

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Amendment (Strengthening Quality and Integrity in Vocational Education and Training No. 1) Act 2024

No. 10, 2024

An Act to amend the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*, and for related purposes

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An Act to amend the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*, and for related purposes

[*Assented to 28 March 2024*]

The Parliament of Australia enacts:

1 Short title

This Act is the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Amendment (Strengthening Quality and Integrity in Vocational Education and Training No. 1) Act 2024*.

2 Commencement

(1) Each provision of this Act specified in column 1 of the table commences, or is taken to have commenced, in accordance with column 2 of the table. Any other statement in column 2 has effect according to its terms.

| Commencement information | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 |
| Provisions | Commencement | Date/Details |
| 1. Sections 1 to 3 and anything in this Act not elsewhere covered by this table | The day after this Act receives the Royal Assent. | 29 March 2024 |
| 2. Schedule 1, Part 1 | The later of:  (a) 1 July 2024; and  (b) the day after the end of the period of 90 days beginning on the day after the day this Act receives the Royal Assent. | 1 July 2024  (paragraph (a) applies) |
| 3. Schedule 1, Parts 2 to 9 | The day after this Act receives the Royal Assent. | 29 March 2024 |

Note: This table relates only to the provisions of this Act as originally enacted. It will not be amended to deal with any later amendments of this Act.

(2) Any information in column 3 of the table is not part of this Act. Information may be inserted in this column, or information in it may be edited, in any published version of this Act.

3 Schedules

Legislation that is specified in a Schedule to this Act is amended or repealed as set out in the applicable items in the Schedule concerned, and any other item in a Schedule to this Act has effect according to its terms.

Schedule 1—Amendments

Part 1—Lapse of registration

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011

1 Paragraph 20(1)(b)

Omit “or”, substitute “, lapses or is”.

2 At the end of Division 3 of Part 2

Add:

Subdivision C—Lapse of registration

40A Lapse

(1) This section applies in relation to an NVR registered training organisation if, in a period of 12 consecutive months beginning on or after 1 January 2023 (the ***measurement period***), the organisation:

(a) if the scope of registration of the organisation is limited to providing assessments resulting in the issue of VET qualifications or VET statements of attainment by the organisation—provides no assessments necessary for a VET student to satisfy a requirement of a VET qualification or a unit of competency or module in relation to a VET statement of attainment; or

(b) otherwise—provides no training for the purposes of a VET student satisfying, or assessments necessary for a VET student to satisfy, a requirement of a VET qualification or unit of competency or module in relation to a VET statement of attainment.

(2) Subject to section 40B, the organisation’s registration lapses at the end of the measurement period.

Note: Details relating to an NVR registered training organisation whose registration lapses are included on the National Register, see section 216.

(3) If the organisation’s registration lapses under subsection (2), the National VET Regulator must give the organisation a written notice stating that the organisation’s registration has lapsed.

(4) If the organisation is given a notice under subsection (3), the organisation must return its certificate of registration to the National VET Regulator within 10 days of the day the notice is given.

Note: Failure to return a certificate of registration is a contravention of a civil penalty provision, see section 112.

40B Extension of measurement period

Application

(1) An NVR registered training organisation may apply to the National VET Regulator to extend the measurement period referred to in subsection 40A(1).

(2) An application must be made at least 90 days before the measurement period would otherwise end.

(3) An application must be in a form (if any) approved by the National VET Regulator.

Extension

(4) If an application is made, the National VET Regulator may, in writing, extend the measurement period in relation to the organisation.

(5) The National VET Regulator may extend a measurement period in relation to an NVR registered training organisation under subsection (4) more than once.

(6) The total period of all extensions of a measurement period in relation to an NVR registered training organisation must not exceed 12 months.

3 At the end of section 112

Add:

(3) A former registered training organisation contravenes this subsection if:

(a) the organisation is given a notice under subsection 40A(3) stating that the organisation’s registration has lapsed; and

(b) the organisation fails to return its certificate of registration to the National VET Regulator within 10 days of the day the notice is given.

Civil penalty: 600 penalty units.

4 Section 199 (after table item 13)

Insert:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 13A | A decision to extend, or not to extend, the measurement period in relation to an NVR registered training organisation. | Section 40B |

5 Section 206 (heading)

After “**cancellation**”, insert “**or lapsing**”.

6 At the end of subsection 206(1)

Add:

; or (d) the registration of an NVR registered training organisation that provides all or part of a VET course in the State or Territory concerned lapses.

7 Subparagraph 211(1)(b)(i)

Omit “has been cancelled”, substitute “ends”.

8 Paragraph 211(2)(a)

Omit “has been cancelled”, substitute “ends”.

9 Paragraph 211(2)(a)

Omit “from which cancellation takes effect”, substitute “on which the registration ends”.

10 After subsection 211(2)

Insert:

(2AA) For the purposes of subsections (1) and (2), an organisation’s registration ends when it is cancelled or lapses.

11 After paragraph 216(1)(ca)

Insert:

(cb) if an NVR registered training organisation’s registration has lapsed—the following:

(i) the day on which the registration lapsed;

(ii) the names of the organisation’s executive officers and high managerial agents;

Part 2—Scope of registration

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011

12 At the end of section 32

Add:

(3) An application may only be made by an NVR registered training organisation that has been registered for a period of 24 months or more at the time the application is made.

Part 3—Period for reconsideration of decisions

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011

13 Section 202

Omit “90 days” (wherever occurring), substitute “120 days”.

Part 4—Order of consideration of applications

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011

14 After section 17A

Insert:

17B Order of consideration of initial applications for registration

(1) The National VET Regulator may consider and dispose of initial applications for registration in such order as the National VET Regulator considers appropriate.

(2) The fact that an initial application for registration has not yet been considered or disposed of although an initial application for registration that was made later has been considered or disposed of does not mean that the consideration or disposal of the earlier application is unreasonably delayed.

Part 5—Suspension of applications for registration

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011

15 Section 3

Insert:

***initial application for registration*** means an application for registration, other than for renewal of registration, as an NVR registered training organisation.

***processing activity*** means:

(a) performance of a function or exercise of a power under or for the purposes of this Act; or

(b) an act connected with performing functions or exercising powers under or for the purposes of this Act.

16 Subsection 16(1)

Omit “A person”, substitute “Subject to any instrument made under section 231D, a person”.

17 Subsection 16(1) (note)

After “Note”, insert “1”.

18 At the end of subsection 16(1)

Add:

Note 2: Under section 231D, the Minister may determine that no initial applications for registration may be made until after a specified day.

19 At the end of subsection 17(1)

Add:

Note: The Minister may determine that the National VET Regulator is not required to, or must not, deal with initial applications for registration for a period (see section 231C).

20 Section 159

Omit “section 160”, substitute “sections 160 and 231C”.

21 Section 223

Omit “or 184B”, substitute “, 184B, 231C or 231D”.

22 After Division 3B of Part 12

Insert:

Division 3C—Suspension of initial applications for registration

231C Minister may suspend processing of initial applications for registration

National VET Regulator is not required to do any processing activity

(1) The Minister may, by legislative instrument, determine that the National VET Regulator is not required to deal with initial applications for registration until after a day specified in the instrument.

(1A) The day specified in an instrument made under subsection (1) must not be later than 12 months after the day the instrument commences.

Note: While an instrument made under subsection (1) cannot be varied to specify a day that is later than 12 months after the instrument commences, the Minister can make another instrument.

(2) Between the day an instrument made under subsection (1) commences and the day specified in the instrument, the National VET Regulator is not required to do any processing activity in relation to an initial application for registration to which the instrument applies.

National VET Regulator must not do any processing activity

(3) The Minister may, by legislative instrument, determine that the National VET Regulator must not deal with initial applications for registration until after a day specified in the instrument.

(3A) The day specified in an instrument made under subsection (3) must not be later than 12 months after the day the instrument commences.

Note: While an instrument made under subsection (3) cannot be varied to specify a day that is later than 12 months after the instrument commences, the Minister can make another instrument.

(4) Between the day an instrument made under subsection (3) commences and the day specified in the instrument, the National VET Regulator must not do any processing activity in relation to an initial application for registration to which the instrument applies.

Instruments under this section

(5) An instrument made under subsection (1) or (3) may be expressed to apply to:

(a) all initial applications for registration or one or more classes of initial application for registration; and

(b) initial applications for registration made before or after the commencement of the instrument (or both).

(6) An instrument made under subsection (1) or (3) is a legislative instrument, but section 42 (disallowance) of the *Legislation Act 2003* does not apply to the instrument.

Note: Legislative instruments and explanatory statements must be tabled in each House of the Parliament under sections 38 and 39 of the *Legislation Act 2003*.

231D Minister may suspend making of initial applications for registration

(1) The Minister may, by legislative instrument, determine that no initial applications for registration may be made under section 16 of this Act until after a day specified in the instrument.

(1A) The day specified in an instrument made under subsection (1) must not be later than 12 months after the day the instrument commences.

Note: While an instrument made under subsection (1) cannot be varied to specify a day that is later than 12 months after the instrument commences, the Minister can make another instrument.

(2) An initial application for registration is invalid if:

(a) the application is made between the day an instrument made under subsection (1) commences and the day specified in the instrument; and

(b) the application is an application to which the instrument applies.

(3) An instrument made under subsection (1) may be expressed to apply to all initial applications for registration or one or more classes of initial application for registration.

(4) An instrument made under subsection (1) is a legislative instrument, but section 42 (disallowance) of the *Legislation Act 2003* does not apply to the instrument.

Note: Legislative instruments and explanatory statements must be tabled in each House of the Parliament under sections 38 and 39 of the *Legislation Act 2003*.

231E Minister to consult the National VET Regulator

The Minister must consult the National VET Regulator before the Minister makes a determination under section 231C or 231D.

231F Agreement of Ministerial Council

The Minister must not make a determination under section 231C or 231D unless the Ministerial Council has agreed to the determination.

Note: For how the Ministerial Council gives agreement, see section 191.

231G Notice of determination must be published on National VET Regulator’s website

(1) If the Minister makes a determination under section 231C or 231D, the National VET Regulator must, as soon as practicable after the determination is registered on the Federal Register of Legislation, publish on the Regulator’s website:

(a) a notice that:

(i) states that the determination has been registered; and

(ii) describes the determination; and

(b) a copy of the explanatory statement for the determination.

(2) A failure by the National VET Regulator to comply with subsection (1) does not affect the validity of a determination made under section 231C or 231D.

Part 6—False or misleading representations

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011

23 After section 100

Insert:

100A Offence—making false or misleading representation in advertisement

An NVR registered training organisation commits an offence if:

(a) the organisation makes a representation that relates to:

(i) all or part of a VET course; or

(ii) a course that is held out as being a VET course; or

(iii) part of a course that is held out as being part of a VET course; or

(iv) a VET qualification; or

(v) a qualification that is held out as being a VET qualification; or

(vi) the organisation’s operations; and

(b) the representation is made in connection with an advertisement; and

(c) the representation is false or misleading in a material particular.

Penalty: 300 penalty units.

Note: For the liability of an executive officer of a registered training organisation, see sections 133 and 133A.

100B Civil penalty—making false or misleading representation in advertisement

An NVR registered training organisation contravenes this section if:

(a) the organisation makes a representation that relates to:

(i) all or part of a VET course; or

(ii) a course that is held out as being a VET course; or

(iii) part of a course that is held out as being part of a VET course; or

(iv) a VET qualification; or

(v) a qualification that is held out as being a VET qualification; or

(vi) the organisation’s operations; and

(b) the representation is made in connection with an advertisement; and

(c) the representation is false or misleading in a material particular.

Civil penalty: 600 penalty units.

100C Offence—making false or misleading representation relating to VET course, VET qualification or operations

An NVR registered training organisation commits an offence if:

(a) the organisation makes a representation that relates to:

(i) all or part of a VET course; or

(ii) a course that is held out as being a VET course; or

(iii) part of a course that is held out as being part of a VET course; or

(iv) a VET qualification; or

(v) a qualification that is held out as being a VET qualification; or

(vi) the organisation’s operations; and

(b) the representation is false or misleading in a material particular.

Penalty: 300 penalty units.

Note: For the liability of an executive officer of a registered training organisation, see sections 133 and 133A.

100D Civil penalty—making false or misleading representation relating to VET course, VET qualification or operations

An NVR registered training organisation contravenes this section if:

(a) the organisation makes a representation that relates to:

(i) all or part of a VET course; or

(ii) a course that is held out as being a VET course; or

(iii) part of a course that is held out as being part of a VET course; or

(iv) a VET qualification; or

(v) a qualification that is held out as being a VET qualification; or

(vi) the organisation’s operations; and

(b) the representation is false or misleading in a material particular.

Civil penalty: 600 penalty units.

24 Section 133A (after table item 4)

Insert:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 4A | Section 100A |
| 4B | Section 100C |

Part 7—Penalty increases

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011

25 Section 64 (penalty)

Omit “30 penalty units”, substitute “150 penalty units”.

26 Subsection 71(3) (penalty)

Omit “30 penalty units”, substitute “150 penalty units”.

27 Subsection 79(2) (penalty)

Omit “30 penalty units”, substitute “150 penalty units”.

28 Section 93 (penalty)

Omit “120 penalty units”, substitute “600 penalty units”.

29 Section 94 (penalty)

Omit “240 penalty units”, substitute “1,200 penalty units”.

30 Section 95 (penalty)

Omit “300 penalty units”, substitute “1,500 penalty units”.

31 Section 96 (penalty)

Omit “600 penalty units”, substitute “3,000 penalty units”.

32 Section 97 (penalty)

Omit “300 penalty units”, substitute “1,500 penalty units”.

33 Section 98 (penalty)

Omit “600 penalty units”, substitute “3,000 penalty units”.

34 Section 99 (penalty)

Omit “120 penalty units”, substitute “600 penalty units”.

35 Section 100 (penalty)

Omit “240 penalty units”, substitute “1,200 penalty units”.

36 Subsections 101(1) and (2) (penalty)

Omit “120 penalty units”, substitute “600 penalty units”.

37 Subsections 102(1) and (2) (penalty)

Omit “240 penalty units”, substitute “1,200 penalty units”.

38 Subsections 103(1) and (2) (penalty)

Omit “120 penalty units”, substitute “600 penalty units”.

39 Subsections 104(1) and (2) (penalty)

Omit “240 penalty units”, substitute “1,200 penalty units”.

40 Subsections 105(1) and (2) (penalty)

Omit “120 penalty units”, substitute “600 penalty units”.

41 Subsections 106(1) and (2) (penalty)

Omit “240 penalty units”, substitute “1,200 penalty units”.

42 Section 107 (penalty)

Omit “120 penalty units”, substitute “600 penalty units”.

43 Section 108 (penalty)

Omit “240 penalty units”, substitute “1,200 penalty units”.

44 Section 109 (penalty)

Omit “120 penalty units”, substitute “600 penalty units”.

45 Section 110 (penalty)

Omit “240 penalty units”, substitute “1,200 penalty units”.

46 Subsection 111(1) (penalty)

Omit “240 penalty units”, substitute “1,200 penalty units”.

47 Subsections 111(2) and 112(1) and (2) (penalty)

Omit “120 penalty units”, substitute “600 penalty units”.

48 Section 114 (penalty)

Omit “300 penalty units”, substitute “1,500 penalty units”.

49 Section 115 (penalty)

Omit “600 penalty units”, substitute “3,000 penalty units”.

50 Subsections 116(1) and (2) (penalty)

Omit “300 penalty units”, substitute “1,500 penalty units”.

51 Subsections 117(1) and (2) (penalty)

Omit “600 penalty units”, substitute “3,000 penalty units”.

52 Section 118 (penalty)

Omit “300 penalty units”, substitute “1,500 penalty units”.

53 Section 119 (penalty)

Omit “600 penalty units”, substitute “3,000 penalty units”.

54 Section 120 (penalty)

Omit “300 penalty units”, substitute “1,500 penalty units”.

55 Section 121 (penalty)

Omit “600 penalty units”, substitute “3,000 penalty units”.

56 Section 123A (penalty)

Omit “60 penalty units”, substitute “300 penalty units”.

57 Section 123B (penalty)

Omit “120 penalty units”, substitute “600 penalty units”.

58 Section 126 (penalty)

Omit “300 penalty units”, substitute “1,500 penalty units”.

59 Section 127 (penalty)

Omit “600 penalty units”, substitute “3,000 penalty units”.

60 Section 128 (penalty)

Omit “300 penalty units”, substitute “1,500 penalty units”.

61 Section 129 (penalty)

Omit “600 penalty units”, substitute “3,000 penalty units”.

62 Section 130 (penalty)

Omit “120 penalty units”, substitute “600 penalty units”.

63 Subsection 140(5) (penalty)

Omit “30 penalty units”, substitute “150 penalty units”.

64 Subsection 211(3) (penalty)

Omit “150 penalty units”, substitute “750 penalty units”.

65 Subsection 211(4) (penalty)

Omit “300 penalty units”, substitute “1,500 penalty units”.

Part 8—Other amendments

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011

66 Subsection 17(2)

Omit “complies with”, substitute “is complying, or will comply, with”.

67 Subsection 17A(3)

Omit “The”, substitute “If the report is published, the”.

68 Paragraph 33(2)(c)

Omit “complies with”, substitute “is complying, or will comply, with”.

69 Subsection 35(1C)

Omit “The”, substitute “If the report is published, the”.

70 Subsection 201(1)

Repeal the subsection, substitute:

(1) Upon receiving an application under section 200 for the reconsideration of a reviewable decision, the National VET Regulator must reconsider the decision.

(1A) After reconsidering the reviewable decision, the National VET Regulator may:

(a) affirm, vary or revoke the decision; and

(b) if the Regulator revokes the decision, make such other decision as the Regulator considers appropriate.

71 Subsection 201(2)

Omit “person who reconsiders the decision must be”, substitute “National VET Regulator’s reconsideration of the reviewable decision must be done by”.

72 Paragraph 201(2)(a)

Omit “under review”.

73 Subsection 201(3)

After “has effect”, insert “(except for the purposes of section 199)”.

74 Subsection 201(3)

Omit “original decision”, substitute “reviewable decision”.

75 Subsection 203(1) (heading)

Repeal the heading, substitute:

Review of reconsideration decision

76 Subsection 203(1)

Omit all the words after “review of a”, substitute “decision of the National VET Regulator under subsection 201(1A)”.

Part 9—Amendment of the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Transitional Provisions) Act 2011

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Transitional Provisions) Act 2011

77 In the appropriate position

Insert:

Schedule 7—Transitional provisions relating to the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Amendment (Strengthening Quality and Integrity in Vocational Education and Training No. 1) Act 2024

1 Definitions

In this Schedule:

***Amending Schedule*** means Schedule 1 to the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Amendment (Strengthening Quality and Integrity in Vocational Education and Training No. 1) Act 2024*.

***first commencement time*** means the time at which this Schedule commences.

***Principal Act*** means the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*.

***second commencement time*** means the time at which Part 1 of the Amending Schedule commences.

2 Interpretation

An expression used in this Schedule that is also used in the Principal Act has the same meaning in this Schedule as it has in the Principal Act.

3 Application—lapse of registration

General

(1) The amendments of section 20 of the Principal Act made by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule apply in relation to any registration in force immediately before, at or after the second commencement time.

Lapse due before the second commencement time

(2) Despite subsection 40A(2) of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule, if:

(a) section 40A of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule, applies in relation to an NVR registered training organisation; and

(b) the measurement period in relation to the organisation ends before the second commencement time;

the organisation’s registration lapses at the second commencement time instead of the end of the measurement period (subject to section 40B of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule).

Applications for extensions before the second commencement time

(3) An NVR registered training organisation may, before the second commencement time, make an application for the purposes of subsection 40B(1) of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule, as if that subsection had commenced.

(4) Subsection 40B(3) of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule, applies in relation to any application made after the second commencement time for the purposes of subsection 40B(1) of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule.

(5) Despite subsection 40B(2) of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule, if:

(a) section 40A of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule, would apply in relation to an NVR registered training organisation; and

(b) the measurement period in relation to the organisation would end before the second commencement time;

an application by the organisation under subsection 40B(1) of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule, may be made during the period:

(c) beginning at the first commencement time; and

(d) ending 60 days before the second commencement time.

(6) Despite subsection 40B(2) of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule, if:

(a) section 40A of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule, would apply in relation to an NVR registered training organisation; and

(b) the measurement period in relation to the organisation would end within 30 days after the second commencement time;

an application by the organisation under subsection 40B(1) of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule, may be made during the period:

(c) beginning at the first commencement time; and

(d) ending 60 days before the end of the measurement period.

(7) For the purposes of subitems (5) and (6):

(a) disregard subsection 40B(4) of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule; and

(b) assume that, after the first commencement time, the organisation provides no training or assessments of the kind mentioned in subsection 40A(1) of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule.

Records

(8) The amendments of section 211 of the Principal Act made by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule apply in relation to any registration that ends (within the meaning given by subsection 211(2AA) of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 1 of the Amending Schedule) at or after the second commencement time, whether the records were created before or after the second commencement time.

4 Application—change to scope of registration

The amendments of section 32 of the Principal Act made by Part 2 of the Amending Schedule apply in relation to any application made at or after the first commencement time.

5 Application—period of reconsideration

The amendments of section 202 of the Principal Act made by Part 3 of the Amending Schedule apply in relation to the following:

(a) any application for reconsideration that is made at or after the first commencement time;

(b) any application for reconsideration that is made before the first commencement time if, immediately before the first commencement time, a decision on the application has not been made, or taken to have been made, by the National VET Regulator.

6 Application—order of consideration

Section 17B of the Principal Act, as inserted by Part 4 of the Amending Schedule, applies in relation to the following:

(a) any application for registration that is made at or after the first commencement time;

(b) any application for registration that is made before the first commencement time if, immediately before the first commencement time, a decision on the application has not been made, or taken to have been made, by the National VET Regulator.

7 Application—registration

The amendments of section 17 of the Principal Act made by Part 8 of the Amending Schedule apply in relation to any application made at or after the first commencement time.

8 Application—audit report

The amendments of section 17A of the Principal Act made by Part 8 of the Amending Schedule apply in relation to a report prepared before, at or after the first commencement time.

9 Application—change of scope of registration

The amendments of section 33 of the Principal Act made by Part 8 of the Amending Schedule apply in relation to any application made at or after the first commencement time.

10 Application—compliance audit report

The amendments of section 35 of the Principal Act made by Part 8 of the Amending Schedule apply in relation to a report prepared before, at or after the first commencement time.

11 Application—reconsideration of a reviewable decision

The amendments of section 201 of the Principal Act made by Part 8 of the Amending Schedule apply in relation to the following:

(a) any application made under section 200 of the Principal Act at or after the first commencement time;

(b) any application made under section 200 of the Principal Act before the first commencement time if, immediately before the first commencement time, a decision on the application has not been made, or taken to have been made, by the National VET Regulator.

[*Minister’s second reading speech made in—*

*House of Representatives on 7 February 2024*

*Senate on 26 February 2024*]

(11/24)