

# Engaging a NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant



## **What is a NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant?**

---

A NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant is an auditor under contract to NARA who also provides consultancy services to training organisations registered or seeking registration with NARA. Some NARA-endorsed Quality Consultants also offer consultancy services to non-NARA RTOs and other VET sector stakeholders, which are outside their contractual relationship with NARA. A list of NARA-endorsed Quality Consultants is available on [NARA's website](#).

## **When am I required to use a NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant?**

---

Your organisation must engage a NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant in the following circumstances:

- if you are seeking registration as a training organisation (initial registration) or initial CRICOS approval
- prior to re-registration (AQTF/CRICOS)
- if you are applying for major changes to scope of registration (AQTF/CRICOS)

## **Are there any exceptions to this requirement?**

---

If you are an existing RTO seeking to add qualifications or units of competence from Training Packages with which you already have experience, your organisation will not be required to engage a NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant prior to audit.

## **Why am I required to use a NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant?**

---

Your organisation is required to use a NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant to ensure that you are fully prepared for audit by an independent NARA auditor. NARA believes that engagement of a Quality Consultant prior to audit will reduce the regulatory burden on your training organisation. The consultants will provide your organisation with compliance-related advice, and, if necessary, assist you to adjust systems or processes in line with the *AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for RTOs* prior to being audited.

NARA expects that engagement of a Quality Consultant will reduce the number of non-compliances identified at audit, reduce post-audit rectification requirements for your RTO and assist your continuous improvement.

## **I have my own relationship with a consultant. Can I still use them if they are not endorsed by NARA?**

---

Yes. NARA expects that some training organisations will continue their existing relationships with consultants. You are still required to use a NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant as outlined above to check your RTO's readiness for audit. If your existing consultant has helped you prepare thoroughly for audit then the NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant's role should be minimal.

## **Which NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant do I choose?**

---

Some NARA-endorsed Quality Consultants have experience with specific training packages, so you may wish to choose a consultant particularly familiar with your RTO's industry areas. You may wish to contact several NARA-endorsed Quality Consultants to discuss your training organisation's needs, as well as the consultant's services and costs, before you choose a consultant.

## **What will a NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant do, how long will it take and what will it cost?**

---

In choosing a NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant, you should:

- discuss the scope of their consultancy role, including your RTO's application and any relevant background details
- agree on a timeline for completing the consultancy tasks, and
- discuss and agree to meet the consultant's fees.

Please note that NARA has no role in individual arrangements between your RTO and the NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant. Once the Quality Consultant is confident that the applicant is ready for audit, he/she will provide formal confirmation of this to the relevant NARA Client Relationship Manager, who will then assign an independent Lead Auditor to undertake an audit of your RTO.

## **How does NARA ensure the quality of advice provided by NARA-endorsed Quality Consultants?**

---

To ensure the integrity of decision-making by NARA-endorsed Quality Consultants, NARA only endorses consultants if they also agree to work as auditors for NARA. This means that all Quality Consultants participate in NARA's auditor moderation activities and strive for consistency in auditing compliance with the *AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration* and the ESOS National Code requirements, and, for South Australian and Queensland RTOs, all guidelines and policies issued by the Training and Skills Commission (SA) and the Training and Employment Recognition Council (QLD).

## **How does NARA manage any potential conflicts of interest when NARA auditors are also NARA-endorsed Quality Consultants?**

---

To manage any potential or actual conflicts of interest in this regulatory approach, NARA ensures that no training organisation is audited by someone who has previously worked with the organisation in the capacity of Quality Consultant for a minimum period of six months prior to the audit. This means that each training organisation will be audited by an independent auditor. Similarly, a NARA auditor is restricted from working as a Quality Consultant for an RTO they have audited during the previous six months.

If you have any other questions about engaging a NARA-endorsed Quality Consultant, email NARA at [nara@tvetaustralia.com.au](mailto:nara@tvetaustralia.com.au)