



REIA

REAL ESTATE INSTITUTE
OF AUSTRALIA

REIA SUBMISSION TO THE ASQA REVIEW OF UNDULY SHORT TRAINING COURSES DISCUSSION PAPER

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PREPARED BY

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The Real Estate Institute of Australia (REIA) is the peak national association for the real estate profession in Australia.

The REIA's members are the State and Territory Real Estate Institutes, through which around 75 per cent of real estate agencies are collectively represented. The 2011 Census records the Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services Industry employment sitting at a total of 117,880. By occupation the key data recorded by ABS Census were 64,699 business brokers, property managers, principals, real estate agents and representatives.

The REIA represents an important element of the broader property and construction sector which together makes a significant contribution to Australia's social climate and economic development. Property contributes \$300 billion annually in economic activity.

Importantly, REIA represents an integral element of the small business sector. Some 99 per cent of real estate agencies are small businesses and 11 per cent of all small businesses in Australia are involved in real estate.

REIA is committed to providing and assisting research and well-informed advice to the Federal Government, Opposition, professional members of the real estate sector, media and the public on a range of issues affecting the property market.

The REIA welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the ASQA Review of Unduly Short Training Courses Discussion Paper.

Background

REIA and its member Real Estate Institutes have long been critical of short courses.

The following matters have been raised:

- The variable quality of training. In particular some short courses and self-paced e-learning courses were of a poor quality. Examples are courses which offer a Cert IV in property that can be completed within a few days. Some have in the past advertised that a job will be available at the completion. The colleges or institutions that the REIA takes issue with across all states are those that offer very short courses for the purposes of licensing based on a questionable system of Recognised Prior Learning (RPL). Many colleges have used a process of "self-assessment" – i.e. "tick the box if you have the following knowledge" - and do not actually test or validate the information in an objective way that could stand any scrutiny. Similarly many providers provide answers to question and students then tick the appropriate answer – students are not trained but yet gain full qualification

- The approach to training has not been coordinated and uniform across jurisdictions with a detrimental consequence on the quality of training. Indeed jurisdictional differences have at times been used by some RTOs to circumvent scrutiny by registration bodies. For example, in at least one jurisdiction the registration body will only investigate complaints when these are about RTOs based in that jurisdiction
- The RPL process has not been properly audited by state training authorities
- There is a feeling that with a focus on compliance audits that processes are created to meet the compliance requirements but the delivery and assessment of training are not evaluated.
- The assessment of LLN (language, literacy and numeracy) requirements should only be done by those that have received the specific formal training. Most trainers in the VET sector have not and are undertaking this assessment.

This is why REIA was supportive of the recommendations contained in ASQA's report, A Review of Issues Relating to Unduly Short Training, reviewing short training courses in June of last year. The recommendations, in REIA's view, if implemented, would address some of the problems identified above.

Response to Discussion Paper of December 2017

REIA continues to be supportive of the intent of the three recommendations contained in the Discussion Paper and provides some comments in relation to these.

Recommendation 1

REIA understands the intent behind Questions 4 to 6 which are seeking a prescriptive response to "duration" and is aimed at those RTOs described in the Background section of this submission. The practicality is that it is difficult to be prescriptive in a competency based approach.

There are many variables that come into consideration which makes it almost impossible to be definitive.

There is no question that change is required but the challenge remains on how duration is to be determined and implemented in a competency based system.

Recommendation 3

Again REIA understands the intent behind having a product disclosure statement (PDS) but believes a PDS, as evidenced in other areas, can become overwhelming and add to a student's confusion rather than assist them.

REIA believes the intent can be better achieved by having a standardised information or fact sheet. By having a template students will be able to make comparisons and decisions on a much more objective basis.