Summary of achievements

The VRQA supports the achievement of the Victorian Government’s education and training goals. The VRQA operates in a close collegiate relationship with three departments: DEECD, the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development, and the Department of Planning and Community Development.

The VRQA Strategic Plan is informed by and supports the corporate plans of the three departments.

In addition to the delivery of effective regulation for Victoria’s more than 3700 education and training providers, the VRQA completed work in regard to key initiatives under each of its strategic objectives.

To provide a modern proportionate regulatory framework that:

- ensures that minimum standards are met by all course developers and education and training providers
- accommodates changes in and expansion of education and training markets
- is based on co-regulation
- is responsive to client needs for an effective and efficient regulatory service.

Regulatory activities initiated by the VRQA in 2008–09 to support the provision of a proportionate regulatory framework included:

- delegation to TVET Australia Ltd of VET registration and audit functions, including approval of courses to overseas students. Multi-jurisdictional RTOs can now apply to be registered through, or transfer their registration, to TVET
- continued work on the development of the VET Student Record Archive, an electronic database to retain student records if an RTO closes
• collaboration with the Office for Government School Education and the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria to establish review bodies. Review Body arrangements enable these agencies to be responsible for and report on compliance of their schools with the prescribed minimum standards.

• introduction of a risk framework to support a Differentiated School Review Model for independent schools. The type of review conducted depends on an evidence-based risk rating assigned to the school.

• establishment of minimum age requirements for international students in homestay accommodation in Victoria and the publication of The Guidelines on Home Stay Accommodation for Overseas Students.

• commencement of a rapid audit program for VET providers to international students whose operations were identified as high risk, in conjunction with State and Commonwealth authorities.

Institutions already approved by other jurisdictions that apply to deliver higher education courses in Victoria are now considered under the mutual recognition provisions in the National Protocols and National Guidelines, which focus on appropriate delivery arrangements rather than course-specific matters.

To ensure providers and consumers of education and training have access to high-quality authoritative and relevant information that meets their needs.

The State Register is a major VRQA initiative that makes high-quality authoritative and relevant information accessible to providers and consumers of education and training. The first phase of the State Register, which was implemented in 2008–09, provides a single online source of information on all Victorian registered schools and vocational education and training providers, and the accredited qualifications they offer.

The VRQA commissioned ACPET to develop a register that provides a list of recommended consultants and advisers who are able to provide services to RTOs on registration, accreditation and compliance matters.
To ensure Victoria has an effective qualifications framework that reflects the integrated provision of education and training and responds to state and national policy development.

The VRQA has been working with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority on the use of the Credit Matrix in VCE and VCAL course review and development processes. The VRQA is continuing to work with other jurisdictions in Australia and internationally on possible application of the Credit Matrix to enhance qualifications development and student pathways.

To establish collaborative and productive relationships with stakeholders which result in a shared commitment to high-quality education and training in Victoria.

The VRQA has developed a Communications strategy. Initiatives undertaken in 2008–09 included the first VRQA client survey; two seminars for all VRQA contractors; auditors and school reviewers designed to generate comment and feedback on current priorities and emerging issues; and focus groups with international students to improve information services to this sector of education and training.

An online self-assessment tool based on the prescribed minimum standards was developed and briefings to support the risk-based review of independent schools were instigated.