VET Assessment Validation Procedure

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) The University is committed to ensuring the ongoing systematic validation of assessment tools, processes, practices and judgements for all VET Training Products on its scope of registration. Assessment validation ensures the integrity of all VET assessments at the University.

Section 2 - Compliance

(2) 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 3 - Intent

(3) This document outlines the University's procedures for VET assessment validation.

Section 4 - Relevant Definitions

(4) In the context of this document:

a. Assessment means the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that a student can perform to the standard required in the workplace, as specified in a training package or VET accredited course;
b. Assessment tool 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 student; 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;
c. Assessment validation means the quality review of the assessment tools, processes, practices and judgements;
d. Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) means the national policy for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training system;
e. Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) means the national regulator for VET in Australia. ASQA regulates courses and training providers;
f. College means an academic unit or department within the University;
g. 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;
h. Curriculum Approval Proposal System (CAPS) means the system used by the University to record and store all registered VET Training Products;

i. Independent assessment validation means validation carried out by a validator who is not employed or subcontracted by the University to provide training and assessment and has no other involvement or interest in the operations of the University;
j. 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, such as 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;
k. Principles of Assessment means the principles contained in clause 1.8 of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, which includes fairness, flexibility, validity, and reliability;
l. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) means the process by which prior learning (formal, informal) 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 training product;
m. Rules of evidence means the rules contained in Clause 1.8 of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, which include validity, sufficiency, authenticity and currency;
n. School means an academic unit or department within the University;
o. Scope of Registration means the identified VET Training Products for which the University is registered to deliver and issue AQF certification documentation;
p. Services means 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;
q. Training and Assessment Strategy (TAS) means the overarching document that describes the training and assessment of a Training Product. The strategy comprises multiple documents. However, there will always be consistency between these documents so that the overall strategy is clearly described;
r. Training and Assessment Strategy (TAS) Cycle means the cycle of planning, designing, implementing and reviewing VET provisions;
s. 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;
t. Training Package Working Advisory Group (TPWAG) means staff members involved in the provision of Training Products from a particular Training Package, as well as VET Developers and other stakeholders;
u. Training product means a VET unit, skill set or qualification registered with ASQA on the University's Scope of Registration; and
v. VET Quality Management System (VETQMS) means the policies, procedures, processes, guideline and practices which govern and guide staff members in the planning, design, delivery and review of VET quality products and services.

Section 5 - Procedures

(5) The University is required to implement an assessment system that ensures that 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 contained in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015.

Pre-assessment Quality Assurance Process

(6) The pre-assessment quality assurance process is carried out to check assessment processes and tool/s are fit for purpose and meet the requirements of the Training Package.

(7) All assessment resources, whether purchased or designed internally, must undergo the University's quality

assurance process prior to use. The quality assurance process is designed to ensure the University's assessment tools meet the Principles of Assessment, and are likely to gather evidence that meets the Rules of Evidence, as well as any legislative or regulatory obligations. This applies to all units of competency or modules for a training product.

(8) The Training Package Working and Advisory Group will ensure that the relevant VET lecturers work together to develop assessment tools for units and/or clusters of units The quality assurance processes are to be conducted by a suitably qualified individual or a team of staff who collectively have appropriate qualifications (can be chosen by the Team Leader or the TPWAG). The assessment tool/s are to be evaluated against the:

a. unit of competency assessor requirements;
b. unit of competency requirements;
c. student and assessor instructions (including number of attempts);
d. AQF level; and
e. conditions for assessment including reasonable adjustment.

(9) The person who developed or has facilitated the use of the tool may be involved in a quality assurance process, but is not to sign off on the tool meeting the required quality standard.

(10) The Training Package Working Advisory Group will ensure recommendations from the quality assurance processes are actioned before the assessment tool/s are used.

Assessment Validation

(11) Assessment validation is a quality review process to check that the assessment tools produced valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence for assessors that to make reasonable judgements as to whether the requirements of the units and training product have been met and that assessment judgements are consistently applied. This activity is a quality review and is not intended to be used to make changes to assessment outcomes.

(12) The Chair of the VET Learning and Teaching Committee Chair is responsible for developing, implementing and reviewing a documented plan for conducting Post-Assessment Validation that meets the requirements of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015.

The Schedule for Assessment Validation

(13) The Assessment Validation Schedule (AVS) is a five-year plan where each training product must be reviewed at least once in that five-year period. At least 50% of training products on the University's scope of registration are validated within the first three (3) years of each five-year cycle. Validation of training products may occur more frequently if risk indicators demonstrate that more frequent validation is required. Indicators of risk might include:

a. the use of new assessment tools;
b. delivery of training products where safety is a concern;
c. the level and experience of the assessor;
d. changes in technology, workplace processes, legislation, and licensing requirements;
e. qualifications identified by the regulator as 'high-risk';
f. assessment conducted under a third-party agreement;
g. the number of locations where assessment is conducted;
h. the number of students;
i. the mode of assessment such as RPL or on-line;
j. feedback from clients, trainers and assessors; and
k. audit and validation history.

Maintaining the Schedule

(14) The Accreditation and Registration Team will maintain the Assessment Validation Schedule, on the VETQMS Staff Intranet site, to reflect changes to the University's scope of registration. The Accreditation and Registration Team will:

a. update the Schedule whenever a course proposal is completed in the Curriculum Approval Proposal System or when notification from ASQA has been received, whichever is applicable; and
b. replace superseded training products on the Schedule with the most recent version, once they are approved through the VETQMS Training and Assessment Strategy (TAS) Cycle Procedure.

(15) The most recent version of training products will be scheduled for assessment validation at least six (6) months after its initial delivery, to ensure the sample of student evidence selected will be from the most recent version. If this unduly changes the five-year plan and jeopardises the 50% rule, then other training products may need to be moved up the schedule to compensate.

(16) New additions to the University scope are added to the end of the schedule.

Validation Sample

(17) Stand-alone units of competency are to be treated as individual training products.

(18) When validating a whole qualification, accredited course or a skill set, the assessment practices and judgements of at least two (2) units of competency must be validated. At least one (1) of the two (2) units selected must be characteristic of the qualification and not a generic unit such as communication or health and safety.

(19) The number of units to be validated are to be expanded when the assessment practices and judgements from the initial two (2) units of competency are deemed to be significantly not valid by the validation team.

(20) The Accreditation and Registration Team will extract sample data for the scheduled training product due for a post-assessment validation, in the first week after the review period.

Validation Scheduled	Review Period		Data Available
	Start Date	End Date	
Term 1	1 July	31 December	3-10 Jan
Term 2	1 October	31 March	1-7 April
Term 3	1 Jan	30 June	1-7 July
Term 4	1 April	31 September	1-7 October

(21) The sample is chosen from the population of students who have been resulted with an assessment judgement CA, NYC, RPL-NOT or RPL grade in the previous six (6) months for the selected units from the scheduled training product.

(22) The sample data will include:

a. two (2) units of competency from the training product scheduled of validation; and
b. the Student ID, Result and Team Location.

Internal Validation

(23) The Accreditation and Registration Team will provide the Education Program Managers with:

a. two (2) units of competency from the qualification chosen for validation;
b. sample size calculated using ASQA Assessment Validation Sample Size calculator; and
c. student IDs selected for the sample using a random selection process.

External Independent Validation

(24) A statistically valid sample will be chosen for each course, giving due regard to the cohorts involved, and the locations the course is delivered to.

Selecting the Validation Team

(25) Team Leaders will review Staff Qualification Matrices, and Professional Development records and qualifications to select appropriate staff to perform the validation.

(26) Education Program Managers (or equivalent) will select the assessment validation team to ensure VET Training Products are compliant with quality standards. They will identify the trainers and assessors for the students in the sample selected and choose a validation team whose members are independent of delivery and assessment of the training product being validated and, particularly, the assessment judgements being considered. This selection helps to maintain professional distance and integrity.

(27) Collectively, the post-assessment validation team must hold:

a. vocational competencies and current industry skills relevant to the assessments being validated;
b. current knowledge and skills in vocational learning and teaching; and
c. TAE40110 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (or successor) or TAE00001 Assessor Skill Set (or successor) or a higher-level adult education qualification.

(28) Industry experts may also be involved in validation to ensure there is a combination of expertise.

(29) Trainers and assessors who conducted the assessment judgement may be involved in validation activities, provided they are not directly involved in deciding the validation outcome for their own students. These staff members should be made aware of any students who they have trained or assessed within the sample.

Planning the Validation

(30) Education Program Managers will determine and communicate to the validation team:

a. the way the post-assessment validation will be managed;
b. how much time will be required to complete it;
c. the deadline for completion; and
d. the time, date and location through the Outlook Calendar.

Collecting the Documents

(31) The validation team will collect:

a. the assessment tools and the corresponding Assessment Cover Sheets and Feedback forms used to record the final unit assessment judgements;

b. the Assessor Guides including assessment mapping;
c. the Pre-Assessment Validation Report;
d. the Unit of Competency for the Training Package from the national register (training.gov.au) and companion volume/implementation guide;
e. the Training and Assessment Strategy;
f. the Unit Outline;
g. the Student Assessment Guide; and
h. student assessment evidence.

(32) In the case of RPL assessment judgements, the evidence collected should include all evidence provided by the student and the assessor's mapping of that student evidence against the unit requirements.

(33) In the case of assessments where the selected unit is one (1) in a cluster of units, all units in the cluster should be reviewed.

Conducting the Validation

(34) The validation team will consider all the collected assessment documents and student evidence to validate the assessment tools, practices and the assessors' judgements.

(35) They will check that the assessment tools produced valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence to make reasonable judgements about whether the Training Package requirements have been met. Only the evidence in the sample is used to determine if it is valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic.

(36) The validation outcomes may identify recommendations for improvement to the assessment tool, assessment practices or assessment outcomes. If critical issues arise in the review process the validation team can:

a. increase the validation sample size to assist in identifying patterns of issue;
b. validate completed assessments from other units of competency to see if the issue is spread across the whole qualification; and/or
c. look for patterns of error, for example, consider if it is one (1) assessor making invalid judgements. This could indicate the assessor requires further development in training and assessment practice.

(37) The validation team will record the outcomes of the assessment validation and if applicable, any recommendations for future improvements to the assessment tools, practices and/or outcomes in the Assessment Validation Report form.

(38) The Assessment Validation Report form is signed and dated by all members of the validation team and uploaded to the Training Package Repository Site, together with the following evidence:

a. Names of the members on the validation team including their qualifications skills and knowledge;
b. sample pool;
c. student evidence;
d. assessment tools; and
e. changed/improved assessment tools, assessor guides and student assessment guides.

Conducting Rectifications and Improvements

(39) Where the assessment validation outcomes recommend rectifications and improvements to assessment tools and practices the Training Package Working Advisory Group will implement the recommendations across all Training Products in that Training Package, by the date nominated on the Assessment Validation Schedule.

(40) Any identified professional development for assessors should also be conducted in a timely manner. Heads of School/College Deans must ensure that all actions identified as part of the assessment validation process are implemented by the nominated date.

(41) If there is a requirement for the Training and Assessment Strategy to be updated this must be completed through the Curriculum Approval Proposal System and a Request to Amend Registered Qualification (Unit) and/or (Delivery) forms.

(42) The Training Package Working Advisory Group is responsible for identifying and communicating any systemic changes that emerge from an analysis of all validation findings. The Chair will ensure rectifications are implemented, monitored, checked and signed off on the Assessment Validation Schedule within three (3) months of completion of the assessment validation report.

(43) Independent assessment validation involves the engagement of an external validator/s. The method for choosing external validators is based on the requirements of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 or its successors.

Records

(44) All assessment and validation documents must be stored and retained in accordance with the University's Records and Information Management Policy and Procedure and Retention Schedules and in line with the VET Training Package Repository Site Procedures. Hard copy assessment evidence should be kept in an agreed location by the Training Package Working Advisory Group.

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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