



Announcement of new Quality Advisory Committee for Vocation

16 October 2014

Vocation Ltd is pleased to announce the creation of a Quality Advisory Committee. This initiative arose from a review by CEO Mark Hutchinson on the best way to promote continuous improvement across Vocation's providers in VET and Higher Education, and has been endorsed by the Board. The Quality Advisory Committee will provide guidance and advice on quality and compliance to Vocation's registered training organisations and higher education providers. The committee will report directly to the Board of Directors and is being established and chaired by independent VET quality expert, Claire Field.

Ms Field set-up and ran the National Audit and Registration Agency, the Commonwealth government's first national VET regulator (the predecessor to the Australian Skills Quality Authority). In her recent tenure as the Chief Executive of the Australian Council for Private Education and Training, Claire was widely recognised for her committed efforts to lift quality in the private VET and higher education sectors. Earlier in her career, Claire held a senior leadership position in the former NSW VET regulator (VETAB), and has also held senior strategic roles in other parts of the VET sector, at both the Commonwealth, State and provider level.

The Quality Advisory Committee will provide independent oversight of Vocation's VET and Higher Education operations to ensure:

- the monitoring of the student experience and related support services
- student satisfaction and outcomes are maximised, and
- the provision of quality education and assessment services (including compliance with all relevant regulatory standards and contractual requirements)

The Committee will also provide ongoing advice to Vocation's management and Board on matters related to provider governance and the harmonisation of education and training operations.

Ms Field will be joined on the Quality Advisory Committee by two further independent representatives, Neil Edwards and Ann Doolette. Mr Edwards is highly experienced in tertiary education policy and practice in both the public and private sector. He most recently served as Chief Executive of TVET Australia, which provided policy support to the national vocational standards regime and managed the National Accreditation and Registration Agency (NARA). Ms Doolette has a similarly strong background in the sector, having previously served as the Executive Head of the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) Council. Anne also consults to international governments and organisations as a qualifications specialist.

Ms Field said, "I'm pleased to be taking on this role and working with Vocation to further strengthen the quality of its education and training delivery. Vocation is to be commended for the strict independence of the Quality Advisory Committee, including through its direct reporting to the Board. The Quality Advisory Committee represents a model for governance that places quality at the heart of the organisation."

Vocation Group Managing Director and Group CEO, Mark Hutchinson, said, "As an organisation committed to quality, excellence and transparency in our education and training operations, the establishment of a quality committee has been something we have been wanting to do for some time now. When the opportunity arose to secure such well-credentialed candidates like Claire, Neil and Ann to constitute that committee, we jumped at it."

[ENDS]

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Attachment: QAC Member Biographies**Claire Field, Chair**

Claire Field has nearly two decades of experience in the public and private vocational education and training sector, extensive knowledge of on-and off-shore international education, and market leading insights into the private higher education sector.

Claire was Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) from 2011-14, having initially joined ACPET as Deputy CEO in June 2010.

Previously, Claire was with TVET Australia for three years where she was initially responsible for the establishment of the National Audit and Registration Agency (NARA).

Claire has extensive experience in the VET sector having worked in a range of strategic policy, planning and performance review roles at both the national and State government level. In 2005 Claire worked with Commonwealth officials on a suite of VET reforms for consideration by COAG. Prior to that she worked in the NSW government, with senior roles in TAFE NSW and Quality Assurance Services supporting the work of the NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB).

Claire has had senior management experience in Mission Australia as an advocate on behalf of the clients of Mission Australia's employment and community services. She commenced work in the VET sector with research and policy development roles in the Australian National Training Authority.

Claire has a Bachelor of Arts (Education), a Masters of Education and most recently, an Executive Masters of Public Administration from the Australia New Zealand School of Government.

Neil Edwards

Neil Edwards is highly experienced in tertiary education policy and practice in both the public and private sectors.

Neil Edwards has served as chief executive of TVET Australia (2010-11) which previously provided policy support to the national vocational standards regime and managed the National Accreditation and Registration Agency (NARA); Chifley Business School (2005-10, a private provider of vocational and higher education; and the Victorian Government Department of State and Regional Development (1999-2003).

His current appointments include independent Chairman of the Airservices Australia Board of Training, guiding vocational training for Australia's air navigation and airport emergency services provider; Chairman of TESSAustralia, which provides quality assurance services to RTO's; and Non-Executive Director at Chifley Business School.



Ann Doolette

Ann was executive head of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Council, which advises Commonwealth and State Ministers on the maintenance of the framework. Ann lead the process to strengthen the AQF and its subsequent implementation following endorsement by Ministers.

Ann served in executive leadership positions in the South Australian Government for 10 years, with responsibility for the regulation on non-university higher education and VET providers and served on the national quality council for VET.

Her current positions include Board Member of the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council and the Hong Kong Council for the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications.

She consults to international governments and organisations as a qualifications specialist including to the Governments of Indonesia, Germany and a consortium of Japanese universities.