



TAFE, industry applaud scheme



TAFE NSW Riverina Institute Director of Educational Delivery Graeme Stuchbery.

Over 80 TAFE schools and faculties, as well as private training providers have now been rated by The Star Rating Scheme, an initiative of The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence (The Institute).

The Star Rating Scheme was developed by industry for industry, with The Institute's eight reference groups

(automotive; building and construction; electrical; hospitality & personal services; manufacturing; metals & engineering; mineral resources; and rural and farming) developing the criteria to appraise vocational courses.

The Star Rating Scheme is a rigorous process, whereby Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) undergo a

three step process. The first step is a self evaluation, which if carried out to a satisfactory level is then reviewed by a panel of relevant industry experts, who then go on to assess all aspects of the course, including thorough interviewing of teachers, students and employers that take graduates from the RTO.

Director of Educational Delivery from the TAFE NSW Riverina Institute, Graeme Stuchbery of Narrandera has been involved in the evaluations of four faculties at the TAFE and has used The Star Rating Scheme to improve the courses.

"The Star Rating scheme has been invaluable to us in terms of marketing our capability to employers and apprentices in the region and has certainly enhanced our industry recognition.

"The Star Rating Scheme is also a great way to help improve our courses through shared knowledge, for example we are now visiting other Gold Star Rated TAFE's nationally to learn from their success to further strengthen our reputation as a smart, dynamic and highly professional educational leader," Mr Stuchbery said.

Brian Wexham, Chief Executive Officer of The

Institute for Trade Skills Excellence enthuses that The Star Rating Scheme is already addressing some of the key points raised in the Federal Government's discussion paper on Skilling Australia.

"The Government's Skilling Australia paper states that education providers must change from meeting their own needs towards meeting the need of industry, and The Institute wholeheartedly agrees.

"In fact this is why we worked with Industry to develop The Star Rating Scheme - to ensure that graduates are well prepared and armed with the skills industry needs.

"And overwhelmingly, the feedback we are getting from the rated Registered Training Organisations is that the process is being used to improve course standards, ensuring that courses are relevant to future employer expectations" Mr Wexham said.

The Star Rating Scheme was established in October 2007 and to date has formally rated over 80 schools and faculties within Registered Training Organisations, with a further 50 schools and faculties currently going through the evaluation process.