Guidelines

for the Registration of Awarding Bodies and the Accreditation of Senior Secondary and Foundation Secondary Courses



Published by the   
Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority

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These Guidelines were approved by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority Board on 7 April 2022.

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Introduction

Purpose

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) has developed guidelines for the accreditation of senior secondary courses and foundation secondary courses to ensure that the certification of learning in the senior years of schooling provides high-quality pathways for Victorian students to post-secondary education, training and work.

As a government accreditation authority, the VRQA is responsible for the accreditation of courses and registration of qualifications under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (the Act)*.* This includes ensuring courses meet national standards and quality indicators to protect the integrity of education and qualifications in Victoria, facilitate national consistency and ensure the quality of secondary school education.

Expectations of Year 11 and 12 school education

*The senior years of schooling are a critical transition point for young people – emotionally, socially and educationally. These years should provide all students with the high-quality, relevant and engaging education and support necessary to complete their secondary school education. The senior years of schooling should provide all students with high quality advice, support and experiences to make informed choices about their future and smooth the initial transition to further education, training or meaningful employment.*

Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (December 2019)

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) provides a nationally consistent framework for the design of regulated education and training qualifications. A senior secondary qualification is designated under the AQF as a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education.

In Victoria, a course undertaken by students in Years 11 and 12 may also be a foundation secondary course that leads to the award of a foundation secondary qualification. A foundation secondary qualification is not an accredited qualification that is recognised under the AQF.

Both senior secondary courses and foundation secondary courses must meet the requirements in Part 4.4 of the Act.

*Senior secondary education* [should] *truly prepare all Victorian students to become active and informed citizens, successful learners and confident and creative individuals capable of making successful transitions to further study, training and ultimately secure employment.*

Review into vocational and applied learning pathways in senior secondary schooling – Final report (2020)

The VRQA is responsible for accrediting and registering all courses and qualifications on the State Register.

An awarding body is an organisation that is registered by the VRQA to award, confer or issue a registered senior secondary qualification or a registered foundation secondary qualification.

These Guidelines outline the requirements and processes for the registration of awarding bodies, the accreditation of their courses, and the registration of their qualifications.

Registration of awarding bodies

A person or body must be registered by the VRQA to award or issue an accredited senior secondary qualification or a foundation secondary qualification in Victoria. Registration of an organisation will be undertaken by the VRQA Board or authorised delegate, in accordance with the procedures set out in *Registration and accreditation processes* in these Guidelines. The VRQA will not register an awarding body unless it is satisfied that the

organisation meets the prescribed minimum standards for registration in the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (ETR Regulations), including standards relating to:

* quality assurance
* access and equality of opportunity
* safeguarding the integrity of the qualification
* assessment frameworks, policies, criteria and standards
* student records
* governance and probity
* policies and procedures
* investigations.

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) and the International Baccalaureate (IB) are currently registered awarding bodies in Victoria.

A school or other person or body may be registered by the VRQA to provide an accredited senior secondary or foundation secondary course. The provider may not, however, award or issue the registered qualification. A registered provider must also be authorised by the owner of the qualification or course and comply with the conditions relating to that authorisation. Contact the VCAA and/or the IB for their respective authorisation requirements.

Accreditation of senior secondary and foundation secondary courses

Under the Act, courses pertaining to Years 11 and 12 include an accredited senior secondary course or an accredited foundation secondary course.

These Guidelines cover matters relating to senior secondary courses and foundation secondary courses. An accredited senior secondary course is a course leading to the issue of a senior secondary qualification. An accredited foundation secondary course is a course leading to a foundation secondary qualification.

In assessing an application for accreditation of a senior secondary or foundation secondary course, the VRQA will determine whether the course meets the requirements in Part 4.4 of the Act and these Guidelines. Senior secondary courses will also be assessed against the AQF standards, policies and specifications for a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education.

An application for accreditation may be assessed by a panel composed of nominees with appropriate expertise in senior secondary and foundation secondary education from key stakeholders in education and training. For example, the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd, the Department of Education and Training, Independent Schools Victoria, and registered senior secondary providers such as schools, TAFE institutes and community providers. The VRQA will nominate the chair of the accreditation panel.

Under the Act, a course also means a subject or other part of a program, unit of competence or module of study or training leading to the award or issue of a particular qualification. Matters relating to the accreditation of foundation or senior secondary subjects are not included in these Guidelines. Contact the VRQA for advice regarding the application process for accreditation of subjects under Part 4.4 of the Act.

Marketing and public statements

An applicant for registration as an awarding body or accreditation of a course must refrain from making any public statement or advertisement implying that a senior secondary or foundation secondary course is accredited, or that the applicant is registered, to award, confer or issue the qualification before accreditation or registration is formally granted. There are penalties for conferring or proposing to award a qualification before the qualification is registered on the State Register.

A registered awarding body must not claim that a senior secondary or foundation secondary course accredited by the VRQA under the Act is equivalent to an AQF Senior Secondary Certificate of Education unless the VRQA has provided a written report under Part 4.4.1 of the Act which confirms that the content and educational standard of the course is consistent with the AQF specification.

Issuance of accredited senior secondary or foundation secondary qualifications

The registered awarding body must continue to meet the minimum standards for registration to award, confer or issue a registered senior secondary or foundation secondary qualification. AQF qualifications must be clearly distinguishable from non-AQF qualifications and correctly identified in marketing and certification documentation, including the testamur and statement of results.

Fees

The fees associated with the registration of an awarding body and accreditation and registration of courses are determined by Ministerial Order. The current fees are published on the VRQA website at:

* [www.vrqa.vic.gov.au](http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au)

Applicants should confirm the relevant fees with the VRQA prior to lodging the application.

Duration of registration and accreditation

After approval, the awarding body and its registered senior secondary or foundation secondary qualification may be registered for a period of up to 5 years. The awarding body and its registered qualification and period of registration are recorded on the State Register. The State Register is publicly available on the VRQA website.

Registration and accreditation processes

Timeline

As a rule, applicants should allow for at least 8 months between submission of a complete and satisfactory application to the VRQA and a decision being made.

The complexity of the application, as well as requests for additional information and the time taken to provide any required additional or revised information, may result in extension of the assessment process and therefore the timeframe.

Registration and accreditation

Depending on the nature of the accreditation being sought, possible approaches include the following.

* Registration and accreditation may be undertaken simultaneously through submission of both an application for registration as an awarding body and accreditation of a course and registration of a qualification.
* Course accreditation and qualification registration may be undertaken when an organisation is already registered as an awarding body and is seeking accreditation of a new course or an amendment to an existing course. If the application is for accreditation of a new course, the awarding body will then need to apply for registration to award the registered qualification.
* Registration may be undertaken when a new or existing body wishes to be registered to award an existing senior secondary or foundation secondary qualification.
* An organisation may wish to apply for registration as an awarding body, and then subsequently apply for accreditation of a course and registration of a qualification.

Steps in the process

Overview

Approval pathways for both initial registration as an awarding body and accreditation of courses are similar (see Figure 1). A more detailed description follows for each of the steps listed in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Awarding body:

* application fee
* assessment fee

Senior secondary course or foundation   
secondary course:

* application fee
* assessment fee

The VRQA may request additional information. If the application is substantially deficient it may be rejected or withdrawn at this stage.

An additional fee may apply for a qualification developed outside Victoria or Australia that requires travel.

Panel Chair: VRQA Board member or other person with appropriate expertise.

Applicants are strongly advised to meet   
with the VRQA prior to submission of   
the application to become familiar with the Guidelines and all the documentation required.

**Not accredited/ not registered**

**Application withdrawn or rejected**

Accredited/registered   
(with or without conditions)

Application prepared and submitted with fees

Preliminary review undertaken:

* are all requirements addressed?
* is there sufficient evidence?

Initial discussion with the  
VRQA regarding proposal

Appointment of registration/ accreditation panel/experts

Panel assesses application   
and prepares report

Applicant receives draft report for comment and rectification

Report and recommendation forwarded to VRQA delegate for decision

Initial contact with VRQA

The applicant should become familiar with the requirements for accreditation of courses in Part 4.4 of the Act, these Guidelines, the AQF (for senior secondary courses) and all documentation associated with the application process. The applicant should then contact the VRQA to discuss the proposed course and to advise the VRQA of its intention to seek registration.

An applicant for registration as an awarding body should become familiar with the minimum standards for registration to award, confer or issue a registered senior or foundation secondary qualification in Schedule 9 of the ETR Regulations.

Application preparation and submission

An application for registration as an awarding body and accreditation of a senior secondary or foundation secondary course involves the preparation of a detailed application supported by documentary evidence. The application must address in full the prescribed minimum standards for registration as an awarding body and/or the standards for accreditation of courses in Part 4.4 as well as in these Guidelines.

The VRQA requires evidence that each requirement in Part 4.4 and all requirements in these Guidelines and/or the minimum standards for awarding bodies are met through documentation provided by the applicant. It is also likely that direct verification will be required during a site visit and/or interviews as part of the assessment process. It is expected that much of this information will be readily available within an organisation – for example, from its annual reports, handbooks, manuals and documented technical procedures.

The applicant must present the application and supporting evidence electronically to the VRQA, together with the required fees. The VRQA will acknowledge receipt of the application in writing within 14 days.

Information about the application will remain confidential and will not be released by the VRQA without the agreement of the applicant, unless misleading public statements are made by the applicant as described in *Marketing and public statements* in these Guidelines, or the VRQA is required by law to release information.

Preliminary review

The VRQA undertakes a preliminary review of the application to determine whether the application is complete and accurate. The review considers whether all requirements have been fully addressed and whether there is sufficient evidence for the application to proceed to an assessment by the accreditation panel. If additional information is requested, no further action is taken until the applicant responds by providing the information. The application is considered withdrawn if the applicant does not provide the information within 28 days of the request.

The preliminary review may indicate that the application is not complete and cannot proceed to assessment by the accreditation panel. In such circumstances, the applicant will receive written advice to this effect and the registration and accreditation assessment fees will be refunded.

Appointment of accreditation panel

An accreditation panel is appointed to evaluate the application against the relevant requirements and to recommend to the VRQA delegate whether the course should be accredited.

The panel is chaired by a VRQA Board member or person with appropriate expertise and experience and comprises around 3 to 5 representatives with relevant expertise nominated by key stakeholders. The panel may also include further subject matter experts. The representatives and stakeholders are selected according to the nature of the course under consideration.

The VRQA may also use the panel process to assess an application for initial registration as an awarding body. It may also decide to engage an appropriately qualified accreditation and qualifications expert to assess applications for re-registration as an awarding body.

Panel deliberations

The panel meets to discuss the application in detail and determine whether any further information or issues need to be followed up with the applicant.

Meetings of the panel may be conducted face-to-face and/or via teleconference or videoconference. The panel may wish to arrange a site visit, the timing and format of which will be explained to the applicant. The panel may also request to meet with representatives of the applicant.

Comments made by panel members during a site visit do not constitute the panel’s final assessment or the decision of the VRQA delegate.

If at any stage in the process the panel considers that the application clearly does not meet the required standards and requirements for accreditation, the panel has the discretion to finalise its deliberations and prepare its report to the VRQA.

If the panel determines that additional expertise is needed, it may seek advice outside its membership. Details of the sources of this external advice will be included in the panel’s report.

**Opportunity to provide further evidence**

At its penultimate meeting, the panel formulates its assessment of the application and prepares a written report.

The applicant is provided with a copy of the report and is afforded an opportunity to provide any additional evidence or information to demonstrate that the course meets the requirements for accreditation.

An applicant typically has up to 28 days to make any submission.

An application may be withdrawn at any stage in the process. However, the application fees for registration as an awarding body and for accreditation of a course and registration of a qualification are non-refundable at this point in the process.

Applicants will be afforded one opportunity to provide the additional evidence requested. If a submission is not received within 28 days, the application will be considered as withdrawn.

Panel report and applicant’s response

At its final meeting, the panel formulates its final assessment of the application having regard to any additional evidence provided by the application. A final written report of the panel’s findings is prepared.

The applicant is provided with a copy of the report and is invited to make any corrections of fact only. The response must be received by the VRQA within 7 days of the date of receipt of the report. The response may not include new material for assessment.

VRQA decision

The final report will then be provided to the VRQA delegate and contain a recommendation as to whether the course should be accredited. After considering the report and the applicant’s comments, the VRQA delegate will make a decision on the application. Depending on the nature of the application, the decision may be to:

* accredit the senior secondary or foundation secondary course with or without conditions for up to 5 years
* register an awarding body with or without limitations or restrictions for up to 5 years
* register an organisation as the awarding body for a qualification
* approve the amendment to an existing accredited course
* refuse to do any of the above.

The applicant will be notified in writing of the VRQA’s decision.

Appeal

A person whose interests are affected by a decision of the VRQA not to grant an accreditation or registration, or to suspend or cancel accreditation or registration, may apply to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) for review of the decision. An application for review must be made within 28 days after the day on which the decision is made. Part 4.8 of the Act provides details on appeals to VCAT.

Post-registration and accreditation requirements

Terms of registration

Registration as an awarding body will be for a period not exceeding 5 years. It is a condition of registration that an awarding body continues to meet the prescribed minimum standards to award, confer or issue a qualification. This includes complying with any conditions on the registration or accreditation.

The VRQA must investigate complaints from a member of the public alleging any breach of an obligation as a registered awarding body under Part 4.3 of the Act. Before proceeding to an investigation, the VRQA must be satisfied that the complainant has first raised the complaint with the registered awarding body. The VRQA complaints investigation and handling procedures are published on the website at:

* www.vrqa.vic.gov.au

An awarding body must have procedures in place to enable the VRQA to conduct an audit on the operations of the organisation in relation to the prescribed minimum standards.

The VRQA may suspend or cancel registration if it is satisfied that the awarding body does not comply with the prescribed minimum standards and other requirements under section 4.3.11 of the Act.

The minimum standards require an awarding body to monitor patterns of student participation and completion rates, and the quality of outcomes of students in the registered qualification. An awarding body must undertake an annual analysis (that is made publicly available) of student participation and completion rates and outcomes. An awarding body is also required to advise registered providers and the VRQA annually about patterns of participation and quality of outcomes.

Approval of registered providers

A person, body or school that provides, or proposes to provide, an accredited senior secondary or foundation secondary course must be authorised by the owner (the awarding body).

It is an offence under the Act for a person, body or school to provide an accredited course leading to a senior secondary qualification or foundation secondary qualification registered on the State Register unless that person, body or school is registered on the State Register as being authorised to provide the course. A registered awarding body must ensure that a person, body or school providing or proposing to provide an accredited course is registered by the VRQA. The VRQA will work with an awarding body to register providers.

Changes during registration to the awarding body and/or its qualifications and courses

Changes to an organisation or its qualifications may affect the registration status of the organisation or accreditation of the course and registration of the qualification. Significant changes may have the potential to affect the organisation’s capacity to meet the standards and may affect the integrity or accreditation status of the registered qualification.

The awarding body should seek advice from the VRQA as early as possible to confirm the extent of the changes to be made, and the process to be followed.

Examples of major changes to an awarding body are:

* a merger with another body
* changes to the status of the legal entity
* a contract with another body or person to deliver a significant portion of services
* significant organisational changes that may have a major impact on governance and quality assurance
* a significant deterioration in financial position.

Examples of major changes to an accredited course or registered qualification are:

* withdrawal of senior secondary or foundation secondary course owner’s approval/recognition arrangements
* changes to the educational standards of the course which lead to the qualification
* changes to the assessment processes for courses to be used to determine whether students have achieved the learning outcomes
* significant substitution of new courses comprising more than 25% of the total number of courses in the qualification
* changes to the requirements for graduation.

The following diagram may assist consideration of the extent of the changes proposed to an accredited course and registered qualification and the type of application that may need to be made to the VRQA.

Amending an accredited senior secondary or foundation secondary course

When does a proposed change materially affect the integrity of an accredited course?

The process of re-registration and re-accreditation

An awarding body is registered for a period of up to 5 years. A senior secondary or foundation secondary course is also accredited, and the qualification registered, for a period of up to 5 years. After this period, registration and accreditation must be renewed.

Applications for re-registration and re-accreditation must be submitted to the VRQA at least 8 months before registration expires.

The process and timeline for re-registration and re-accreditation are similar to those outlined above; however, information in the public domain, other regulatory requirements and the applicant’s track record are taken into account in the assessment process.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Minor change Re-accreditation/New course** | | | | |
| New subjects proposed that are consistent with the accredited course design rules. | New subjects proposed with minor changes to the accredited course design rules. | New subjects proposed with major changes to the accredited course design rules. | Substitution of new subjects comprising more than 25% of the qualification (major content substitution).  Changes to the accredited course design rules.  Changes to the volume of learning and/or course duration.  Changes to the AQF level of learning/educational standards.  Changes to the aims, learning outcomes and assessment procedures. | New stream/field of education leading to different course outcomes.  Changes to the requirements for the award of the registered qualification.  Changes to the registered qualification title.  Changes to the mode – e.g. entirely online or work-based learning leading to different graduate capabilities.  Changes to the registered qualification outcomes – i.e. educational/employment for students and/or the community. |

Standards for registration and accreditation

This section provides details of the requirements that must be met for:

* registration of an awarding body
* accreditation of a senior secondary or a foundation secondary course.

The following minimum standards are prescribed in Schedule 9, regulation 87, of the ETR Regulations.

Minimum standards for registration as an awarding body

The application must include evidence that the following standards for registration to award, confer or issue a registered senior secondary or a registered foundation secondary qualification have been met.

Definitions

In this schedule:

* **registered provider** in relation to an accredited senior secondary or foundation secondary course means a person, body or school registered by the VRQA (the Authority) under Division 3 of Part 4.3 of the Act to provide the course
* **awarding body** means a person or body that proposes to award, confer or issue a registered senior secondary qualification or a registered foundation secondary qualification.

Quality assurance

The application for registration as an awarding body must include evidence that the body can:

* ensure that it has processes in place to develop courses designed to be normally undertaken in the school years 11 and 12 that are accredited by the Authority under Part 4.4 of the Act
* have arrangements in place to ensure access and equality of opportunity to, while safeguarding the integrity of, the qualification
* ensure that the registered qualification is awarded, conferred or issued in an accurate and timely manner
* have policies, criteria and standards for the curriculum and assessments of the registered qualification
* oversee the delivery of the conduct of assessments for the registered qualification
* have quality assurance, review and evaluation processes in place that enable:
* annual evaluation of delivery of the course
* proper evaluation of the curriculum and assessments
* have assessment frameworks, policies, criteria; and standards in relation to teaching, learning and assessment that are valid, reliable and fair.

Student records

The application for registration as an awarding body must include evidence that the body can:

* ensure that records of student enrolment, certification and assessment are maintained by it or by the registered provider of the accredited senior secondary or foundation secondary course; and that a copy of the record of student assessment is provided to the student on request or to a person authorised by the student to receive it
* have procedures in place to maintain and provide student records and results to the Authority upon request
* monitor patterns of student participation and completion rates, and the quality of outcomes of students in the registered senior secondary or foundation secondary qualification
* undertake an annual analysis (made publicly available) of student participation and completion rates and outcomes
* advise registered providers of the accredited senior secondary or foundation secondary course and the Authority annually about patterns of participation and quality of outcomes.

Governance and probity

The application for registration as an awarding body must include evidence of the following:

* The governance and management of an awarding body must be structured to enable the body to effectively:
  + develop and review courses and curriculum
  + manage assessment processes
  + develop accurate systems for the management of student records.

Policies and procedures

The application for registration as an awarding body must include evidence that suitable procedures are in place to:

* enable the body to respond to and supply any information requested by the Authority in regard to matters listed in section 4.3.11(2) of the Act
* enable the body to comply with any guidelines issued by the Authority under section 4.3.11(3) of the Act.

Investigations

The application for registration as an awarding body must include evidence that the body can:

* conduct investigations and hearings and, if necessary, amend or cancel assessments
* have arrangements in place to enable the Authority to conduct an audit in relation to the minimum standards.

Owner requirements

If the awarding body is not the owner of the registered qualification, the awarding body must satisfy the Authority that it will comply with all the requirements of the owner of the qualification.

Prescribed minimum standards for accreditation of senior secondary or foundation secondary courses

An application for registration of a senior secondary or a foundation secondary course must meet the requirements of section 4.4.2 of the Act.

The VRQA may accredit a course or part of a course if it is satisfied:

* the following matters are appropriate to the qualification (if any) to which the course or part of the course leads:
* the aims and learning outcomes of the course or part of the course
* in the case of a course other than a higher education course, the scope of the studies of the course or part of the course
* the assessment processes for the course or part of the course to be used to determine whether a student has achieved the learning outcomes of the course or part of the course
* the course or part of the course are likely to achieve the specified purposes of the course
* the contents and standards of the course or part of the course are consistent with any relevant national standards about the principles, processes or other matters to be applied in accrediting the course or part of the course.

**A portfolio of evidence must be submitted with the application to demonstrate the course meets the above requirements and the standards identified below which are applicable to a senior secondary or a foundation secondary course.**

Identified need and purpose

A senior secondary or a foundation secondary course must:

* have a demonstrated need and purpose
* identify and justify duplication of learning outcomes with existing qualifications on the State Register
* have community, industry and/or stakeholder support, and be likely to gain broad public endorsement
* include aims and learning outcomes of the course appropriate to the qualification to which the course leads
* have long-term credibility and integrity with demonstrated linkages to high-quality pathways to further education, training and work.

Structure and coherence

A senior secondary or a foundation secondary course must:

* have a coherent rationale for the qualification design, requirements for the award of the qualification, assessment processes and subjects or studies to be offered
* have a scope and curriculum that are appropriate for a course usually undertaken by students in Years 11 and 12 (foundation secondary course)
* have a scope and curriculum that are appropriate for a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education under the AQF (senior secondary course)
* have content and standards that are consistent with any relevant national standards about the principles, processes or other matters to be applied in accrediting the course
* justify the contribution an individual subject or study makes to a student’s achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the course and attainment of the qualification
* have explicit qualification design rules, such as entry requirements, credit arrangements and completion timeframes (foundation secondary course) and (for a senior secondary course) these must be consistent with the AQF.

Values and capabilities for personal or civic life

A senior secondary or a foundation secondary course must:

* enable participation and promote achievement regardless of race, gender or religion
* promote and support the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to the rule of law, and support the Australian Education Ministers’ commitment to provide an education in the senior years of schooling that equips young people with the skills, knowledge, values and capabilities to succeed in employment, personal and civic life
* include knowledge, skills and capabilities to enable students to become active and informed members of the community
* provide access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and learnings where appropriate.

Rigour

A senior secondary or a foundation secondary course must:

* be comparable with international standards for senior years education (foundation secondary course)
* be comparable with international standards for senior secondary education (senior secondary course)
* include studies or subjects that are normally undertaken, or designed to be undertaken in Year 11 or 12 of the school years
* demonstrate an appropriate complexity and volume of learning and a duration commensurate with the senior years of schooling (foundation secondary course)
* demonstrate a complexity and appropriate volume of learning and a duration commensurate with the senior secondary certificate specifications under the AQF (senior secondary course)
* meet the needs of employers and further education and training sectors
* establish depth of knowledge, understanding and skill development consistent with the aims and learning outcomes of the course and the senior years of schooling.

Individual learning needs

A senior secondary or a foundation secondary course must:

* require a reasonable workload on the part of students
* adopt approaches to learning that accommodate personal learning styles, gender, culture, physical disability and location
* have the capacity to be delivered using a variety of contexts and in a range of settings
* support learners in becoming confident and creative individuals.

Student assessment

A senior secondary or a foundation secondary course must:

* identify explicit expectations for all students
* identify the specific knowledge, skills and capabilities to be demonstrated by students
* ensure fair, valid and reliable results
* provide for consistent results over time
* ensure that assessment and results are quality assured
* make explicit the basis for the award of the qualification
* ensure the assessment processes for the course used to determine whether a student has achieved the learning outcomes are appropriate for the qualification.

Appendix

Glossary

**Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration:** the declaration made by all Australian Education Ministers setting out their vision for education in Australia and commitment to improving educational outcomes for young Australians.

**Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF):** the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework.

**Awarding body:** a person or body that proposes to award, confer or issue a registered qualification.

**Certification documentation:** the set of official documents issued by the awarding body to confirm that an individual has completed a program of learning and been awarded the qualification.

**Foundation secondary course: a course pertaining to Year 11 or 12 (other than a senior secondary course) leading to a foundation secondary qualification.**

**Foundation secondary qualification: qualifications described under level 1 in the AQF.**

**Registered provider:** a person, body or school providing, or proposing to provide, an accredited senior secondary or an accredited foundation secondary course.

**Senior secondary course:** a course normally undertaken in Year 11 or 12 of the school years leading to a senior secondary qualification. It includes a subject or other part of a program, unit of competence or module of study or training leading to a particular qualification.

**Senior secondary qualification:** qualifications described under the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education in the AQF.