

Assessment Validation and Moderation Policy and Procedures

Policy Purpose

As recognition of vocational qualifications across Australia is a cornerstone of the national Vocational Education and Training (VET) system, there is a strong emphasis within the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) on assessment validation as a process to ensure the quality and consistency of assessment and as a basis for continuous improvement.

The Institute implements assessment validation and moderation processes for the courses within its scope of registration to ensure that all assessment is undertaken with fairness, reliability, validity and flexibility.

This process will ensure that:

- assessment tools are appropriately aligned to Training Package units of competence and to the learning outcomes being assessed in accordance with industry expectations **(All assessment tools are to have an accompanying Competency Mapping Matrix)**
- assessment guidelines support consistent assessment practices by all assessors and for all participants completing the assessment task
- evidence used to make an assessment is valid, authentic and sufficient;
- feedback is provided to and obtained from participants, facilitators and assessors;
- clients, industry and industry organisations are consulted in developing and reviewing assessment tools and activities.

The Compliance Manager/Program Coordinator oversees the validation and moderation of assessments and monitors compliance with this policy.

Assessment includes all forms of assessment including Skills Recognition, workplace and on-the-job assessments, simulated and classroom assessments, and all approaches such as written assignments, projects, Q&A tests, evidence portfolios, oral presentations, practical demonstrations, role plays, simulations, (Refer to the Assessment Definitions list)

Procedures

All assessments should be validated to:

- check that evidence of competence adequately covers all of the relevant information such as performance criteria, knowledge and skills requirements, employability skills and essential assessment criteria;
- check that the evidence which is collected meets the rules of evidence (validity, sufficiency, currency and authenticity);

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- check that the participants are assessed against the level of competence required by AQF level criteria;
- check that participants are being assessed taking into account language, literacy and numeracy skills and special needs of the candidate
- check that there is an agreed understanding by assessors of the criteria being used to arrive at an assessment of “competent”;
- check that the agreed criteria are being used consistently by all those assessing competency.

Pre-assessment

Initially, assessment strategies will be developed through consultation with industry to ensure that they are consistent with industry needs. This will include the development of a Competency Mapping Matrix where this is not provided with the assessment tool.

Assessment tools and activities are validated in consultation with assessors from within the RTO, industry and client feedback, and from another RTO that delivers the same or a similar course.

Validation before assessment will focus on:

- The design of assessment tools and activities;
- Assessment methodologies that are planned to be used;
- The benchmarks and criteria against which each participant will be assessed.

Post-assessment

In order to ensure that assessments are reliable across a range of assessors, over a range of contexts and over time, the Validation Team will collect a sample of assessment records to measure them against the following key questions:

- Do the assessment tools or activities address the performance criteria for the competencies being assessed?
- Do the strategies allow participants the best opportunity to succeed?
- Are the assessment strategies chosen appropriate for all target groups?
- What assessment tools or activities worked best for specific target groups? What assessment instruments or activities did not work?
- Are assessment outcomes from different assessors consistent and equivalent?
- How have the assessment strategies, tools and processes been validated?

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- Have all relevant stakeholders (i.e. participants, trainers/assessors, employers, industry and other RTOs) given feedback on the assessment processes and tools used so that they might be improved?

Validation after assessment will focus on:

- The assessment tasks and the assessment process;
- Participants' performance;
- The assessment decisions made;
- Reporting and record keeping.

It is important that sufficient information is stored about assessment so that there is consistency across a period of time by keeping samples of participant work and assessment (e.g. selection of very good, medium, barely there and not yet competent assessments with records of evidence and comments which clearly indicate reasons for assessment).

To record the results of validation activity the following form will be used:
[Assessment Validation Template](#)

The Competency Mapping Matrix is to be updated as required.

Competency Based Assessment

Assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making judgments on whether competency has been achieved. The purpose of competency based assessment is to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace, as expressed in the relevant endorsed industry or enterprise competency standards. The best way to assess this is through holistic assessment methods that focus on whole work activities rather than specific tasks or components of a work activity.

Assessment should be:

Valid: Assessment techniques assess what they claim to assess.

Reliable: Assessment approaches provide consistent results every time.

Fair: Ensure that same assessment is used for each learner or situation while still being flexible.

Flexible: Able to assess different ways – e.g. verbal, doing, question and answer.

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The following technical principles will assist assessors to undertake assessment that meets these four requirements:

Valid:

Does the assessment covers what it claims to assess? Does the evidence cover the range of knowledge and skills, and the application of such knowledge and skills, as specified in the competency standards?

Validity of assessments can be enhanced when:

- the assessment focuses on the appropriate areas of competence and skills and a sufficient range of the performance of the person being assessed is sampled;
- the assessment tasks resemble those encountered in the workplace;
- evidence of performance is obtained over time rather than on a one-off occasion to support predictive validity;
- evidence is gathered of transfer to new situations other than that used for assessment;
- the assessment procedure documents the links to workplace performance;
- multiple approaches to assessment are used; and

Reliable:

This refers to the consistency of the interpretation of evidence and the assessment outcomes. To make reliable assessments, assessors must be competent assessors, have the relevant technical/specialist competencies or have access to a subject matter expert who can advise the assessor on the relevant competencies at least to the level being assessed.

Can the assessment methods and procedures used be relied upon to apply consistently from person to person, context to context, and time to time? Is there consistency in interpretation of evidence between assessors?

Applying the following practices enhances reliability:

- comparing the results of two or more assessors (moderation);
- collecting evidence via a number of different assessment methods;
- collecting evidence across different locations and times;
- providing clear and careful instructions when a student is requested to provide his/her own assessment evidence;
- specifying clearly the competencies to be attained;
- detailing clearly the assessment criteria and processes for self/peer/supervisor assessment;
- use of consultation in the development of assessment tools, and
- providing professional development opportunities of assessors

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Fair:

A fair assessment will not disadvantage any person and will take into account the characteristics of the person being assessed.

An assessor should ask:

- Are the assessment practices and methods equitable for all persons being assessed?
- Has there been opportunity for reasonable adjustment?
- Have assessment requirements been made clear to all persons being assessed?
- Were persons being assessed given opportunities to provide feedback in regard to the process of assessment?
- Is there provision for a review and an appeal of assessment decisions?
- Is there provision for reassessment?

Flexible:

Flexibility allows for assessment in a variety of ways.

Flexibility also allows for a process for students to seek skills recognition for prior learning and current competency.

To be flexible assessment should:

- cover both on and off the job competence of training where applicable;
- provide for the recognition of competencies no matter how, where or when they have been acquired;
- draw on a range of methods and be appropriate to the context, task and person; and
- be made accessible to the person(s) being assessed so that they can proceed readily from one competency standard to another.

Responsibility	Institute Manager
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