VET Assessment System Policy

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) The University is committed to implementing a Vocational Education and Training (VET) assessment system that ensures all assessment, including recognition of prior learning: complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant Training Package or VET Accredited Course; and is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence.

(2) The University's VET Assessment System comprises a coordinated set of documented policies and procedures (including assessment tools) that ensure assessments are consistent and are based on the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence.

Section 2 - Statement of Authority

(3) The authority behind this policy is the Charles Darwin University Act 2003 part 3, section 15.

Section 3 - Compliance

(4) This is a compliance requirement under the:

a. Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015; and
b. National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

Section 4 - Intent

(5) The system ensures that: assessment judgements are consistently made on a sound basis; and validation of assessment judgements is carried out.

Section 5 - Relevant Definitions

(6) In the context of this document:

a. Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) means the national policy for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training system;
b. Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) means the national regulator for VET in Australia. ASQA regulates courses and training providers;
c. Assessment conditions mean the description of the context for assessment under which a student demonstrates competency, including any specific requirements for resources, trainers and assessors;
d. Assessment means the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard required in the workplace, as specified in a training package or VET accredited course;

e. Assessment tools means the instrument used to collect evidence and make judgements for an entire unit of competency or a cluster of units. An assessment tool includes the following components: context and conditions of assessment, tasks to be administered to the student, an outline of the evidence to be gathered from the candidate; and evidence criteria used to judge the quality of performance (i.e. the assessment decision-making rules). This term also takes in the administration, recording and reporting requirements, and may address a cluster of competencies as applicable for holistic assessment;
f. Assessment system means a coordinated set of documented policies and procedures (including assessment materials and tools) that ensure assessments are consistent and are based on the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence;
g. Assessment validation means the quality review of the assessment tools, processes, practices and judgements.
h. College means an academic unit or department within the University;
i. Continuous improvement means the ongoing process of change for the purpose of improvement to processes, practices, products and services. It involves the ADRI cycle of: approach, deployment, review and improvement;
j. Independent assessment validation means validation carried out by a validator/s who are not employed or subcontracted by the RTO to provide training and assessment and have no other involvement or interest in the operations of the RTO;
k. Industry means the bodies that have a stake in the services provided by the University. These can include, but are not limited to: specific enterprise/industry clients, e.g. employers; group training organisations; industry organisations; industry regulators; industry skills councils or committees; industry training advisory bodies; training advisory councils, occupational licensing bodies and unions;
l. Industry engagement is an ongoing activity where the information obtained is systematically used to develop and review the training and assessment strategies used in VET provisions;
m. Scope of Registration means the identified VET Training Products for which the University is registered to deliver and issue AQF certification documentation;
n. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) means the process by which prior learning (formal, informal or non-formal) is identified and assessed for relevance and value against the requirements of a VET course to determine the competencies that may be granted towards that course;
o. Regulation means any rule endorsed by government where there is an expectation of compliance;
p. Regulator standards mean the Standards for RTOs 2015 or its successor;
q. RTO means Registered Training Organisation;
r. Services include the training, assessment, and related educational and support services and/or any activities related to VET. It does not include services such as student counselling, mediation or information and communications technology (ICT) support;
s. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) means Australia's independent national regulator of the higher education sector;
t. Training package means a set of nationally endorsed standards, qualifications and guidelines used to recognise and assess the skills and knowledge people need to perform effectively in the workplace;
u. Training product means a VET unit, skill set or qualification registered with ASQA on the University's Scope of Registration. It also includes a VTP comprising units on the University's scope of registration; and
v. VET means Vocational Education and Training.

Section 6 - Policy

Policy Context

(7) The University's VET Assessment System ensures that:

a. in the development of an assessment strategy, VET Lecturers use the information contained in each unit of competency and assessment conditions to:
    i. engage and consult with industry in regards to the physical and human resources required for specific contexts of assessment;
    ii. develop assessment tools that are fair, flexible, valid and reliable;
    iii. set benchmarks for measuring student performance using observable behaviour; and
    iv. provide opportunities for assessment in different workplace contexts and environments.
b. in the conduct of assessment VET assessors assess students, to determine if students are capable of performing these tasks at an acceptable level, against all of the:
    i. tasks identified in the elements and performance criteria of the unit of competency;
    ii. skills, performance and knowledge evidence as specified in the unit of competency;
    iii. foundation skills; and
    iv. requirements as set out in the assessment conditions.
c. in the achievement of competency students have satisfactorily demonstrated their:
    i. ability to perform relevant tasks in a variety of workplace situations, or accurately simulated workplace situations;
    ii. understanding of what they are doing, and why, when performing tasks in the workplace; and
    iii. ability to integrate performance with an understanding, which shows they are able to adapt to different workplace contexts and environments.

Legislative Context

(8) The University's VET Assessment System is designed to comply with the VET Quality Framework comprising:

a. Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015;
b. fit and Proper Person requirements;
c. Financial Visibility Risk Assessment Requirements;
d. Data Provision Requirements; and
e. Australian Qualifications Framework.

(9) In addition to the VET Quality Framework, the University's VET Assessment System also complies with the Standards for Training Packages, Standards for VET Accredited Courses and the Standards for VET Regulators. Further aspects of the legislative context include:

a. Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS)
b. Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS)
c. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)
d. VET Assessment Principles

VET Assessment Principles

(10) The following Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence underpin and guide the University's VET Assessment System:

Principles of Assessment

Fairness

(11) The individual student's needs are considered in the assessment process.

(12) Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied to take into account the individual student's needs.

(13) The student is informed about the assessment process, and provided with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.

Flexibility

(14) Assessment is flexible to the individual student by:

a. reflecting the student's needs;
b. assessing competencies held by the student no matter how or where they have been acquired;
c. drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements and the individual.

Validity

(15) Any assessment decision is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual student. Validity requires:

a. assessment against the unit/s of competency and the associated assessment requirements covering the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance;
b. assessment of knowledge and skills integrated with practical application;
c. assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a student could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and
d. judgement of competence is based on evidence of student performance aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.

Reliability

(16) Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.

Rules of Evidence

Validity

(17) The assessor is assured that the student has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.

Sufficiency

(18) The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made of a student's competency.

Authenticity

(19) The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the student's own work.

Currency

(20) The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.

Responsibility

(21) This policy applies to all organisational units, all staff and all functions of the University involved in the conduct and/or validation of assessment practices and processes. It is inclusive of the entire University community including third party providers and partners of the University located locally, interstate or overseas.

Implementation

(22) At an operational level the University's VET Assessment system provides a set of procedures, guidelines, tip sheets, checklists, templates and forms for staff members (who are responsible for VET assessment) to ensure that:

a. VET assessment (including RPL) complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant Training Package or VET Accredited Course; and is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence;
b. VET Assessors hold the qualifications, skills and expertise to conduct valid assessment and participate in assessment validation as per the Standards for RTO's 2015 or its successor;
c. students are provided with relevant Student Assessment Guides and other supporting information about assessment conditions, context, requirements and resources;
d. students are provided with enough time to practice and demonstrate competence;
e. student results are recorded and reported;
f. assessment validation of assessment tools and judgements is systematically carried out; and
g. assessment evidence and materials are retained to as per the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 or its successor.

Status and Details

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Effective Date	15th January 2022
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Responsible Executive	Louise King Provost
Implementation Officer	Lisa Papatraianou Deputy Provost
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