

Continuous Improvement Policy

Relevant Standards: *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* Standard 2.1, 2.2 and 8.6

Purpose

This policy has been created to ensure that the **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** is committed to providing high quality training and assessment that is relevant to clients, employers and industry and meets the requirements of the Standards for Registered Training Organisation (SRTOs 2015). The **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** systematically monitors, evaluates and improves its training and assessment practices through continuous improvement practices.

This policy outlines the mechanisms that the **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** implements to systematically and continually review and improve its systems and practices (including policies and practices), as well as training and assessments products and services to meet compliance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015.

Policy Principles

The **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** is committed to the continuous improvement of its training and assessment system, strategies, practices, products and resources to ensure ongoing quality delivery and compliance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015.

To ensure this, **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** will:

1. Implement and maintain strategies and practices to systematically monitor its compliance with the Standards for RTOs 2015;
 - a. Conduct self-assessment / internal audit or external audit of its training and assessment systems, policies and procedures across all of its operations and scope of registration.
 - b. Collect and analyse and feedback and satisfaction data from all stakeholders regarding its training and assessment strategies and practices.
2. Review and evaluate its training and assessment strategies and practices (using various processes) including those offered by a third party;
3. Utilise the outcomes of all monitoring and evaluative processes to inform and continually improve training and assessment strategies and practices.

Systematic Monitoring of Compliance

1. The **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** uses a systematic approach to continuous improvement that involves staff, clients and other stakeholders, and uses qualitative and quantitative data to determine the need for improvement to services, operations, practices and systems.
2. Continuous improvement is ongoing and may be planned, occurring as often as identified and required.
3. All staff are encouraged to report any opportunities for improvement in writing as they identify them. Staff are to provide any information and data they have collected to support their recommendations so it can be analysed and acted on accordingly. All staff will have access to the **Opportunity for Improvement Form** in order to lodge any continuous improvement opportunities.
4. Identified opportunities for improvement will be recorded in the **Australian Institute of Arboriculture Continuous Improvement Register** and entries will be reviewed during management meetings, and/or compliance and continuous improvement meetings conducted quarterly by the **General Manager**.
5. Staff recommendations are reviewed and prioritised by the **General Manager**. Improvements may be implemented immediately or at an appropriate time, depending on the urgency and circumstances, action and subsequent effect to other operational systems and practices. Critical items are actioned and assigned to stakeholders for implementation.
6. **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** implements where possible the continuous improvement cycle from ISO 9001:2008 found in the annex of this policy.

Internal Audit

1. **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** will regularly complete a self-assessment / audit against the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 (SRT0 2015)
2. This self-check / audit will be conducted internally or with assistance from an external compliance consultant (if applicable) at least every 12 months. The schedule of the audit will consider the timing of audits by other parties such as the VET regulator, funding body (if applicable), etc.
3. This audit will be conducted in accordance with an audit schedule in the compliance calendar.
4. This internal audit will examine all standards, policies, procedures, products across the scope of registration and scale of operations, including training and assessments delivered by a third-party partner (if applicable).
5. New projects and new third-party providers shall be audited within six months of commencement.
6. The self-check / audit will involve the examination of records and evidence gathered on the **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** compliance, systems and practices.
7. A report on this audit will be documented and appropriate action will be taken to rectify any non-compliances. The **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** will aim to correct identified non-compliances within 3 months from when it was identified.
8. Outcomes of all kinds of audit will feed into the Continuous Improvement Register.

External Audit

1. The **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** cooperates with the VET Regulator in the conduct of audits and the monitoring of its operations.
2. **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** ensures all third-party providers (if applicable) are required, under written agreement, to cooperate with the VET Regulator:
 - a. By providing accurate and factual responses to information requests from the VET Regulator relevant to the delivery of services; and\
 - b. In the conduct of audits and the monitoring of its operations.

Feedback Mechanism

1. **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** is committed to ensuring that stakeholder feedback is collected, analysed and utilized to ensure the provision of quality training and assessment services including services provided via third party providers (if applicable).
2. Information to be evaluated includes data collected from:
 - a. Quality/performance indicators
 - b. Validation outcomes
 - c. Feedback from clients, trainers and assessors and staff, workplace clients, SMEs.
 - d. Industry Feedback
 - e. Complaints and Appeals
3. While feedback is requested and encouraged from all clients, it is not compulsory. Trainers and assessors provide students with the **Course Feedback Form** at the end of the training to determine student satisfaction with the services they have received.
4. Quality indicator data is collected through a **Learner and Employer Questionnaire** provided to the students and employers at the end of each training.
5. **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** requires all trainers and assessors to provide feedback through the **Trainer Course Feedback** to be completed for each qualification they are delivering training once bi-annually.
6. All feedback collected is collated and submitted to the **General Manager** for review during management meetings and/or compliance and continuous improvement meetings.

7. The **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** uses other tools and instruments to gather feedback from relevant stakeholders. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Email correspondence
 - b. Verbal Communication
 - c. Client and Staff Feedback Forms
 - d. Course reports
 - e. Complaints Lodgement Form
 - f. Appeals Lodgement Form
 - g. Validation Forms and Reports
 - h. Opportunity for Improvement Form

Complaints and Appeals

Whenever a complaint or an appeal is upheld, The **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** immediately acts to address the finding and records the action within the framework of a continuous improvement action. Action is also taken if a complaint or an appeal highlights a need to improve **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** information or processes.

For further information, refer to **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

Industry Engagement

The **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** consults with relevant industry experts to improve the training and assessment process. All feedback and improvement opportunities identified during industry consultations feed into the Continuous Improvement Register to be reviewed, acted upon and evaluated. For further information, refer to **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** Industry Engagement Policy.

Validation Outcomes

Australian Institute of Arboriculture implements a plan for ongoing systematic validation of assessment practices and judgements for each training product on its scope of registration. All feedback and improvement opportunities identified during validation activities feed into the Continuous Improvement Register to be reviewed, acted upon and evaluated. For further information, refer to the Validation Policy.

Third-Party Monitoring

1. **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** ensures that appropriate partnering arrangements are entered into and that these are monitored to ensure their effectiveness and compliance.
2. **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** is accountable for the quality of training and assessment and other services provided by the third-party provider. As such, **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** ensures that it:
 - a. develops and maintains written agreements with all third-party providers delivering training and assessments services and/or recruitment and other services on its behalf;
 - b. roles and responsibilities of the third-party provider and **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** are clearly specified in the written agreement;
 - c. types of and responsibilities of the third-party provider and **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** are clearly specified in the written agreement;
 - d. all parties sign and are provided with a copy of the written agreement.
3. **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** monitors the implementation of training and assessment products and services, recruitment or other services by third parties through, among others, regular meetings and reporting, including gathering student feedback, and/or third-party audit processes, third party activity, or output review/monitoring.
4. **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** follows the type of monitoring and schedule of monitoring written in the third-party agreement.
5. **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** shall, as soon as practicable and prior to the commencement of third party arrangements, notify ASQA that arrangements are made for a third party to provide services on its behalf.

Review of Policies and procedures

The **Australian Institute of Arboriculture** will review all its policies and procedures annually to ensure that they are still current, relevant and accurate.

Amendments will be approved and noted in the 'Continuous Improvement Register'.

Monitoring and Improvement

The **General Manager** is responsible for all continuous improvement processes and ensuring that all staff, including those from third-party providers are complying with the provisions of this policy.

Annex A

Cycle of Improvement

