the Noting Process albeit in a revised manner.</p>	<p>NQC's core business is to advise on strategic planning and policy development for the VET sector and not to perform administration within it.</p> <p>DEEWR currently has a range of administrative roles in relation to the continuous improvement of TPs. In light of this precedent, it could be considered reasonable for them to remain responsible for overseeing the Noting Process.</p> <p>Revised arrangements would require additional resourcing.</p>

Options	Comments
<p>Option No 2</p> <p>NQC to assume both the strategic oversight of the Noting Process and TVET, in its capacity as the NQC Secretariat, assume responsibility for administration of the Noting Process.</p>	<p>The benefits of this option would be to enable a direct line to the NQC (in a revised and more strategic role based on evaluation and continuous improvement of the process) and more ownership of the process by the training system as a whole. The direct link to the NQC would also be logical for a NQC auspiced process.</p> <p>Revised arrangements would require additional resourcing. This is covered further in Section 4.1.</p>
<p>Option No 3</p> <p>ISCs assume responsibility for administration of the Noting Process.</p>	<p>This option provides a response to stakeholders who felt that the current process lacked industry input.</p> <p>A major disadvantage of this option is that it would take the process from a single administrative point to one spread across a number of governing bodies. This is likely to introduce inconsistencies in administration.</p> <p>There are other ways of ensuring industry input which are discussed further later. It is also unclear whether ISCs would want to take on this role.</p>

One of the key factors in determining appropriate governance for a revised Noting Process is recognising the core business of the relevant organisations and their willingness and capacity to devote the necessary resources to properly administer it.

The prevalent view amongst stakeholders, and the one supported by Stenning & Associates, is that the Noting Process should carry the NQC imprimatur. Therefore, it makes sense for the NQC to remain involved at a strategic level, but not at an administrative level. As one respondent said “NQC should endorse the system not direct the traffic across it.”

It would address a number of concerns if the NQC were to endorse a revised and more rigorous quality process and be responsible for considering an annual report (prepared by the process administrator) on the value and outcomes of the process, together with recommendations about continuous improvement. Such an approach would ensure that the process continues to be tested for relevance, value and ‘fitness for purpose’ as changes are made to VET policy. This will be particularly important once the outcomes of the two evaluations referred to earlier - VET Training Products for the 21st Century and the evaluation of TP Development and Endorsement Processes – are known and are implemented.

Finding #3: That the NQC's role in the Noting Process should focus on strategic planning and policy development.

Finding #4: Administrative arrangements should be streamlined.

In terms of administration of the process, on balance we support the view that it should be undertaken by TVET so that the system as a whole has more ownership of the outcomes. However, we acknowledge that it is possible TVET may have concerns about the cost of assuming a new responsibility and this will be an issue for discussion by the NQC. In addition, our view is that the level of involvement of the administering body needs to increase to ensure the Noting Process, including the administration of the QAC Panel, reflects the ever changing VET sector and delivers quality training outcomes. This is likely to involve some increased costs for whichever agency assumes administration. Whilst not being able to specifically put a dollar value on potential cost increases we see them related to more active management of the Panel, support for QACs including regular moderation meetings and auditing of the Noting Process itself. There are ways to minimise some of these costs which are discussed in Section 4.1.

Finding#5: That the current administration of the Noting Process is minimal in nature and causes concern to stakeholders because it lacks rigour and transparency.

3.3 Product Specification

Product specification deals with the:

- Nature of the Noted product including branding; and
- Standards required to be met by resources to qualify for Noting.

Most of the stakeholders consulted were aware of the Noting Process and the outputs from that process, i.e. the Noted logo. However, some differences of opinion were expressed by them regarding what the Noted logo represented. Mostly their view was that a training resource with the Noted logo on it conveyed that it had gone through a quality process. Even those few stakeholders who did not understand the intimate details of the process said that the logo suggests a quality product. Some suggested that this is because most Australians are familiar with food products that bear the National Heart Foundation logo denoting healthy food.

Another concern was about the different uses of the Noted resources by RTOs. Some RTOs used the Noted resource exclusively in training delivery without supplementing it with other learning strategies to achieve quality training outcomes. These RTOs were quite often surprised when Auditors rated them as being non-compliant with AQTF requirements, assuming that the use of Noted resources would guarantee compliance. This is clearly an RTO professional development issue and outside the scope of this evaluation.

On the other hand, more informed RTOs understood that the Noted resource is simply a tool to support high quality delivery and assessment and that a more holistic approach was required. One RTO and some ISCs indicated they preferred to create and utilise its own quality training resources. Reasons for this varied – the RTO had been performing

this role for many years and successfully meeting a demand from other RTOs on a national basis.

The main concern expressed by the ISCs and some other stakeholders was that the Noting Process did not require industry input at any stage of the process. Given that TPs are industry driven they felt that lack of a requirement for industry input into the Noting Process was at odds with required practice in TP development and implementation.

Finding #6: The current product specifications do not mandate industry input, which is inconsistent with AQTF and TP requirements.

A major stakeholder concern was that there is no provision for Noted resources to be reviewed and/or their status confirmed, particularly where TPs had undergone review. Specifically, Noted resources can become outdated as units of competency contained in the TPs are subject to continuous improvement.

None of the developers indicated that they had a system to review their Noted resources when TPs were changed. However, WELL representatives reported that it undertakes periodic reviews of its products and during one such review last year found 50% of products 'dead'. This suggests that it is likely a number of Noted resources in the market place are out of date. TVET maintains a Product Services site where a number of the Noted resources are promoted, and also has a sales arm where approximately 40% of all resources it sold were Noted. The current process is silent on who should be responsible for such reviews.

As a minimum, there needs to be some form of version control incorporated into the Noting Process that clearly aligns each Noted resource with the specific version of a TP. Stakeholders acknowledge that minor changes to TPs would not necessarily render the Noted resource redundant so guidelines need to be established which state when Noted resources need to be revised/withdrawn. The inclusion of a disclaimer on Noted resources as proposed by some stakeholder and mentioned earlier would remind RTOs to check the current versions of the relevant units of competency in case of changes which have occurred through continuous improvement.

Furthermore, consideration could be given to stating a period of currency on the Noted resources after which time the Noted resources would need to be re-evaluated. There may be some criticism of this approach because of the extra cost to developers. Our view is that the issue for developers would be to balance the benefit of having current resources against the costs incurred. However, the ultimate objective to facilitate quality training outcomes means that only relevant and current resources should be used.

- Finding #7:** Given the changes to TPs because of the continuous improvement process and the fact that Noted resources are not currently subject to review or 'shelf life', it is likely many of the Noted resources are out of date.
- Finding #8:** The Noting Process needs to be improved through regular reviews that ensure the Noted resources continue to remain current and relevant to TPs.
- Finding #9:** Noted resources need to carry a fixed term endorsement to avoid them continuing to be used when they no longer relate directly to the relevant version of the TP.

Concern was expressed by a number of stakeholders, especially by auditors and some STAs, that Noted resources often failed to address the requirements of the AQTF and in particular, failed to provide transparent linkages to the units of competencies contained in the TPs and the assessment requirements for those units.

The opinion of most stakeholders (aside from the developers, QACs and Commonwealth funded program representatives) was that the Noted resources themselves varied in quality. In their view, this was because of the broad nature of the five quality principles (foundation, scope, structure and design, flexible delivery and access and equity) and the interpretation placed on them. Whilst there was some support for these principles it was felt that currently there were too broad and written like 'motherhood statements'.

Specifically, feedback from consultations suggests that:

- The quality principles need to be more descriptive and detailed, given that support materials facilitate the learning and assessment of the units of competency in TPs. Specifically, they should be aligned with and complementary to the TP quality principles. This alignment will ensure that Noted resources support the underlying objectives of TP to provide qualifications and products which meet the needs of business and industry and equip learners with skills and knowledge relevant to workplaces; and
- They should support the objectives of the AQTF which are to assure nationally consistent high quality training and assessment services for the clients of the VET system and to continuously improve the quality of those services.

The brief from DEEWR was to evaluate the Noting Process quality principles and determine whether they met the objectives of AQTF and TPs.

In this respect, the quality principles tend towards being motherhood statements and do not give sufficiently tight practical guidance. The evidence suggests that this situation has led to inconsistent interpretation. Table 4 provides an analysis of the principles.

Table 4 - Evaluation of Noting Process Quality Principles

Noting Process Quality Principle	Analysis Comment
Foundation – TP support materials must identify and support units of competency from endorsed TPs.	<p>The Noted resources should state explicitly which unit/s of competence (including unit codes) they support and specify the version of the TP(s) to which they relate.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Noted resources should also demonstrate how they map against the elements, performance criteria and evidence guide of the units. This would help ensure that</p>

Noting Process Quality Principle	Analysis Comment
	Noted resources adequately support good assessment practice.
Scope – TPs support materials must specify and be appropriate for their purpose, audience and coverage.	<p>There should be evidence or the appropriateness of the Noted resources to specific audiences and details of intended coverage.</p> <p>There should also be a requirement that evidence be provided that Noted resources have had appropriate industry input during their development. Indeed, a requirement for industry input could form the basis for a new quality principle focussed on the responsiveness of resources to industry needs – this would align with the current TP quality principle relating to industry responsiveness.</p>
Structure and design – TP support materials must promote effective learning and assessment strategies and use easily accessible formats.	<p>It is unclear what is meant by ‘promote’. This principle specifies the ‘how’ rather than the ‘what’. A more realistic principle should focus on the effectiveness of the resource, that is, whether the Noted resource supports effective learning and assessment processes. This would require some demonstration by the developer as to how the resource meets this principle.</p> <p>The issue of accessible formats is quite separate and should be dealt with by a separate principle.</p>
Flexible delivery – TP support materials must provide for variations in learners’ needs, preference and starting points.	<p>The way this is worded is unrealistic as there are various types of resources that can be produced to meet various learner needs. To expect a single resource to cover the field of learners is, arguably, setting the bar too high.</p> <p>A more pertinent (and new) principle would be to focus on whether the resource is fit for purpose in terms of its delivery.</p> <p>The Noted resources should detail the conditions under which they are suitable in training delivery and/or any limitations to their use.</p> <p>A further option (in addition to including a fitness for purpose principle) would be to replace this principle and the next one (access and equity) with a principle called ‘flexibility’ – the requirement to support the flexibility requirements of TPs. TP Quality Principle #3 incorporates meeting diversity of needs and support of equitable access.</p>
Access and equity – TP support materials must be inclusive and actively challenge stereotypes.	This could be tightened by specifying that the Noted resources should be free of any discriminatory comment and promote the concept of diversity.

More broadly, since the establishment of the principles in 2002, there have been a number of significant developments in the national training system, including the implementation of an outcomes focus for the AQTF in 2007 and the 2008 NQC policy for the TP Development and Endorsement Process (which contains a set of quality principles for TPs). It is observed that the 5 quality principles for the Noting Process have not been amended to keep pace with these developments.

Accordingly, the evaluation indicates that the five quality principles need to be recast to improve their ability to ensure resources are of adequate quality. In doing this, the principles need to be aligned with and made complementary to current AQTF requirements and the TP quality principles. The recast principles should be more descriptive and detailed to facilitate consistent interpretation. This recasting should not rule out changes to the number of quality principles for the revised Noting Process. The recasting of the principles will need to have regard to the outcomes of current relevant reviews identified in Section 2.2.

In moving forward it will be important that the Noting Process and the Noted resources are well understood by the range of relevant stakeholders. Strategies for ensuring this are contained in Section 4.

Finding #10: Noted resources need to be aligned with the units of competencies contained in TPs and mapped against the assessment requirements of the units.

Finding #11: The focus of the five quality principles should be recast to improve their ability to ensure resources are of adequate quality. In doing this, the principles also need to be aligned with and made complementary to the requirements of the ATQF and TP quality principles. The recast principles should be more descriptive and detailed to facilitate consistent interpretation.

3.4 Process

This section examines the Noting Process from the conceptual stage of a training resource through to the incorporation of the Noted logo on that product. This includes the role played by QACs in the process.

The Noting Process is a voluntary one, but most of the developers we consulted saw benefit in submitting their resources through what they saw as a quality assurance process. This view was supported by QACs and some other stakeholders. However, there was a general view from the stakeholders that the process needs to be reviewed, if for no other reasons that it has not been reviewed since its inception and there have been significant changes in the VET sector over that time.

Similarly, there has been virtually no change to the QAC Panel, apart from two who recently discontinued as QACs, since it began in 1998 or shortly thereafter. Almost without exception, the remaining QACs undertake other roles within the sector. This is because, according to them, there is insufficient resource Noting work at any one time. DEEWR reported that it had received enquiries about joining the Panel in recent times. DEEWR had made no additions to the Panel pending the outcomes of this evaluation.

There was a mixed view regarding the value the existing Panel contributed to the quality of the Noted resources. Some developers spoke highly of the role the QACs played (specifically the ones they chose to work with) whereas other stakeholders (auditors and some STAs) considered that perhaps the QACs had become out of touch with the requirements for delivery of quality training outcomes and the role training resources played in that.

Another criticism of the current process is that it does not contain checks and balances that should be inherent in any quality process. A sign of this is a conflict of interest perception that arises due to the close relationships that some believe has developed

between many developers and QACs. Most developers advised that they tend to continue to use the same QAC because of a shared understanding that has developed between them. Both developers and QACs explained the role of a QAC as a 'critical friend' and did not think their relationship comprised objectivity. Other stakeholders outside of this group do not necessarily share this view, and believe that if a developer pays the QAC (and there are no other checks), then they are in a powerful position.

One suggestion put forward was that there should be less QACs who could work exclusively on evaluation of the Noted resources. We do not support this suggestion as the number of QACs is properly set by the market having regard to the standards that QACs have to meet and the demand for QAC services. It is possible, however, that a new Noting Process that involves fixed term endorsement periods for Noted resources may also result in more frequent, but potentially smaller, pieces of work for QACs.

Under revised arrangements one suggestion was that the administrator be responsible for the Panel and allocate a QAC to a developer on request. Such arrangements could increase objectivity and reduce the potential for conflicts of interest to arise. However, this option would reduce freedom of choice and possibly have unintended consequences for the developer/QAC relationship. Whether this option should be pursued is best determined when the impending review of the TP Development and Endorsement Process is complete, as that review is considering similar issues concerning the arrangements for engaging TP developers. Our view is that the nature of the requirements relating to the engagement of QACs and TP quality assurance panel members should be consistent.

Finding #12: The current Noting Process is not perceived as being transparent and accountable and that quality resources could be delivered by undertaking a number of procedural changes.

On the issue of what qualifications and skills a QAC should have there was general agreement by stakeholders that the following should be included:

- TP knowledge;
- experienced in the VET sector;
- experience in learning and assessment strategies;
- general knowledge of industry that is maintained through networks and contacts (but not necessarily experience in it);
- formal VET qualifications (TAA Certificate IV as a minimum)

There was differing opinion regarding the requirement for other skills and expertise such as subject matter knowledge, instructional design, technological developments, etc.

We conclude that there should be a set of mandatory skills required by QACs in applying to be appointed to the Panel. These would include TP knowledge, experience in learning and assessment strategies and instructional design. If an appointee has this skill set, then it follows that they will have knowledge of the VET sector.

There was a mixed response regarding whether QACs should have formal qualifications and we do not believe that this should be a mandatory requirement. There was a strong view from ISCs and some STAs that industry knowledge, or as a minimum, an ability to access industry expertise, was also an essential requirement.

Given the high level of support for the Noting Process to align with TPs, we agree that the need for industry input in the process is important, but observe that this can be achieved in other ways.

A further consideration in relation to QACs was their appointment to the Panel. Irrespective of the basis of appointment some ten years ago, there was a strong view that new criteria should be developed which included limited tenure, or at least, regular performance reviews and the requirement to undertake continuous professional development. Most of the existing QACs did not object to the notion of performance evaluation as they considered the offset to be overarching administration that could provide the support they have sought over the last few years. It is suggested that as a minimum this should include regular meetings of QACs facilitated by the administrator to provide VET sector updates and an opportunity to moderate assessment of resource and foster consistent interpretation of product specifications.

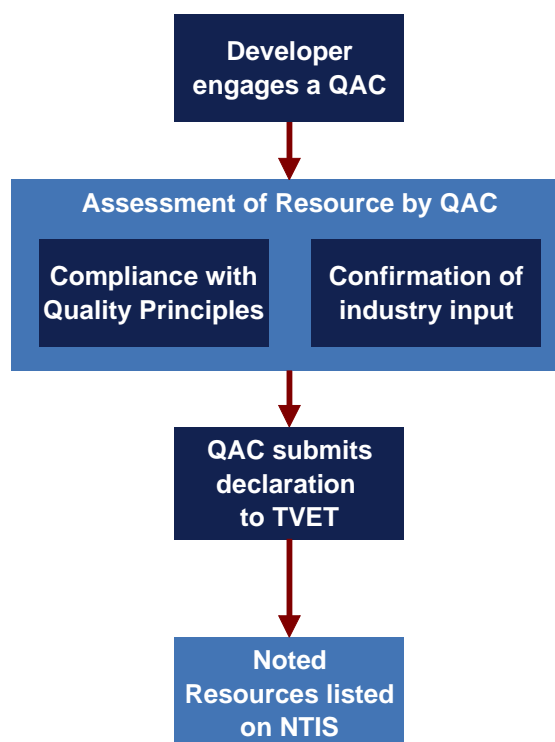
There was differing opinion about how industry input into the development of Noted resources should occur. The ISCs were generally supportive of industry involvement, but they did not have a shared view on how this could be achieved. For the most part they were critical that currently QACs did not have knowledge of industry requirements and this needed to be addressed. How this should happen was, however, debatable. One Industry Skill Council (ISC) indicated it could take on an administrative role, but would want to be compensated financially. Other ISCs said that as long as any revised Noting Process incorporated industry input, it would meet their requirements. A third view (and probably the majority of those consulted) is that ISCs have their own quality process and are not convinced they would use a revised Noting Process.

We agree that it is important to have a specific requirement for industry input in the revised Noting Process. There was a suggestion that this could be achieved by mandating endorsement by the relevant ISC or requiring the developer or QAC to ensure industry input into the process. We consider that the latter of these two options is preferable as:

- there are a number of ISCs who currently are not engaged in or are supportive of the Noting Process; and
- there are a number of ways in which developers could obtain industry input to ensure that the resource is fit for purpose.

Given the above we propose the revised Noting Process outlined in Figure 5.

Figure 5 - Proposed Noting Process



This proposed process requires changes to the current administrative arrangements, particularly in respect of the process administrator who will be required to take on a more active administrative role. The key changes relate to identifying the respective roles of DEEWR and TVET in a revised Noting Process, including whether either remain involved. This will be a matter for discussion and resolution by the NQC.

Given the concerns expressed by stakeholders and the overall analysis of the current arrangements, it is considered that the following further work needs to be undertaken:

- recast the five quality principles as outlined in Section 3.3.
- review specifications for QACs Panel appointments and tenure. Broader stakeholder consultation may be required to define mandatory selection criteria.
- consideration should also be given to expanding other existing Panels e.g. TP Quality Panel – subject to the outcomes of other reviews underway; and
- determine QAC performance standards, management and audit arrangements and, hence, professional development needs.

This further work is expanded further in Section 4.

Finding #13: There has been no change to the QAC panel since its inception. The performance of some QACs in the Noting Process was of concern to some stakeholders.

Finding #14: Selection criteria, performance standards, management and audit arrangements and conditions of tenure should be developed for the Quality Assurance Panel.

3.5 Communication

There are two levels of communication canvassed in this section;

- communication between the various stakeholders in the Noting Process; and,
- communication more broadly about the meaning of the Noted logo, the Noting Process and the Noted resources themselves.

Currently, to achieve the Noted status for a resource, a developer will contact a QAC seeking an evaluation service. As mentioned previously, developers tend to utilise the services of a particular QAC exclusively. Once the QAC has evaluated the training resources, they complete evaluation documentation confirming that the resource meets the five quality principles. The Noted resource is then forwarded to DEEWR. This process was well understood by those stakeholders familiar with the Noting Process.

It was beyond this step that the process became less transparent. As mentioned previously most stakeholders had little or no knowledge what actions DEEWR and NQC undertook. However, despite this only a few stakeholders questioned the authenticity of their respective roles, possibly because it was seen as a rubber stamp, i.e. evaluation reports are rarely referred back to QAC/developers for refinement/upgrading.

Most STAs reported that they are advised of Noted resources. It is left up to each STA how, if at all, they distribute this information within their own sectors. In a revised process it is vital for the communication processes to be developed in consultation with all stakeholders and commitment obtained where circulation within jurisdictions is required.

Finding #15: The roles of the various participants in the Noting Process are not well publicised or understood.

Several stakeholders, apart from developers and QACs, indicated that discoverability was an issue. The Noted resources are not housed on one single repository because this is not mandatory. When DEEWR send advice to developers that their resource has been Noted they also forward an application for that resource to be listed on the NTIS. However, it is up to the developer as to whether they take this action. Information about the Noting Process and Noted resources can be found on the DEEWR site and by accessing www.training.com.au (this is currently being upgraded and will become the primary site for the VET sector).

We consider that it is critical for the ongoing promotion and management of the Noting Process that there be a single authoritative repository for the discovery of Noted resources. It is likely that a facility on www.training.com.au will be the best option for this repository.

Finding #16: Noted resources are not easily discoverable.

Most stakeholders familiar with the Noted resources indicated that they are easily recognisable. However, there was a view put forward by some that if the Noting Process continues into the future, subject to suggested improvements, then it should be re-named and re-badged.

We support the view that the Noting Process should be re-badged to create a refreshed and revitalised brand. This could be achieved with some minor modifications such as changing the name to reflect a 'quality training resource process' and maybe simply changing the logo from an oval shape to say, a square. The words contained in the logo should then be consistent and reflect the product as a 'quality training resource'.

Finding #17: The Noting Process needs to be re-badged and conditions of use developed and incorporated into the training resource.

4 Way Forward

In undertaking this evaluation, it was identified that two other reviews were either underway or about to commence, although due to complete later. The outcomes of these reviews may have implications for the Noting Process into the future. The two reviews are:

- VET Training Products for the 21st Century, and
- Evaluation of Training Package Development & Endorsement Processes.

Despite the possibility of the outcomes of these reviews having implications for the Noting Process, the recommendations and 'way forward' have been, through necessity, shaped in the context of the current training framework. It is also recognised that some stakeholders are keen for a decision to be made regarding the future of the Noting Process as this review has interrupted business activities and development for them.

At the outset three threshold issues were identified that needed to be addressed in this evaluation:

1. Does the Noting Process add value to the VET system?
2. Does the Noting Process provide access to quality products?
3. Do the quality criteria for Noted resources meet the objectives of the Australian Quality Training Framework and Training Packages?

The short answer to all these threshold questions emerging from the evaluation is "to some extent". There is general support for the Noting concept rather than support for the specifics of the existing Noting Process. Further, there is recognition that significant improvements are required to administration processes, with a number of suggestions being put forward to make it a more rigorous and transparent in practice.

The extent of changes required suggests that the best way forward is to terminate the current process and replace it with a new process which captures the improvements suggested throughout this report. This is discussed further in Section 4.3.

The challenge for the Noting Process into the future is to develop a process that is easily understood, simplistic in administration and governance, cost effective³ and which contributes to the delivery of quality training outcomes. Inevitably, to improve rigour and the quality of outcomes some additional investment of effort and resources will be required as outlined below.

4.1 How will it work?

The first undertaking in moving forward is to establish new governance and administrative arrangements. Earlier the options for governance of the quality process were discussed and it was concluded that NQC should provide high level approval for it and endorse arrangements for administration and for ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement of the process. A number of suggestions regarding administration of this quality process were also discussed and it was concluded that it was a best fit with TVET, subject to any concerns about resourcing the responsibility. However, whether administration remains with DEEWR or shifts to TVET, this will require a conscious change to a more active role than is currently the case.

³ DEEWR asserted at the project initiation phase and subsequently that it was their expectation any revised option/s could be implemented in a cost efficient manner

It is difficult to bring about any program and/or significant process change without some set-up costs, but it is envisaged that the proposed changes will realise sufficient benefits to the delivery of quality training outcomes to justify the cost involved. Again, the benefits of improving the quality of the process and the quality outputs will also count towards justifying the additional costs. While it is not anticipated that these additional costs will be excessive, it is difficult to quantify any precise costs due to existing capacity of participating organisations and depending on the number and extent to which the recommendations are accepted. However, if a revised Noting Process is to continue there does need to be more active management of the process and the QAC panel as well as management of a quality assurance process. These changes will require additional human resources and therefore have a financial impost.

One way of recouping any additional expenditure is to ask QACs to pay a registration fee. Given the current low number of QACs involved in the Noting Process, the fee required to fully offset costs in any new process is likely to be too high. Perhaps once the new arrangements have been in place for some time and the credibility of the processes increases, there may be greater requirements for a sizeable panel and this option may become viable.

However, consideration could be given to requiring QACs to undertake a set number of audits of each other's work. This addresses two issues:

- it potentially internalises the costs of auditing Noted resources under any new Noting Process; and
- provides an opportunity for professional development for QACs.

4.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings for the various components of the Noting Process.

Table 5: Recommendations

Component	Findings	Recommendations
Value proposition	No.1 There is a high level of support for the concept of the Noting Process and Noted resources.	No.1 That a Noting Process continue subject to the recommendations of this evaluation.
	No.2 Changes are required to the Noting Process to ensure it delivers high value to the training system.	No.2 A new Noting Process be developed.

Component	Findings	Recommendations
Governance	<p>No.3</p> <p>That the NQC's role in the Noting Process should focus on strategic planning and policy development.</p>	<p>No.3</p> <p>The NQC endorse a new Noting Process and consider an annual report on the Process focused on the value being delivered, the quality of the Noted resources and any recommendations for continuous improvement to the process.</p>
	<p>No.4</p> <p>Administrative arrangements should be streamlined.</p>	<p>No.4</p> <p>That a process administrator be appointed by NQC to manage the operations of the new Noting Process.</p>
	<p>No.5</p> <p>That the current administration of the Noting Process is minimal in nature and causes concern to stakeholders because it lacks rigour and transparency.</p>	<p>No.5</p> <p>That the process administrator undertakes an active administrative role in the new process, including management of the QAC Panel and responsibility for ensuring a robust and transparent process.</p>
Product Specification	<p>No.6</p> <p>The current product specifications do not mandate industry input, which is inconsistent with AQTF and TP requirements.</p>	<p>No.6</p> <p>That the Noting Process specifications mandate industry input in the development of resources.</p>
	<p>No.7</p> <p>Given the changes to TPs because of the continuous improvement process, and the fact that Noted resources are not currently subject to review or "shelf life", it is likely many of the Noted resources are out of date.</p>	<p>No.7</p> <p>That the Noted resources contain reference to the TP version for which they were developed.</p>

Component	Findings	Recommendations
	<p>No.8</p> <p>The Noting Process needs to be improved through regular reviews that ensure the Noted resources continue to remain current and relevant to TPs.</p>	<p>No.8</p> <p>The process administrator develops and implements auditing requirements for the new Noting Process.</p>
	<p>No.9</p> <p>Noted resources need to carry a fixed term endorsement to avoid them continuing to be used when they no longer relate directly to the relevant version of the TP.</p>	<p>No.9</p> <p>That Noted resources have a “shelf life”, at the expiration of which time the quality endorsement no longer prevails. The resources are then deemed to be out of date and have to be re-evaluated and re-Noted.</p>
	<p>No.10</p> <p>Noted resources need to be aligned with the units of competencies contained in TPs and mapped against the assessment requirements of the units.</p>	<p>No.10</p> <p>That the quality training resources be cross-referenced to particular units of competency and, for assessment resources to be mapped against the TP assessment requirements.</p>
	<p>No.11</p> <p>The focus of the five quality principles should be recast to improve their ability to ensure resources are of adequate quality. In doing this, the principles also need to be aligned with and made complementary to the requirements of the ATQF and TP quality principles. The recast principles should be more descriptive and detailed to facilitate consistent interpretation.</p>	<p>No.11</p> <p>Having regard to the outcomes of relevant current reviews, that the quality principles for Noting be recast to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve their ability to ensure resources are of adequate quality; and • ensure consistency with ATQF requirements and TP quality principles.

Component	Findings	Recommendations
Process	<p>No.12</p> <p>The current Noting Process is not perceived as being transparent and accountable and that better quality resources could be achieved by undertaking a number of procedural changes.</p>	<p>No.12</p> <p>That the existing Noting Process be terminated and replaced by a new Noting Process.</p> <p>No.13</p> <p>That the new arrangements be promulgated to all stakeholders.</p>
	<p>No.13</p> <p>There has been no change to the QAC panel since its inception. The performance of some QACs in the Noting Process was of concern to some stakeholders.</p>	<p>No.14</p> <p>That the existing Panel arrangements be terminated and a new Panel established.</p>
	<p>No.14</p> <p>Selection criteria, performance standards, management and audit arrangements and conditions of tenure should be developed for the Quality Assurance Panel.</p>	<p>No.15</p> <p>That the selection criteria, performance standards, management and audit arrangements and conditions of of tenure for the new QAC Panel be determined by the process administrator in consultation with key stakeholders.</p>
Communication	<p>No.15</p> <p>The roles of the various participants in the Noting Process are not well publicised or understood.</p>	<p>No.16</p> <p>That the roles of the various participants in the new process are clarified and promulgated.</p>
	<p>No.16</p> <p>Noted resources are not easily discoverable.</p>	<p>No.17</p> <p>That clear communications about the new quality resources be developed and implemented.</p> <p>No.18</p> <p>That one authoritative repository be identified to enable discovery of quality training resources.</p>

Component	Findings	Recommendations
	<p data-bbox="564 259 647 288">No.17</p> <p data-bbox="564 322 994 472">The Noting Process needs to be re-badged and conditions of use developed and incorporated into the training resource.</p>	<p data-bbox="1016 275 1099 304">No.19</p> <p data-bbox="1016 322 1445 423">That the name of the Noting Process be changed and a revised logo be developed.</p> <p data-bbox="1016 441 1099 470">No.20</p> <p data-bbox="1016 488 1445 589">That Noted resources have conditions of use imbedded in them.</p>

4.3 Implementation Plan

The recommendations include terminating the existing Noting Process and introducing a new Noting Process based on a revised and relevant quality criteria with clear and concise links to AQTF requirements and TP units of currency. It is considered that all resources developed under the new arrangements carry a ‘fixed term’ endorsement which will require re-evaluation should the resources remain aligned with later versions of TPs. There are a number of stakeholders concerned about the current Noting Process being on hold and termination of it may aggravate those concerns. However, we are not satisfied that continuing with the existing process, albeit for a short time, is in the best interest of delivering quality training outcomes.

Should there be a significant period before the development and implementation of a new process can be commenced, DEEWR may wish to consider interim continuation of the existing Noting Process.

Subject to the recommendation of this evaluation be accepted, the next step will be to develop a detailed implementation plan covering the following.

1. Advising stakeholders that the NQC has decided that the Noting Process is to be terminated and that a new process to endorse quality training resources is to be developed and implemented.
2. Development of the specifics of the new process, having regard to the recommendations of the evaluation and including:
 - Governance and administrative arrangements for the new process, including establishing the role of the administrator;
 - details of the new process;
 - recasting the quality principles for the new process;
 - re-badging the new process and developing the associated marketing strategy;
 - establishing Panel arrangements for QACs, including determining the eligibility requirements for candidates for appointment to the Panel; and
 - developing a communication plan for the implementation and ongoing management of the new process.

There will be some steps in the implementation process than can occur simultaneously.

ATTACHMENT A: Interview Schedules

SCHEDULE FOR FIRST ROUND INTERVIEWS

Date	Category	Interviewee
Tuesday 3 Mar	QAC	Lewis Hughes, Enviro-sys
	QAC	Gaye Murray , Gaye Murray & Associates
	QAC	Alan Daniel & Trevor Lange, Chisholm Institute of TAFE
Wed 4 Mar	QAC	Cilla Barrand, Barrand Consulting
	RB	Deb Doherty, Tasmanian Qualifications Authority, Tasmania
Thursday 5 Mar	ISC	Kristen Sydney, Construction & Property Services ISC
	Developer	Stephen White, Aspire Learning
	Developer	John Loveday, smallPRINT Australia
Friday 6 Mar	TVET/NQC	Chris Stewart, Luke Salman & Graham Foster or David Kelly, TVET Australia
	Auditor	Andrea Bateman, Bateman & Giles, National & NSW
Tuesday 10 Mar	Developer	Diane Gee-Clough & Jill Roebuck, Pearson Australia
	QAC	Gizelle Mawer, Gizelle Mawer & Associates
	ISC	Cherry Cole, Innovation & Business Skills Australia
Wed 11 Mar	ISC	David Greentree, Agri-Food Skills Australia
	Auditor	Lourdes McCleary (nominated by DEEWR)
	STA	Marie Healy, Department of Employment and Training, Queensland
	WELL	Nerida Rosco & Pam Owen, Workplace, English, Language and Literacy Program (WELL - DEEWR)
Thursday 12 Mar	Aust. Flex Learning	Harriet Wakelam & Linda Stannard, Australian Flexible Learning Framework
	Developer	Lyndon Shea , Shea Business Consulting
	Developer	Melanie Sorensen, Challenger TAFE
	Developer	Maria Amesz & Louise Housden, WestOne

Date	Category	Interviewee
	STA	Elizabeth Owers, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, South Australia
Friday 13 Mar	RTO	Paul Siddall, SkillsTech Australia
	QAC	Ron Oliver, Edith Cowen University

SCHEDULE FOR SECOND ROUND INTERVIEWS

Date	Category	Interviewee
Friday 20 Mar	ISC	Kit McMahon & Karee Gurtman, Service Skills Australia
Monday 30 Mar	QAC	Margaret Clark, Focus on People
	RTO	Jim Thompson, Challenger TAFE, Western Australia
	DEEWR	Aimee Benge, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)
Tuesday 30 Mar	QAC	Mitch Cleary, Precision Consultancy
Wednesday 1 April	ISC	Barbara Wallace, Manufacturing Skills Australia
	RTO	Liz Hoffman (nominated by DEEWR)
Thursday 2 Apr	ISC	Annette Duggan-Turner, Government Skills Australia
	DEEWR	Carrie Roche & Murray Judd, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)
	RTO	Karen Kearns, International Child Care College
Friday 3 Apr	RTO	Rod Mason, Tasmanian Skills Institute
	ISC	Anthony Plevey, EE-Oz
Tuesday 7 Apr	Developer	James Tennant, Easy Guides
	NQC	Mary Hicks, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Wednesday 8 April	RB/STA	Jeannie Cottrell, - Melissa Pinney, Sharon Carter & Chris Whitton, Department of Education and Training, Australian Capital Territory
	Developer	Clair ,Cappe, NSW

Date	Category	Interviewee
	STA	Jan Mulcahy, Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority, Victoria
	STA	Jerzy Gill, Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority, Victoria, (audit perspective)
Thursday 9 April	Dev	Alona Reid, e-works
	RTO	Amy Boleszny, Queensland
	RTO	Alison Traine, Western Australia
Wednesday 15 April	RB/STA	Rebecca Brown (Coordinator Registration and Audit), Karen Smith (Manager, VET Regulation) and Wayne Percy (Accreditation Officer), Department of Education and Training, Western Australia
	QAC	Irena Morgan, MWTC Pty Ltd
	STA	Margaret Willis and Susan Jackson, Department of Education and Training, New South Wales
Thursday 16 April	Auditor	Steve Trice, Tasmania
	Auditor	Chris Todd, National & Northern Territory
	NQC	Allan Ballagh, representing Virginia Simmonds, NQC member
Friday 17 Apr	Auditor	Frank Gallagher, Victoria
	STA	NT, Howard Lai, Department of Employment, Education and Training, Northern Territory
Monday 20 April	STA	Genevieve Haskett, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, South Australia, 08 81773574

ATTACHMENT B: Questionnaires

NQC Secretariat

Views on current process	
1.	What priority do NQC members place on the Noting Process?
2.	Have members commented on the relevance/quality of the process, either positively or negatively?
3.	Have members expressed any views on the roles in the Noting Process played by DEEWR or NQC?
4.	Have members commented on how the Noting Process supports quality implementation of Training Packages?
Value Add	
5.	What are members' views about the quality of the Noted products?
6.	Have members commented about how Noted products support training package implementation?
7.	Have members commented on the cost factor of evaluating Noted products?
Quality Assurance Consultants	
8.	Do members understand the role of the QA consultants?
9.	Are members aware of the skill requirements for QA consultants?
10.	What do members think about the QA consultant panel appointment process?
The future	
11.	Have members expressed a view about improvements to the Noting Process and its linkage to quality training delivery outcomes?
12.	Have members a view about whether training package support materials should be actively marketed?
13.	Have members a view on the skills they think is important for a QA consultant to have?
14.	Have they expressed a view about changes to the appointment and tenure of QA consultants? In what way?
15.	Are there members of NQC who you think we should talk to during our second round of consultations?

ATTACHMENT B

TVET

Views on current process	
1.	Describe the role you play in the Noting Process and your relationship with NQC & DEEWR.
2.	What part of the overall Noting Process do you think works well?
3.	What doesn't work well?
4.	Do you believe that the timing of the Noting Process from submitting evaluations to Noted tick is appropriate?
5.	Is the current process transparent?
6.	Do you think the Noted products are readily accessible? If no, why not?
7.	In what way do you think the Noted resources support implementation of Training Packages?
8.	Do you think the Noting Process adds value to the training system?
9.	Have you had any feedback from users of support materials about value, quality and currency of them?
10.	Do you think that a higher level of status is afforded by consumers to resources that have been Noted by the NQC?
Value Add	
11.	Are the Noted products being developed quality products?
12.	What are your views on the 5 quality principles?
13.	Do you think it's important for Noted resources to support the quality requirements of the AQTF? Do you think they do currently?
14.	Are the quality principles consistent with the quality criteria the current training package development and endorsement processes? (i.e. transferability, flexibility, functionality and recognition)
15.	How could the quality principles be improved?
16.	What value do you believe is placed on Noted training package support materials by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTOs • Resource developers • Auditors • The NQC • Others?
17.	What do you think are the incentives for RTOs to use Noted resources?

ATTACHMENT B

Quality Assurance Consultants	
18.	Is the role of the QA consultants clear?
19.	<p>What do you think are the important skills and attributes required for QA consultants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TP knowledge • Industry knowledge • Assessment expertise • TAA qualification (or equivalent) • Understanding of learning and assessment strategy development • Other?
The future	
20.	Do you think the Noting Process is worth continuing?
21.	If so, what role would you like to see TVET playing?
22.	What role do you think the NQC should have in the process?
23.	What role do you think DEEWR should have in the process?
24.	If you agree that the Noting Process should continue what improvements would you like to see made to ensure that it supports quality training and assessment outcomes?
25.	How should Noted resources be promoted? Where do you think these resources should be 'housed/referenced'?
26.	What conditions of engagement should be applied to the QA panel? E.g. performance review, professional development tenure, etc.
27.	Should the process allow for the addition of new QA consultants 'as needed' or as applications are received?

ATTACHMENT B

Industry Skills Councils

Views on current process	
1.	We note that you have not recently used the Noting Process for training package support materials. Are you familiar with the process? (If yes, continue below. If no, see if they have any comments)
2.	Does your ISC have another process for developing quality resources? How does it work?
3.	Why are you not using the process currently? Have you ever used it?
4.	Do you think the current process is transparent?
5.	What are your views on the 5 Quality Principles? (Foundation, Scope, Structure & Design, Flexible Delivery & Access & Equity)
6.	Do you think the noting quality principles are consistent with the quality principles in the current training package endorsement processes? (i.e. responsiveness, recognition, flexibility, functionality)
7.	Do you think it's important for Noted resources to meet the quality requirement of the AQTF? Do you think they currently do?
8.	Do you have any views on the roles in the Noting Process played by the approving authorities (e.g. DEEWR, NQC)?
9.	Do you think that Noted support materials are readily accessible and distinguishable from other resources?
10.	Are you aware of any instances where the Noting Process is mandated?
Value Add	
11.	What is your understanding of the value of the Noted status on a training package support material for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTOs • Resource Developers • ISCs • Auditors • Others?
12.	Does the Noting Process help support RTOs to implement Training Packages?
13.	Do you think the Noting Process enhances quality training outcomes for the following groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers

ATTACHMENT B

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners • Others?
14.	Have you had any feedback from users of support materials about the value, quality and currency of them?
15.	Are you aware of similar quality processes in the development of training materials?
	Quality Assurance Consultants
16.	Do you understand the role of the QA consultants in the Noting Process? What are your thoughts on this?
17.	Do you understand the QA consultant panel appointment process?
18.	Do you have an expectation that the QA Panel all meet a set of minimum requirements in relation to their skills and attributes?
19.	Do you have any other comment on the Quality Assurance Consultants?
	The future
20.	Do you see a role for ISCs in the Noting Process? If yes, in what capacity?
21.	How might the Noting Process be improved to achieve this?
22.	Should Noted training package support materials be actively marketed? If yes, by whom?
23.	<p>What skills do you think it is important for a QA consultant to have?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TP knowledge • Assessment expertise • Industry knowledge • Learning & assessment strategy development • TAA04 qualification (or equivalent) • Other?
24.	<p>Should the Noting Process continue?</p> <p>If no, why not?</p> <p>If yes, in what form?</p>

ATTACHMENT B

Quality Assurance Consultants

	The QA Consultants
1.	How long have you been a Quality Assurance Consultant?
2.	What were the processes you had to follow to become a panel member?
3.	What skills and qualifications were required to be selected as a panel member?
4.	What were the conditions of your engagement? (e.g. did you have a contract/exchange of letters etc)
5.	How did you get your Quality Assurance Consultant role?
6.	How has your role evolved over time?
7.	Do you specialise in any particular area (e.g. industry, type of resource etc)
8.	Approximately how many Noted training package support materials are you requested to evaluate each year?
9.	Approximately how long does each 'job' take? (How many hours work in total)
10.	Are you able to meet the demand for evaluating training package support materials?
11.	How do you ensure currency of your knowledge in the training marketplace?
12.	Do you undertake any professional development specifically related to your QA role?
13.	What are the factors you consider in determining your charges for evaluating resources? Do you think there should be consistency of charging for QA services?
14.	Have you experienced developers that have not gone ahead with the Noting Process because of the cost of the process?
15.	How often have you been engaged to evaluate updates to currency and relevance of already Noted materials? (e.g. after a TP has been reviewed/updated)
16.	Do you think it's important that resources be updated to reflect changes?

ATTACHMENT B

Views on current process	
17.	What process do you go through in performing your role as a Quality Assurance Consultant?
18.	What part of the overall Noting Process do you think works well?
19.	What doesn't work well?
20.	Do you believe the timing of the process from final submission to availability of ticked resource is appropriate?
21.	Do you have any views on the roles in the Noting Process played by the approving authorities (e.g. DEEWR, NQC)?
22.	Is the current process transparent?
23.	Have you had any feedback from resource developers about the process?
24.	How often do you identify materials that do not meet the requirements of the Quality Principles? How do you handle and resolve concerns about materials with developers?
Value Add	
25.	Are the Noted products being developed quality products? Explain
26.	What are your views on the 5 Quality Principles?
27.	Do you think that the noting quality principles are consistent with the quality principles in the current training package endorsement processes? (i.e. responsiveness, recognition, flexibility and functionality).
28.	In what ways do you think that the Noted products support training package implementation?
29.	Do you think it's important for Noted resources to meet the quality requirements of AQTF? Do they?
30.	Are the quality criteria consistent with the quality requirements of the current training package endorsement processes?
31.	Do you think that the Noted products are readily accessible?
32.	What is the value of the Noted tick to consumers?
33.	What value do you believe is placed on Noted training package support materials?

ATTACHMENT B

34.	<p>What incentives are there for RTOs to use Noted training package support materials by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTOs • Resource developers • Auditors • the NQC • Others?
35.	Do you network with other QA panel members?
36.	Would you see value in having a regular forum?
37.	Are you aware of other quality processes in the development of training materials?
The future	
38.	<p>What skills do you think it is important for a Quality Assurance Consultant to have? E.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TP knowledge • Industry knowledge • Assessment expertise • TAA04 qualification (or equivalent) • other
39.	What conditions of engagement as a QA panel member should be applied? e.g. Performance review, tenure etc.
40.	What improvements would you like to see made to the Noting Process and link it to quality training delivery outcomes?
41.	Should Noted training package support materials be promoted? How?
42.	Given the low number of resources evaluated (relative to total number of training material developed) what impact do you think the Noting Process can effectively make?

ATTACHMENT B

Registering Bodies

	Views on current process
1.	What are your views on the current Noting Process for training package support materials?
2.	Are the resources readily accessible? Are they easily distinguishable from non-Noted resources?
3.	What are your views on the 5 Quality Principles (Foundation, Scope, Structure & Design, Flexible Delivery and Access & Equity)?
4.	Do you think the noting quality principles are consistent with the quality principles in the current training package development and endorsement process (that is, responsiveness, recognition, flexibility and functionality)?
5.	What part of the overall Noting Process do you think works well?
6.	What doesn't work well?
7.	Do you have any views on the roles in the Noting Process played by the approving authorities (e.g. DEEWR, NQC)?
8.	Is the current process transparent?
9.	Have you received any feedback (on the process or the value of the materials) from auditors, your NQC member (if you have one), resource developers and/or users of the materials?
	Value Add
10.	Are the Noted products being developed quality products?
11.	How could the process and the 5 quality principles be improved to better support quality training outcomes?
12.	What is the value of the Noted tick to consumers and other stakeholders (e.g. RTOs, auditors, etc?)
13.	What do you think are the incentives for RTOs to use Noted training package support materials?
14.	Do you think it's important that Noted resources being updated when changes are made to a Training Package? Should they be required to go through the evaluation process again and be re-Noted?
	Quality Assurance Consultants
15.	Do you understand the role of the QA consultants in the Noting Process? What are your thoughts on this?

ATTACHMENT B

16.	<p>What skills and attributes do you think are important for QA consultants to possess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TP Knowledge• Industry knowledge• Assessment expertise• TAA04 qualification (or equivalent)• Learning and assessment strategy development experience• Other?
	The future
17.	<p>Do you think it's important for Noted resources to meet the quality requirements of the AQTF? How could this be achieved?</p>
18.	<p>What improvements would you like to see made to the Noting Process?</p>
19.	<p>Should the tenure of the QAC panel be limited to a specified period of time? How should the panel be appointed?</p>
20.	<p>Should professional development of QACs be mandated?</p>
21.	<p>Should the Noting Process continue? If no, why not? If yes, in what form?</p>



ATTACHMENT B

Resource Developers

	Views on current process
1.	Why do you develop training package support materials?
2.	Do you use the Noting Process for all of your training package support materials?
3.	If not, why not?
4.	How/where do you promote your Noted products?
5.	Are the Noted resources easily accessible?
6.	Are Noted resources easily distinguishable from other non-Noted resources?
7.	What part of the overall Noting Process do you think works well?
8.	What doesn't work well?
9.	Do you think it's a timely process from final submission to availability of Noted resource?
10.	Do you have any views on the roles in the Noting Process played by the approving authorities (e.g. DEEWR, NQC)?
11.	Is the current process transparent?
12.	Have you ever had a strong difference of opinion with a QA Consultant I the evaluation of your resources? How was this resolved?
13.	Is the Noting Process mandated for your industry sector or through contractual obligations? (such as WELL)
14.	Are you aware of similar quality processes for training materials? If yes, do you use them?
	Value Add
15.	Are the Noted products being developed quality products?
16.	In what way do the Noted products support training package implementation?
17.	How does use of Noted resources deliver quality training outcomes to learners?
18.	Do you think it's important for Noted resources to meet the quality requirements of the AQTF? Does the Noting Process support this?

ATTACHMENT B

19.	<p>Are you aware of the quality requirements of current training package endorsement processes? (responsiveness, recognition, flexibility, functionality).</p> <p>Do you think that the criteria for evaluating resources for noting are consistent with these criteria?</p>
20.	<p>What is the value of the Noted tick to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers (e.g.RTOs) • The training system more broadly? •
21.	<p>What are your views on the 5 Quality Principles (Foundation, Scope, Structure & Design, Flexible Delivery and Access & Equity)?</p>
22.	<p>How could these be improved to link to quality training outcomes?</p>
23.	<p>Do you update Noted resources when changes occur to qualifications/units within the Training Package the resources support?</p>
24.	<p>Does the cost of Noting Process evaluations influence developers in the updating of their material and having it re-evaluated?</p>
	<p>Quality Assurance Consultants</p>
25.	<p>Is the role of the QA consultants clear? What are your thoughts on this?</p>
26.	<p>Is there a critical mass for the service? (i.e. are there enough QA consultants to meet demand in a timely fashion)</p>
27.	<p>What skills and attributes do you think a QA consultant should have? e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TP knowledge • Industry knowledge • Assessment expertise • TAA04 qualification (or equivalent) • Learning and assessment strategy development • Other
28.	<p>Are QA consultants easily contactable and accessible?</p>
29.	<p>What QA consultant(s) do you use and why?</p>
30.	<p>Do you get value for money by using QA consultants? (i.e. is the return on the investment worth it?)</p>
	<p>The future</p>
31.	<p>What improvements would you like to see made to the Noting Process?</p>
32.	<p>Should Noted training package support materials be promoted? How?</p>
33.	<p>Should the QA Consultant panel be updated regularly to allow new panel members to be added? If so, how frequently?</p>
34.	<p>Should professional development of QA consultants be mandated?</p>

ATTACHMENT B

35.	Should QA consultants be appointed for a specific period of time?
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RTOs

	Views on current process
1.	Do you develop training package support materials and use the Noting Process?
2.	Do you use the noting resources you have developed and/or those developed by others?
3.	How do you promote your Noted products?
4.	Are Noted products easily discoverable, accessible and distinguishable?
5.	What part of the overall Noting Process do you think works well?
6.	What doesn't work well?
7.	Do you believe that the timeframes for the Noting Process are appropriate?
8.	Do you have any views on the roles in the Noting Process played by the approving authorities (e.g. DEEWR, NQC)?
9.	Does the Noting Process support quality implementation of Training Packages?
10.	Have you had any feedback from users of support materials about value, quality and currency of them?
11.	Is the current process transparent and accountable?
	Value Add
12.	Are the Noted products being developed quality products?
13.	In what way do the Noted products support training package implementation?
14.	In what way do the Noted products support the AQTF?
15.	Are they consistent with the quality requirements of current training package endorsement processes?
16.	Is there a better training outcome where the Noted resources are utilised compared to when Noted resources are not used?
17.	What is the value of the Noted tick to consumers/learners?
18.	What are your views on the 5 Quality Principles (Foundation, Scope, Structure & Design and Access & Equity)?

ATTACHMENT B

19.	How could these be improved to link to quality training outcomes?
20.	Does the cost of Noting Process evaluations influence developers in the updating of their material and having it re-evaluated?
21.	What is your view about the currency and relevance of support materials?
22.	Have you ever engaged a QA consultant to evaluate an updated product?
	Quality Assurance Consultants
23.	Is the role of the QA consultants clear?
24.	Is there a critical mass for the service? (i.e. are there enough QA consultants to meet demand in a timely fashion)
25.	What do you think about the QA consultant panel appointment process?
26.	Are QA consultants easily contactable and accessible?
27.	What QA consultant(s) do you use and why?
28.	Do you get value for money by using QA consultants?
	The future
29.	What improvements would you like to see made to the Noting Process and link it to quality training delivery outcomes?
30.	Should 'Noted' training package support materials be actively marketed?
31.	What skills do you think it is important for a QA consultant to have?
32.	Should the process of appointment and tenure of QA consultants be changed? In what way?
33.	Should professional development of QA consultants be mandated?

ATTACHMENT B

State/Territory AQTF Auditors

	Views on current process
1.	What are your views on the current Noting Process for training package support materials?
2.	Are they easily discoverable, accessible and distinguishable?
3.	What part of the overall Noting Process do you think works well?
4.	What doesn't work well?
5.	Do you have any views on the roles in the Noting Process played by the approving authorities (e.g. DEEWR, NQC)?
6.	Does the Noting Process support quality implementation of Training Packages?
7.	Have you had any feedback from users of support materials about value, quality or currency of them?
8.	Is the current process transparent and accountable?
	Value Add
9.	Is there evidence that TP support materials are being used by RTOs?
10.	Have you seen any evidence that the use of Noted training package resources adds value to the training outcome?
11.	Are the Noted products being developed quality products?
12.	In what way do the Noted products support training package implementation?
13.	Are they consistent with the quality requirements of current training package endorsement processes?
14.	What is the value of the Noted tick to consumers?
15.	What are your views on the 5 Quality Principles?
16.	How could these be improved to link to quality training outcomes?
	Quality Assurance Consultants
17.	Is the role of the QA consultants clear?
18.	What do you think about the QA consultant panel appointment process?
	The future
19.	How does the Noting Process support AQTF standards?

ATTACHMENT B

20.	What improvements would you like to see made to the Noting Process and link it to quality training delivery outcomes?
21.	Should Noted training package support materials be actively marketed?
22.	What skills do you think it is important for a QA consultant to have?
23.	Should the process of appointment and tenure of QA consultants be changed? In what way?
24.	Should professional development of QA consultants be mandated?
25.	Should QA consultants be appointed for a specific period of time?

State and Territory Training Authorities

	Views on current process
1.	What are your views on the current Noting Process for training package support materials?
2.	Are they easily discoverable, accessible and distinguishable?
3.	What part of the overall Noting Process do you think works well?
4.	What doesn't work well?
5.	Is the current process transparent and accountable?
6.	Do you have any views on the roles in the Noting Process played by the approving authorities (e.g. DEEWR, NQC)?
7.	Have you received any feedback (on the process or the value of the materials) from your NQC member (if you have one), users of the materials, developers or auditors?
	Value Add
8.	Are the Noted products being developed quality products?
9.	Are they consistent with the quality requirements of current training package endorsement processes?
10.	What are your views on the 5 Quality Principles (Foundation, Scope, Structure & Design, Flexible Delivery and Access & Equity)?
11.	How could these be improved to link to quality training outcomes?
	Quality Assurance Consultants
12.	Do you understand the role of the QA consultants in the Noting Process? What are your thoughts on this?

ATTACHMENT B

13.	What do you think about the QA consultant panel appointment process?
	The future
14.	How does the Noting Process support AQTF standards?
15.	How does the Noting Process support quality implementation of Training Packages?
16.	What improvements would you like to see made to the Noting Process and link it to quality training delivery outcomes?
17.	Should 'Noted' training package support materials be actively marketed?
18.	What skills do you think it is important for a QA consultant to have?
19.	Should the process of appointment and tenure of QA consultants be changed? In what way?
20.	Should professional development of QA consultants be mandated?

ATTACHMENT B

WELL and Flexible Learning

	Views on current process
1.	Why do you develop training package support materials?
2.	Do you use the Noting Process for all of your training package support materials?
3.	How do you promote your Noted products?
4.	Are they easily discoverable, accessible and distinguishable?
5.	What part of the overall Noting Process do you think works well?
6.	What doesn't work well?
7.	Do you believe that the timeframes for the Noting Process are appropriate?
8.	Do you have any views on the roles in the Noting Process played by the approving authorities (e.g. DEEWR, NQC)?
9.	Is the current process transparent and accountable?
10.	Does the Noting Process support quality implementation of Training Packages?
11.	Have you had any feedback from users of support materials about value, quality and currency of them?
	Value Add
12.	Are the Noted products being developed quality products?
13.	In what way do the Noted products support training package implementation?
14.	Are they consistent with the quality requirements of current training package endorsement processes?
15.	What is the value of the Noted tick to consumers?
16.	What are your views on the 5 Quality Principles?
17.	How could these be improved to link to quality training outcomes?
18.	Does the cost of Noting Process evaluations influence developers in the updating of their material and having it re-evaluated?
	Quality Assurance Consultants
19.	Is the role of the QA consultants clear?

ATTACHMENT B

20.	Is there a critical mass for the service? (ie are there enough QA consultants to meet demand in a timely fashion)
21.	What do you think about the QA consultant panel appointment process?
22.	Are QA consultants easily contactable and accessible?
23.	What QA consultant(s) do you use and why?
24.	Do you get value for money by using QA consultants?
	The future
25.	How does the Noting Process support AQTF standards?
26.	What improvements would you like to see made to the Noting Process and link it to quality training delivery outcomes?
27.	Should 'Noted' training package support materials be actively marketed?
28.	What skills do you think it is important for a QA consultant to have?
29.	Should the process of appointment and tenure of QA consultants be changed? In what way?
30.	Should professional development of QA consultants be mandated?
31.	Should QA consultants be appointed for a specific period of time?