

Engaging the learner voice

This guide covers the kinds of things you can do to make the most of learner survey and employer survey results.

Respecting learner feedback

The Learner Questionnaire (LQ) invites learners to contribute to maintaining and improving the quality of your training and assessment. It is a simple, standardised, rigorously tested way of gathering feedback. AQTF 2007 asks that every year your RTO gathers learner feedback using the LQ.

But the LQ is an effective input to quality improvement only if enough learners believe it is worth completing. If too few complete it, your results will be unreliable. Only quality results can support quality improvement. What can you do to ensure that each year enough learners respond to the LQ to give you a reliable picture?

Learners are more likely to complete the LQ if they believe you take their feedback seriously. If they feel you respect their views, they are more likely to answer the two open-ended questions on the back of the LQ. Responses to these questions can be very helpful in interpreting other LQ results. The open-ended questions are:

- What were the best aspects of this training?
- What aspects of the training were most in need of improvement?

The most powerful way to let learners know you respect their feedback, that you take it seriously, is to tell them about:

- results that are positive
- results that concern you and what action you plan to take.

By reporting back to you maximise the chances your learners will complete the LQ next time. You maximise the chances they will tell others you are serious about quality and that when you ask for learner opinions you act on them. That's great word-of-mouth advertising that reaches key stakeholders involved in training operations. There are benefits for you and for your learners.

Use the LQ as a prompt for dialogue with your learners

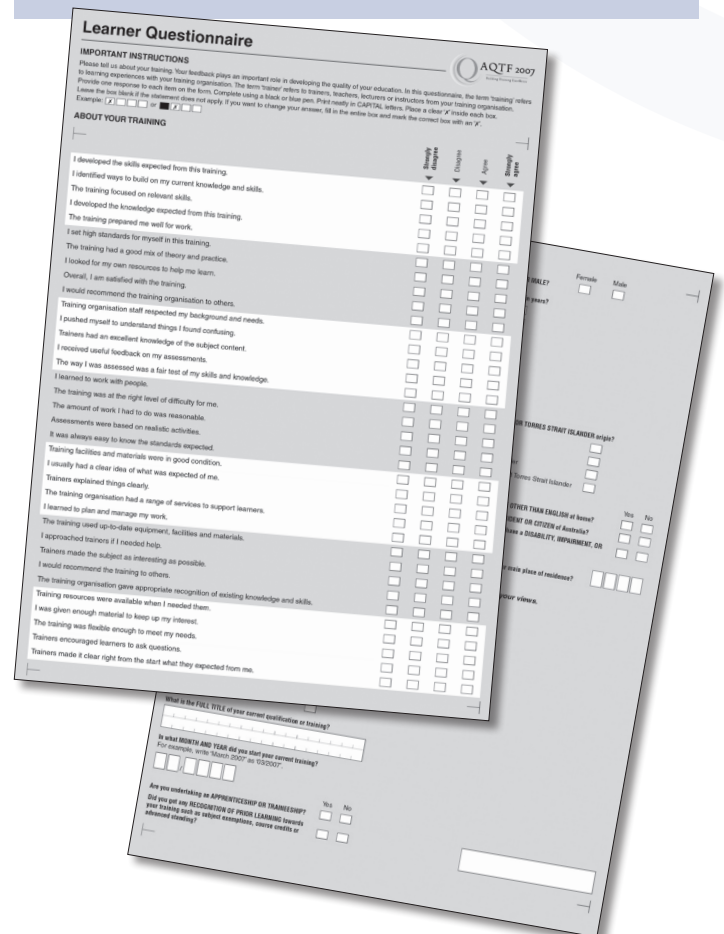
The learner survey will sometimes tell you where to look for a problem but it won't tell you exactly what the problem is.

Perhaps 65 per cent of your learners disagree or strongly disagree with the statement 'Assessments were based on realistic activities'. You would be rightly concerned, but not know which learners disagreed or not be sure which activities weren't hitting the mark. After you report this outcome to your learners you could ask for more information.

This kind of follow-up sends another powerful message that you are responsive to learner views. When you decide to make changes based on this additional information, let your learners know that the changes you make result from their feedback.

Things to do

1. Plan your annual learner survey cycle to include arrangements and timelines for:
 - collection
 - analysis and
 - reporting back to learners about results and planned action.
2. Decide how you will report back to learners. If most of your training and assessment is done on the job, perhaps you can provide feedback verbally or in writing. If your learners download learning materials from your website, perhaps you can put up a web page.
3. Include in your planned arrangements to follow-up on the results. Will you get more details about learner responses through discussion, a short survey, or by checking with employers?



The image shows a 'Learner Questionnaire' form from AQTF 2007. It includes 'IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS' at the top, followed by a section titled 'ABOUT YOUR TRAINING' with various statements and a Likert scale (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree). The statements cover topics like skill development, training focus, knowledge gained, preparation for work, standards, risk, resources, satisfaction, feedback, assessment, and support. At the bottom, there are open-ended questions: 'What is the FULL TITLE of your current qualification or training?' and 'In what MONTH AND YEAR did you start your current training?'. There is also a section for 'Are you undertaking an APPRENTICESHIP OR TRAINERSHIP?' and 'Did you not see RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) arrangements?'.

About this guide

This Continuous Improvement Guide forms part of the AQTF 2007 Quality Indicators Resources Package. This package contains information and materials for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) to use to collect, analyse and act on data about their training and assessment.

The Australian Quality Training Framework 2007 (AQTF 2007) Quality Indicators are part of the AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration for training organisations that wish to deliver nationally recognised vocational qualifications and competencies. Three Quality Indicators have been endorsed by the National Quality Council (NQC): Learner Engagement, Employer Satisfaction and Competency Completion. These are designed to help RTOs conduct evidence-based and outcomes-focused continuous quality improvement, and assist Registering Bodies assess the risk of an RTO's operations.

Visit www.training.com.au for further information on AQTF 2007 or the Quality Indicators Resources Package.