

## Review of Years 9-12 in Tasmania

### Tasmanian Secondary Colleges Registered Training Organisation Submission

The Tasmanian Secondary Colleges (TSC) Registered Training Organisation (RTO) was first registered in 2006. The main goal of the TSC RTO is to provide pathways into industry for young Tasmanians by providing a broad and appropriate range of Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) programs for the 15 – 19 year old cohort. The organisation manages the training and assessment for the VET in Schools programs at 14 sites. This includes 8 public Senior Secondary Colleges; Rosny College, Hobart College, Elizabeth College, Claremont College, Newstead College, Launceston College, Don College and Hellyer College and 6 year 11/12 Regional High Schools; Scottsdale High School, Lilydale District School, St Helens District School, Sorell High School, Sheffield District High School and the Jordon River Learning Federation. In 2017 we will expand this to include 3 more Regional High Schools; Ulverstone High School, Rokeby High School and Burnie High School. In addition the program offerings at some sites will be increased.

The TSC RTO makes a significant contribution to the VET sector in Tasmania and to the pathways for young Tasmanians. We collaboratively work with Colleges and High Schools to deliver a large number of high quality, relevant and industry focused VET programs that produce outstanding student outcomes. By delivering training and assessment in 71 qualifications to a range of industries across Tasmania we nurture the future workforce for many Tasmanian businesses. We are an integral part of the Tasmanian Education Sector and consequently, an important contributor to the Tasmanian economy and the future of Tasmania. It is the priority of the TSC RTO to have all students engaged in positive, productive and supported learning experiences, who are encouraged towards successful transition into further education, training and employment. This successful transition is our core business, it is essential and a vital measure of our success.

The eight College Principals (one of whom is the Chief Executive Officer) and three regionally based Executive Officers (2.0 FTE) form the Board of Management of the TSC RTO. At each site there is a Quality Manger who facilitates the implementation of the TSC RTO Quality Management System and supports the site's VET Coordinators, who are responsible for the training and assessment of the qualifications. To maintain the high level of compliance, the TSC RTO policies and processes developed to meet the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*, are regularly monitored by a structured internal audit process.

The RTO's current scope of registration includes 71 qualifications and 8 units of competence, (*refer attachment 1*) offering 183 VET programs state-wide. These are delivered by 130 VET Coordinators across the 14 sites to 2021 students. These courses range from Certificate I to IV level, with the majority being at Certificate II level. Within the TSC RTO network of Colleges and High Schools, VET is a highly sought after and regarded pathway for a large cohort of students, providing direct pathways into higher certificate qualifications and employment. To ensure students are retained at years 11 or 12, and to provide the appropriate industry pathways, some certificate III and IV options are made available. The TSC RTO uniquely and capably provides the opportunity for VET to be delivered successfully across a number of public education sites, making VET an essential part of public education in Tasmania. Without the TSC RTO, year 11 and 12 students in Tasmania would simply not gain the opportunity to attain skills and knowledge that leads to nationally recognised qualifications.

The existence of the TSC RTO is beneficial for so many stakeholders; students, parents, industry and the community. Unfortunately, VET is not an option for many private education providers and therefore, many students will opt to move to the colleges for their senior secondary years because they want to undertake a VET course.

The TSC RTO is a low cost operation. Our low risk status as a RTO was confirmed at the time of the renewal of registration by ASQA in February 2016, when a 7 year renewal period was granted. The previous external audit carried out in 2010 indicated that since its inception the *“TSC RTO has an exemplary record in the provision of education and training of the highest quality for all Tasmanians”* and has been found fully compliant with no findings at each audit and maintained a low risk status.

For a significant number of students not focussed on an ATAR for university entrance, VET in Schools programs provide skills and knowledge for pathways into industry. Recently released 2015 data from NCVER indicated that Tasmania had 4,800 fifteen to nineteen year old VET in School students, either in school based apprenticeships and traineeships or VET in Schools programs. In 2015 the TSC RTO managed 137 trainers and assessors, with 66 qualifications and 20 units of competency on scope. Of the 1916 students who were enrolled in the TSC RTO in 2015, 57% of students attained a full certificate and a further 32% attained a part qualification (statement of attainment). (*refer attachment 2*)

VET allows many opportunities for young Tasmanians to engage in authentic, applied learning. The majority of our VET programs offer an additional work placement component. This element has a threefold advantage; students experience real work, employers have the opportunity to assess the student as a potential employee and VET coordinators are able to validate assessment. Many businesses show confidence in the quality of our training; with employers regularly contacting our sites requesting suitable nominees from our VET programs to fill vacancies. On a regular basis, students are offered traineeships/apprenticeships/employment as a direct result of work placements and trainers and assessors are often contacted directly requesting suitable applicants for vacant positions.

Industry liaison is an ongoing role for all trainers and assessors. This is evidenced throughout the year during workplace visits, participation in teacher in industry, guest speakers, mentoring, training and assessment reviews, industry validation, and industry management committee meetings. Strong engagement with community partners is pivotal to the success of the quality and relevance of VET programs offered through the TSC RTO. All VET Coordinators maintain strong connections with industry and each Coordinator is responsible for the development of a Training and Assessment Strategy (TAAS) for each qualification. This document is then endorsed by a minimum of two industry representatives, indicating their confirmation that the training and assessment provided in the qualification best meets the needs of industry and the trainees. More than 350 employers around the state have endorsed TAASs this year with over 1000 workplaces registered and partnering with the TSC RTO to provide authentic learning opportunities for students. Regular professional learning is provided to all TSC RTO trainer and assessors to ensure quality programs are offered and managed. In addition, all coordinators are required to maintain their vocational competency and currency.

The key stakeholders of employers and learners are surveyed annually in line with the quality indicator requirements, with many sites obtaining further feedback via student surveys throughout the training

period. Rating scale results for all categories from employers and learners in 2015 Quality Indicator AQIS benchmark report were 70 or higher. Specifically, survey results indicate 77% of learners were satisfied with their learning experience and 78% of employers were satisfied with the TSC RTO. (*refer attachment 3*) This result reflects a similar pattern achieved since the required commencement of the Quality Indicator surveys.

Students at all sites successfully study VET in Schools programs and TASC (Tasmanian Assessment Standards and Certification) subjects simultaneously to achieve the Tasmanian Certificate of Education. The TCE points attained from VET qualifications are varied, however the RTO expectation is that the minimum points for each program must reflect the timetabled hours assigned to the VET program at the site. A certificate II qualification run over 300 hours or 2 lines on a timetable will gain a minimum of 30 TCE points. A certificate III timetabled over 600 hours or 4 lines will gain a minimum of 60 TCE points. (Unlike TASC courses, students who do not successfully completed a course may still receive some units in a statement of attainment and points towards their TCE). TASC accredited courses such as English Applied, Workplace Mathematics and Work Readiness are recommended to students in addition to VET to best prepare them for a vocational pathway. All VET courses have a strong focus on teaching the students important and essential employability skills which are acknowledged and recognised through the solid links with industry partners. The range of VET courses on offer are numerous and varied, catering for a diverse range of students. Eight Industry Reference Committees (IRCs) are represented in the qualifications delivered by the TSC RTO. Courses such as the Certificate 1 in Access for Vocational Pathways and Certificate 1 in Agrifoods provide important entry level qualifications for many students who are exploring a meaningful VET pathway. Higher level qualifications such as Certificate III in Tourism, Certificate IV in Screen and Media and Certificate III in Business provide a more defined pathway for year 12 students who plan to continue in these industry areas post year 12. The implementation of the Foundation Skills Training Package in 2014 has rectified a gap in offerings to our migrant and humanitarian entrant learners giving them the skills required for them to be employed in Australia. Essential foundation skills and work readiness skills in numeracy, literacy, ICT and communication are an integral part of VET to prepare students for the world of work. A significant strength of the VET in Schools programs offered at the College and High School sites of the TSC RTO is that the coordinators of VET programs are also the pastoral care personnel for the students. In the student centred educational model implemented they work closely with students to provide for their academic and career pathway aspirations as well as emotional and social development in a supportive environment.

There is no doubt that the 163 VET programs delivered under the TSC RTO, to approximately 20% of all students in senior secondary public education, are essential to the success of young Tasmanians. VET programs across the 14 sites provide many benefits to school communities. They encourage strong collaboration and links with the local community by integrating student learning into the community and in turn, provide meaningful outcomes for industry and students.