Assessment in the vocational education and training (VET) sector is the process of ‘collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved and to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace, as expressed by the relevant endorsed industry/enterprise competency standards of a Training Package or by the learning outcomes of an accredited course.’
Contents

Section 1 Assessment framework ................................................................................. 4
  1.1 Assessment ........................................................................................................ 4
  1.2 National requirements ...................................................................................... 4
  1.3 Assessment in TAFE NSW ............................................................................... 4
  1.4 Resources ......................................................................................................... 6

Section 2 Planning assessment .................................................................................. 8
  2.1 Determining the purpose and approach to assessment ..................................... 8
  2.2 Developing a training and assessment strategy .................................................. 9

Section 3 Developing assessment tools ................................................................... 13
  3.1 Assessment tools ............................................................................................. 13
  3.2 The focus of the assessment tools ..................................................................... 13
  3.3 Designing assessment tools ............................................................................. 13
  3.4 Reviewing and trialling the tools ...................................................................... 16

Section 4 Conducting assessment ............................................................................. 17
  4.1 Assessment of competency ................................................................................ 17
  4.2 Evidence-based assessment ............................................................................. 18
  4.3 Supporting the learner ...................................................................................... 19
  4.4 Making the assessment decision ...................................................................... 19
  4.5 Recognition of prior learning (RPL) ................................................................. 21

Section 5 Reviewing assessment ............................................................................... 23
  5.1 Validation and moderation ............................................................................... 23
  5.2 Validating assessment ...................................................................................... 24
  5.3 Resources ......................................................................................................... 27

Section 6 Student assessment guides ..................................................................... 28
  6.1 Student assessment guide–course .................................................................... 28
  6.2 Student assessment guide – units ................................................................... 29

Section 7 Recording assessment ............................................................................... 32
  7.1 Recording and reporting assessment .................................................................. 32
  7.2 Graded qualifications ....................................................................................... 32
  7.3 Grade codes and result codes .......................................................................... 32

Section 8 Assessment equity ...................................................................................... 33
  8.1 Assessment equity ............................................................................................ 33
  8.2 Review of learner results and appeals .............................................................. 34
  8.3 Late or absent assessment ................................................................................ 36
  8.4 Attempts at an assessment ................................................................................. 37
  8.6 Assessing and reporting the achievement of learners with disabilities .......... 37
  8.7 Reasonable adjustment for learners with disabilities undertaking assessment ... 38
8.8 Concessional examinations ................................................................................................. 39
8.9 Use of bilingual dictionaries ............................................................................................... 40
8.10 Ethical practice and conflict of interest in assessment for purposes of learner selection, recognition of prior learning or achievement within a learning program .... 40
8.11 Issuing a testamur ............................................................................................................... 40
8.12 Resources .......................................................................................................................... 41
Section 1 Assessment framework

This section covers:
  1.1 Assessment
  1.2 National requirements
  1.3 Assessment in TAFE NSW
  1.4 Resources

1.1 Assessment

1.1.1 Assessment Guidelines

‘Assessment Guidelines for TAFE NSW’ were previously published as ‘Everyone’s Guide to Assessment’. They are implementation guidelines attached to the TAFE NSW Assessment Policy–TAFE NSW PD/2005/0173/V04

1.1.2 Assessment definition

Assessment in the vocational education and training (VET) sector is the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, and to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace as expressed by the relevant endorsed industry/enterprise competency standards of a Training Package or by the learning outcomes of an accredited course.¹

1.2 National requirements

1.2.1 The Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) publishes mandatory standards for training and assessment. The key documents for teachers are:

- AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration
- AQTF User’s Guide to the Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration

These documents include 9 Conditions of registration and 3 standards relating to quality training and assessment, principles of access and equity and management systems which meet the needs of clients, staff and stakeholders.

AQTF User’s Guide to the Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration (pp 55-56) outlines the training and assessment competencies to be held by teachers.

1.2.2 The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) links together qualifications from schools, VET and the higher education sector and is a highly visible, quality-assured national system of educational recognition. It includes specifications for 14 AQF levels for qualifications from senior secondary certificate, VET certificates and diplomas to a doctoral degree.

¹ NQC Training Package Glossary (Training Package Development Handbook)
The AQF Handbook provides a detailed guide for the implementation of the framework. The AQF framework includes policies on issuing student documentation including transcripts and testamurs and learning pathways including articulation, credit transfer and recognition of prior learning.

### 1.3 Assessment in TAFE NSW

#### 1.3.1 Nationally recognised training

Assessment requirements in TAFE NSW relate only to nationally recognised training which includes training package qualifications, accredited courses, accredited short courses or units of competency associated with skill sets and TAFE NSW developed statements of attainment. For more information refer to the Summary of types of courses in TAFE NSW. Assessment can be in relation to delivery and assessment or assessment only which includes recognition of prior learning.

#### 1.3.2 Requirements of Nationally recognised training

Assessment in TAFE NSW must meet the requirements of the endorsed components of training packages and the outcomes specified in accredited courses within the scope of its registration. Regardless of whether it occurs through a ‘training and assessment pathway’ or an ‘assessment-only pathway’, assessment must:

- conform to the Assessment Guidelines included in the nationally endorsed Training Packages or the assessment requirements specified in Accredited courses
- lead to the issuing of a qualification or statement of attainment. This can only occur when a person is assessed as competent against nationally endorsed unit(s) of competency in the applicable Training Package or accredited course
- comply with the principles of validity, reliability, fairness and flexibility
- Provide learners with information about the context and purpose of the assessment and the assessment process
- where relevant, focus on the application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the appropriate context and cover all aspects of performance, including task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills
- involve the evaluation of enough evidence to enable judgments to be made about whether competency has been achieved
- provide for feedback to the learner about the results of the assessment process and guidance on future options
- be equitable for everyone, taking into account the cultural and linguistic needs of the learner
- allow for reassessment on appeal.

#### 1.3.3 Evidence based assessment

Assessment conducted is valid, reliable, consistent and fair. Assessors gather evidence against the competency standards based on evidence of skills and knowledge the learner possesses. They form a sound judgment of the learner's skills and knowledge based on a sufficiency and variety of evidence.

Assessors ask learners to undertake activities which provide evidence as to their:
**level of knowledge and understanding**
**capacity to follow a required process**
**capacity to bring a range of skills and knowledge together to create a product to a required standard.**

### 1.3.4 Holistic assessment

Holistic integrated delivery and assessment is the integrated delivery and assessment of several units of competency together instead of delivery and assessment of each unit of competency separately. It may occur in workplace/community learning and assessment and in off-the-job assessment aiming to closely reflect workplace or actual practice. This is happening, not only in TAFE NSW, but also throughout Australia.

This form of delivery and assessment promotes assessment which better reflects actual workplace practice/community perspective. It is also more cost-effective as it avoids the duplication which can occur across units of competency.

However, you need to be particularly aware of the following:

- all elements of all the units of competency must be properly addressed in the assessment process;
- extra care must therefore be taken to meet audit requirements for recording learner participation in this form of delivery;
- the actual number of units clustered together must reflect what is manageable. In most cases that would be no more than four or five units clustered together

**Key requirements for holistic assessment include:**

- units of competency clustered together for purposes of delivery and assessment should be a natural grouping and reflect skills and knowledge that would be implemented together in workplace practice/community situations
- development of a learning and assessment program
- at the planning stage, consideration is given to the way in which each of the clustered units of competency will be assessed and how an appropriate result may be awarded for each
- actual hours of delivery must be realistic and provide learners with sufficient learning time with teacher/trainer involvement
- where no evidence of participation in a specific unit of competency is available, a result of NS must be recorded.

### 1.4 Resources

#### 1.4.1 TAFE NSW

**Systems:**
- Course Information System (CIS) and Training and Assessment Strategy form through [Course Information Documents Online](https://cidogateway.tafe.nsw.edu.au) (CIDO)

**Policies and procedures** site on the DET intranet for TAFE NSW policies associated with assessment:

- [Aboriginal Education and Training Policy](https://www.det.nsw.gov.au)
- [Assisting Students with Learning Difficulties](https://www.det.nsw.gov.au)
- [Assessment Policy](https://www.det.nsw.gov.au)
- [Intellectual Property](https://www.det.nsw.gov.au)
- [Student Selection Policy - TAFE NSW](https://www.det.nsw.gov.au)
- **Student Records**
- **Alcohol and Other Drugs: Policy Framework for TAFE NSW Institutes**
- **Student Identification in Final Examinations Policy - TAFE NSW**
- **Credit Pathways Policy**
- **Students with Disabilities**
- **Complaints and Conduct**
- **Roll Policy - TAFE NSW**
- **Discipline & Behaviour**
- **Students With Disability**
- **TAFE Disposals Schedules**
- **Code of Conduct Policy**
- **Credit arrangements policy-TAFE NSW**
- **Student documentation**
- **Complaints Handling Policy**
- **Student Administrative Management Policy**
- **Records Management Policy**

**TAFE NSW Intranet sites:**

- **Training and Education Support**
- **TAFE Customer Support**
- **DET International and TAFE NSW National Business**
- **TAFE Strategy**
- **TAFE portal - MyTAFE** for resources for training package qualifications and accredited course documents and Units
- Department of Education and Training (DET) [Teaching and Learning Exchange](https://talef) (TaLE).

**1.4.2 State**

- **Vocational Education and Training Board**

**1.4.3 National**

- **Training package development handbook**
- **Glossary** (National terms)
- **National Industry Skills Committee** (NISC)
- **Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)**
- **Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Implementation Handbook**
- **Product Services** (TVET Australia)
- **NQC Publications** (National Quality Council)
- **Industry Skills Councils**
- **National Training Information System** (NTIS)
- **Teaching and Learning** (NCVER)
- **Training Packages @ Work**
- **What Makes Good Online Learning**
- **The Role of the Teacher** (Online learning)
- **Training.com.au**
Section 2 Planning assessment

This section covers:
  2.1 Determining the purpose and approach for assessment
  2.2 Developing a training and assessment strategy

2.1 Determining the purpose and approach for assessment

It is critical to develop an assessment plan that will be used to guide assessors in conducting competency based assessments.

The planning and organising of an assessment process, including recognition of prior learning (RPL), may involve single or multiple candidates being assessed against single or multiple units of competency.

The planning process involves developing a training and assessment strategy (see 2.2 below) as the overall framework for the assessment at a particular qualification level.

Generally, the planning process will involve steps such as:

- identifying the specific target group and confirming the purpose and context (e.g. workplace/simulation) of the assessment with appropriate people according to legal, organisational and ethical requirements
- deciding if the assessment will be based on recognition of prior learning (RPL), a learning and assessment pathway or a combination of approaches
- basing the development of the plan on the Training and Assessment Strategy
- Identifying and confirming the benchmarks for assessment (e.g. the criterion against which the candidate is assessed or prior learning recognised such as competency standard, assessment criteria from accredited course curricula, performance and/or product specifications)
- interpreting the assessment benchmarks to determine the evidence required to demonstrate competency
- making certain that all aspects of the competency standards are covered in the assessment
- making certain that assessment/recognition of prior learning (RPL) methods and tools are selected and confirming that they address the evidence to be collected in line with the principles of assessment (fairness, flexibility, reliability and validity)
- making certain that all resources needed to gather the evidence are identified, available and recorded
- clarifying the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the assessment process
- Identifying and recording timelines and time periods for evidence collection
- confirming the assessment/recognition of prior learning (RPL) plan with relevant people.
The learners must be informed of any referencing requirements, the differences between cooperative learning, group work and collusion, and the consequences of plagiarism and ‘cheating’.

Learners must also be informed of the learner appeals process (refer to section 8).

2.2 Developing a training and assessment strategy

2.2.1 Training and assessment strategy

A training and assessment strategy documents the delivery and assessment arrangements for each training package qualification, accredited course or unit of competency listed on Scope. It is a clear plan for delivery and assessment which is developed for a specific target group and specific mode of delivery.

A training and assessment strategy includes:

- qualification/accredited course title, national code and TAFE NSW course code
- course entry requirements
- core and elective units of competency
- nominal duration
- information about the target group
- information about the industry/community consultation undertaken to determine target group needs, and how the course is designed to meet any specific requirements
- co-requisites and pre-requisites if applicable
- Information about how the course meets any licensing and/or regulatory requirements
- scheduling or timetabling of the course – including any clustering of units for integrated/holistic delivery
- methods of delivery, location of delivery and assessment and timing of assessment activities
- information about graded assessments if applicable
- Assessment validation methods
- resources required including teacher qualifications, staff that might be required, equipment and materials
- information about how the course will be monitored and reviewed

The reason for having a clear strategy for training and assessment is to make certain that accurate and current information about the delivery and assessment is readily available to everyone who may need it. The training and assessment strategy is targeted at:

- managers and administrators who need to make certain that resources are budgeted and available
- teachers/trainers who will follow the strategy
- learners who want to know how the course will be delivered and assessed
- auditors who want to make sure that the quality of delivery and assessment of qualifications meets standards.

2.2.2 Steps to developing a training and assessment strategy

2 Training and assessment strategy information is available at Scope policies and procedures on the Training and Education Support intranet
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify the local contact for this qualification/accredited course. This will be the person who puts the T &amp; A Strategy together and is the one who will answer any questions about it</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Identify the relevant training package (if a TP qualification) and provide a link to staff so that they can access the TP. Provide NTIS link to the relevant training package qualification to staff, if applicable</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Identify the relevant target group for this qualification/accredited course Describe the cohort to whom you will deliver this qualification/accredited course and identify any special learning needs they may have</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Provide information on industry and community consultation including dates and outcomes Outline consultation undertaken with industry, licensing bodies or community groups to inform the development of this delivery and assessment plan: Choice of electives Delivery mode Workplace changes Target group needs? Evidence could be a link to emails, minutes of meetings etc.</td>
<td>Manager Business Line or delegate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify pre-requisites and co-requisites for the delivery of this qualification/accredited course if applicable Check packaging rules on NTIS for this qualification, or course completion requirements for accredited courses, to ensure that delivery &amp; assessment requirements have been met by this strategy</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Identify core and elective units of competency, and any additional units in the course structure Additional units - under certain circumstances TAFE NSW or the Board of Studies or licensing requirements identifies the need for additional units to meet client needs or licensing requirements</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steps</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7.</strong> Identify human and physical resources that are required</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check training package (on NTIS) or accredited course (in course documents) for resource requirements e.g. facilities, equipment, teacher qualifications, support staff, software, arrangements organised to use industry equipment, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.</strong> Identify delivery modes and locations, and methods of collecting evidence for each unit of competency</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the specific target group for delivery of this qualification record:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How the unit will be delivered - online; on the job; block release etc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How the unit will be assessed eg: project; written exam; observation etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.</strong> Identify sequencing of units and clustering/integration of units.</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show units (clusters) for delivery, including timing, in table form.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10.</strong> Identify staffing details for the delivery of each unit of competency.</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare a table to identify unit of competency, staff member to deliver/assess, their trainer &amp; assessor qualifications and their vocational qualifications.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11.</strong> Identify any direct supervision arrangements, if applicable.</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specify any direct supervision arrangements for staff who do not hold the appropriate training or assessment competencies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12.</strong> Develop assessment tools for two units of competency.</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For a ‘new’ qualification at Scope, one core unit and one industry specific elective relevant to the target group must be fully developed and documented here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13.</strong> Identify the location of all tools for the qualification.</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When all assessment tools are developed they need to be accessible by teaching staff involved in delivering the qualification/ accredited course.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is recommended that these assessment tools be</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steps</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Develop an assessment validation plan and strategies. Create a clear plan to monitor and review assessment practices, materials &amp; tools to make certain that they are consistent, valid, reliable and fair. This plan will identify high risk assessment areas and include teacher and learner feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Upload the T &amp; A Strategy on the designated area for Scope/ATR processes and for reference for future delivery. Need to ensure that all relevant staff can access and know where to find the latest T &amp; A Strategy. Version control is required on documentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Review the T &amp; A Strategy The T &amp; A Strategy should be monitored and improved through feedback from relevant staff, learners and industry on a regular basis. Ensure version control on documentation to reflect modifications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>A new T &amp; A Strategy is developed for each specific target group. A T &amp; A Strategy needs to be created to document the needs of each specific cohort for each course/qualification.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.4 Access a training and assessment strategy checklist from the TES intranet,

[Training & Assessment Strategy Checklist](#)
Section 3 Developing assessment tools

This section covers:
- 3.1 Assessment tools
- 3.2 The focus of the assessment tools
- 3.3 Designing the tools
- 3.4 Reviewing and trialling the tools

3.1 Assessment tools

3.1.1 Assessment tools include the following components:

- context and conditions for the assessment
- tasks to be administered to the candidate
- outline of the evidence to be gathered from the candidate
- evidence criteria used to judge the quality of performance (i.e., the assessment decision making rules/scoring rubrics)
- administrative, recording and reporting requirements.

3.1.2 Instruments are the specific questions or activities that are developed from the chosen assessment methods to be used for the assessment.

3.1.3 Procedures are the instructions given to the candidate (and/or the assessor) about the conditions of the assessment.

3.2 The focus of the assessment tools

3.2.1 The development of relevant and effective assessment tools depends on:

- a proper interpretation of the assessment benchmarks to determine the amount and type of evidence that is needed to demonstrate competency
- making certain that the chosen tools are appropriate and relevant to the clearly identified target group, context and purpose of the assessment
- assessment methods effectively addressing all of the evidence requirements
- meeting organisational, legal and ethical requirements
- designing and developing the assessment tool documentation.

3.3 Designing assessment tools

3.3.1 Assessment tools are designed to address the specific evidence to be collected based on assessment activities which:

- meet the competency standards
- reflect the principles of assessment (validity, reliability, flexibility, fairness)
- incorporate the principles of equity
- provide choice where appropriate
- are sequenced to reflect competency development in a learning and assessment pathway
- reflect the assessment environment
- are practicable.

3.3.2 Assessment tools are developed using appropriate:
3.3.3 Types of assessment tools

The full range of assessment tools that can be designed is limited only by the creativity of the assessors who design them. The table below describes some of the most common tools:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of tool</th>
<th>Description of tool</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation checklists</td>
<td>Used in the classroom, simulated or real workplace or in the ‘field’ to assess candidate performance of a task or visual record of performance (eg video recording).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work sample checklists</td>
<td>Used to evaluate products the candidate has completed at work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd party reports</td>
<td>Include supervisor reports, peer reports and client evaluations of the candidate’s skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>Include true/false, multiple-choice, multiple-response, short answer, cloze questions, reports and essays. These can be written or verbal as required for the competency or candidate needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>Involve candidate’s application of knowledge or performance of skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case studies or scenarios</td>
<td>Provide example environment for candidate’s performance of skills or application of knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment guide</td>
<td>Set out instructions for the assessor to use when assessing the candidate’s answers to questions or their written reports or assignments, or when assessing candidate’s performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions to candidates</td>
<td>Set out instructions for the candidate when performing or just before the assessment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3.4 Steps to designing an assessment tool:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Determine assessment process for unit(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consider:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• the training and assessment strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• the assessment guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• underpinning knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• grading category if applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steps</td>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. Develop/select assessment tools for the specific purpose, context, and group of learners. | Assessment tools should be in accordance with:  
- cultural sensitivity  
- equity principles.  
Assessors working with learners from non-English speaking backgrounds and with students who identify themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander should be aware of the cultural differences and make any changes to assessment practices. |
| 3. Maintain version control of assessment tools.                     | Assessment tools must follow an appropriate version control process including:  
- version number/development date  
- training package/accredited course  
- unit codes.                                                                                                                                 |
| 4. Participate in validation as required.                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

### 3.3.5 Assessment categories

The four assessment categories listed below are a shorthand way of providing information about the way a unit of competency is assessed. These categories are used only for TAFE NSW assessments.

- **Category A** - two results are entered on to the Student Information System (SIS) for each learner - the class result and the examination result. These are combined on a 50/50 basis to arrive at the final result. The examination is centrally set and centrally timetabled and is centrally marked by a marking panel.
- **Category B** - one result, a coordinated result, is recorded on SIS. This result is obtained from combining the results of class assessment and an examination. The examination is centrally set and centrally timetabled but locally marked. The combination rules for the class assessments and exam are stated in the syllabus documentation.
- **Category C** - one result, a class result, is recorded on SIS for each learner. At least one assessment event is set and issued by the relevant TES Unit. It may be marked locally.
- **Category D** - one result, a class result, is recorded on SIS for each learner. This result is obtained from class assessments which are locally set and marked.
Refer to Examinations on the Training and Education Support intranet for more information about examinations and the tools associated with them. Refer also to:

*Setting, assessing and marking final examinations guidelines and procedures*

3.4 Reviewing and trialling the tools

Once developed, the draft assessment tools should be checked against evaluation criteria and, if necessary, changed or amended.

3.4.1 The assessment tool:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Is effective and relevant in meeting the competency standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Meets the principles of assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Meets the rules of evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Is appropriate to the chosen assessment methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Is appropriate to the target group and assessment context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Provides guidance on reasonable adjustment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Addresses organisational, legal and ethical requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Uses appropriate language and literacy for the intended audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Is clear, easy to use, practical, inclusive, cost effective and unbiased</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.2 Trial assessment tools

The draft assessment tools should be trialled to ensure the content and application is appropriate. The trialling could involve review by people with expertise in assessment and the relevant training package/accredited course, or a pilot test with groups of assessors and candidates.

The trial could also involve workshopping with assessors and other key stakeholders in the relevant industry/community sector.

Feedback from those involved in the trial should be collected and documented. As a result of the feedback, amendments should be made to the tools as appropriate. These revised tools should then be properly formatted and filed on the teaching section SharePoint site or similar area where they can be readily accessed.
Section 4 Conducting assessment

This section covers:
- 4.1 Assessment of competency
- 4.2 Evidence based assessment
- 4.3 Supporting the learner
- 4.4 Making the assessment decision
- 4.5 Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Assessors interpret the collected evidence and make a judgement of competency against the competency standards by applying the rules of evidence and the principles of assessment.

The assessor must access and interpret the benchmarks for assessment/recognition of prior learning (RPL) to confirm the evidence that must be collected and how it is to be collected.

The assessor must discuss with the candidate the details of the assessment/recognition of prior learning (RPL) plan and the processes that will be used. This discussion must include the opportunities for assessment, any reasonable adjustment, opportunities for re-assessment and the appeals mechanisms.

If relevant, any changes to the assessment process must be discussed and negotiated and agreed to by both the candidate and the assessor.

Refer to Quality of Assessment Practices (National Quality Council) for an overview.

4.1 Assessment of competency

Assessment of competency requires the collection of evidence. This collection of evidence should be carried out over a period of time. Sufficient evidence of achievement requires the learner to demonstrate their ability to deal with a range of events, and deal with different issues in more than one situation.

The assessment approach must include demonstration in the workplace/community setting or simulated environment to make certain that the demonstration of competency is valid and reliable.

The following should be implemented:

- assessment/recognition of prior learning (RPL) plan should be followed to guide the conduct of assessment and the assessment methods.
- assessment tools should be used to gather, organise and document evidence in a format that is suitable for determining competence.
- principles of assessment (fair, flexible, reliable, and valid) and rules of evidence (valid, current, sufficient, and authentic) should be applied in the gathering of quality evidence.
Where required, the candidate should be given opportunities for integrated assessment activities/recognition of prior learning (RPL). The assessment tools should then be modified where necessary.

Refer to: Training Package Development Handbook which includes Assessment Guidelines

Teachers and learners together have a great deal of responsibility and choice over the:

- form(s) the evidence for assessment will take and
- how the assessment is conducted.

The assessment process is not prescriptive. Rather, it should be a partnership between teacher and learner. This will enable the required range of evidence to be provided showing that the learner has met the required standard of competency. The emphasis moves from the concept of the teacher gathering evidence to the concept of the learner providing evidence.

Exceptions to this will be where:

- Category A or B examinations are specified. These may be specified for licensing purposes or because the curriculum developer considers this is the best way to ensure consistency of outcomes for the particular unit of competency
- certain assessment activities, such as tests of underpinning knowledge might not allow for variation and must be attempted to ensure fairness and validity in the assessment process.

4.2 Evidence-based assessment

There needs to be a careful consideration of a range of evidence to make a judgement.

For example:

- evidence of underpinning skills and knowledge as well as evidence that the required skills have been acquired
- evidence gained from different types of activity, in line with the different skills and knowledge being assessed and the required evidence as specified in the Unit
- the evidence provided:
  - is the learner’s own work
  - reflects actual workplace requirements where this is relevant
- evidence that the learner can use the required skills and knowledge in a holistic way if this is required by the unit of competency
- equity considerations have been addressed
- the broad assessment process and any doubts have been discussed with the head teacher
- overall, the learner has provided a sufficiency and variety of evidence to confirm the required outcomes have been achieved.

If there is any doubt about the validity, reliability or authenticity of evidence, it may be decided that further evidence is required. This is necessary to ensure the learner is awarded a fair and valid result.
4.3 Supporting the learner

Assessment processes must be valid, reliable, fair and flexible and be based on the collection of evidence and the demonstration of competence.

Assessment strategies should be:

- inclusive of the full range of learners
- not overly prescriptive
- flexible in meeting customer needs
- cost effective.

Refer to Section 8: Assessment Equity in the Assessment guidelines for TAFE NSW; Social Inclusion intranet site and Assessment policy and guidelines for more information

4.4 Making the assessment decision

4.4.1 Assessment judgement

It is important to ensure learners are provided with sufficient opportunities to learn and practice skills and be provided with feedback before they are formally assessed. Allowance needs to be made if learners can show special circumstances preventing them from reaching the required standard on a specific occasion.

To make a judgement as to whether the candidate is ‘competent’ or ‘not yet competent’, the assessor must examine and evaluate the collected evidence to ensure that it demonstrates the competency, and that it:

- encompasses all component parts (elements, performance criteria, employability skills, range statement, evidence guide) and the dimensions of the competency
- complies with the rules of evidence (valid, current, sufficient, and authentic).

Once the decision has been made, the assessor must provide clear and constructive feedback to the candidate regarding the assessment decision. If required, the assessor should also develop a follow-up action plan with the candidate. This follow-up plan could include gap training or further learning, additional practice opportunities, additional assessment and/or evidence gathering opportunities and possibly referral to specialist support.

4.4.2 Sample assessment plan for a single unit (Replace with your own assessment plan).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Plan for Unit</th>
<th>Unit code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workplace observation</td>
<td>Case study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filename...</td>
<td>Filename...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Element 1

Element 2
| Element 3 | ✓ | ✓ |
| Element 4 | ✓ |
| Element 5 | ✓ |
| Underpinning Knowledge | ✓ | ✓ |

### Delivery Timetable

**Week 1**  
Beginning Mon ___ / ___ / ___  
List the elements / outcomes / topics that will be covered each session so students know (a) how the sessions align with assessments and (b) what they need to catch up on if absent.

**Week 2**  
Beginning Mon ___ / ___ / ___

**Week 3**  
Beginning Mon ___ / ___ / ___

**Week 4**  
Beginning Mon ___ / ___ / ___

**Week 5**  
Beginning Mon ___ / ___ / ___

**Week 6**  
Beginning Mon ___ / ___ / ___

This SAC was approved for use by:

Head Teachers’ name_____________________

Head Teachers’ signature__________________

Approval date_________________

### 4.4.3 Evidence of achievement is the learners’ own work

Cheating is something which must be guarded against as far as possible. However, as teachers are familiar with the standard of a learner’s work generally, it is possible for an informed judgment to be made and for issues to be followed up if necessary.
Where relevant for the type of assessment, it is suggested that learners be required to fill out a student declaration form stating that the assignment they are submitting is their own work and any material sourced from elsewhere is referenced, whether the assignment is submitted electronically or in person.

Learners are warned in Every Student’s Guide to Assessment in TAFE NSW that if they use someone else’s work without acknowledgement, they are cheating and penalties apply. Refer to the Student discipline policy which will inform you as to what you may do if you find out that some form of cheating has occurred.

### 4.5 Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is an assessment process that involves assessment of the individual’s relevant prior learning to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application against the requirements of the qualification. This is in respect of both entry requirements and the competencies to be achieved.

Recognition of prior learning can only be for a whole unit.

Credit arrangements and recognition of prior learning (RPL) should be explained to students when they enrol.

The recognition of prior learning (RPL) assessment process should:

- Be of minimal time and cost to the learners (and fulfil assessment requirements)
- Provide enough information and support so that learners can gather reliable evidence to support their claim for recognition of competencies currently held, regardless of how, when or where the prior learning occurred
- Ensure that evidence is valid, authentic, current and sufficient and that the process is fair, flexible, reliable and valid
- Be undertaken by appropriately qualified staff with expertise in the subject, content or skills area as well as knowledge of, and expertise in, RPL assessment policies and procedures
- Be to the same standard as other assessment for the relevant qualification components
- Accommodate the literacy levels, cultural background and experiences of learners and it should not be proxy for the assessment of skills such as literacy except where these are intrinsic to the elements of the competencies
- Provide a range of ways for learners to demonstrate that they have achieved the competency.

#### 4.5.1 Steps to the recognition of prior learning assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Establish the purpose of the assessment</td>
<td>Refer to the Recognition of prior learning (RPL) procedure and Section 4: Recognition of prior learning in the Credit pathways guidelines on the Training and Education Support intranet for details about the RPL assessment process. Refer also to the Assessment policy and the Credit Arrangements policy on the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Identify the evidence required
   Interview the applicant and ensure the applicant has sufficient information that will allow them to provide accurate evidence about the target unit(s)

3. Use appropriate evidence gathering (assessment) methods and tools

4. Interpret the evidence and make a judgement

5. Record the outcome
   Refer to the ‘Credit Arrangements Guidelines’ on the Training and Education Support intranet and Enrolments on the Student Administration intranet for details about enrolment adjustment forms and reporting outcomes.

6. Report to Key internal stakeholders

Recognition of prior learning involves the recognition of previous work and/or life experience. This includes non-formal and informal learning as well as any formal learning which contributes to the assessment outcome. Credit Transfer recognises formal education achieved at any Registered Training Organisation (RTO) which is the same as or equivalent to the target qualification/unit of competency.

Refer to ‘Credit Arrangements Guidelines’ and procedures on the Training and Education Support intranet for more detailed information on the Recognition of prior learning (RPL) assessment process.

4.5.2 Gap training

National policy allows for recognition of prior learning (RPL) for a complete unit of competency, but does not recognise achievement below this level. Gap training may follow Recognition of prior learning assessment.

Important references are:

- [Section 4: Recognition of prior learning](#) (guidelines)
- [Recognition of prior learning (RPL) procedure](#) (procedure)
Section 5 Reviewing assessment

This section covers:
- 5.1 Validation and moderation
- 5.2 Validating assessment
- 5.3 Resources

5.1 Validation and moderation

Although these two terms are often used interchangeably, they have different functions:

**Moderation** (in assessment) is the process of establishing comparability of standards of student performance across different courses, institutions or organisations, in order to ensure that assessment is valid, reliable and fair.

**Validation** (in assessment) is the process of ensuring that there is consistency of assessment outcomes and assessment items and events assess what they aim to assess.

The distinctive features of validation and moderation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Validation</th>
<th>Moderation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment quality/Management type:</strong></td>
<td>Quality review</td>
<td>Quality control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary purpose:</strong></td>
<td>Continuous improvement</td>
<td>Bring judgements and standards into alignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timing:</strong></td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Prior to finalisation of candidate results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong></td>
<td>Assessment Tools and candidate evidence (assessor judgements desirable only).</td>
<td>Assessment Tools and candidate evidence, including assessor judgements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of approach:</strong></td>
<td>• Assessor partnerships</td>
<td>• Consensus meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consensus meetings</td>
<td>• External (moderators or panels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• External validation panels</td>
<td>• Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes:</strong></td>
<td>Recommendations for future improvements</td>
<td>Recommendations for future improvements and adjustments to assessor judgements (if required)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taken from: National Quality Council A code of Professional Practice for Validation and Moderation 2009

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Training and Education Support Portfolio
Assessment guidelines/Last updated 04/02/2011
5.2 Validating assessment

Institutes are responsible for the assessment validation processes and planning is important for the success of the validation process.

Planning and scheduling validation allows sections to ensure all qualifications are validated over a reasonable period. The development of a validation plan or action plan allows everyone involved to be aware of what is happening and also provides valuable evidence against the AQTF.

5.2.1 Planning the validation

Validation should be part of monitoring, review and other related activities already conducted within the section. Validation may tie in with questions on student feedback forms, employer evaluation forms and reports prepared by assessors about assessment.

There must be: a documented system for validation in place; evidence that the system is being used, and there must be continuous improvement procedures in place.

Assessment validation:

- Ensures assessment strategies meet the requirements of the training package or accredited course
- Encourages consistent understanding of assessment practices and processes
- Ensures methods for collecting evidence are consistent with the Training and Assessment Strategy for the qualification
- Ensures assessment tools are valid, reliable, flexible and fair
- Encourages informal networks in order to exchange information, share knowledge and promote continuous improvement
- Ensures workplace and regulatory requirements are met
- Provides an opportunity for moderation of assessment and develop benchmarks of performance
- Enables assessors to keep up to date with industry requirements
- Assists the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) to meet AQTF requirements for assessment.

The key purpose of assessment validation is to achieve and maintain effective and consistent practice in assessment and therefore ensure the integrity of the qualifications that are issued by the registered training organisation (RTO).

Assessment validation can include any activity which helps assessors to work more consistently when assessing similar competencies.

Some of the **key arrangements** to make and **documents to organise** when undertaking assessment validation are noted below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arrangements to make</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>Documents to organise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Refer to:
- Validation and Moderation - Implementation Guide
- Validation and Moderation - Guide for developing assessment tools
- Validation and Moderation - Code of Professional Practice

Training and Education Support Portfolio
Assessment guidelines/Last updated 04/02/2011
### 5.2.2 What to validate

To undertake validation, the assessment/recognition of prior learning (RPL) process must be reviewed against criteria in consultation with relevant stakeholders to improve and modify future assessment practice.

#### Assessment processes

- Briefing of candidates
- Assessment of competencies
- Debriefing of candidates and feedback provided
- Recording of results
- Evaluation and reporting of results
- Appeals and grievances received and how these are handled

#### Assessment tools

- Specific assessment tasks
- Instructions for candidates
- Guidelines to gather evidence
- Instructions for assessors
- Evidence guides, checklists used
- Examples of acceptable responses
- Description of typical competent performance

#### Evidence, and decisions made based on the evidence

- Rules of evidence can be reviewed
- Different forms of evidence can be compared
- Sources of evidence can be compared
- Critical areas of evidence can be checked
- Decisions made by different assessors using similar evidence
5.2.3 Key factors in validation

In any assessment process the teacher must ensure that the:

- evidence is valid, authentic, current and sufficient and that
- the process is fair, flexible, reliable and valid.

**Fair**

Fairness in assessment requires consideration of the individual candidates needs and characteristics. Reasonable adjustment takes into account these needs. It requires clear communications between the assessor and the candidate to ensure the candidate is fully informed about, understands and is able to participate in the assessment process, and agrees the process is appropriate. It also includes an opportunity for the person being assessed to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.

**Flexible**

To be flexible, assessment should reflect the candidates needs; establish credit arrangements for recognition of competencies no matter how, where or when they have been acquired; draw on a range of methods appropriate to the context, competency and the candidate and be accessible.

**Reliable**

Reliability refers to the degree to which evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and results in consistent assessment outcomes. Reliability requires the assessor to have the required competencies in assessment and relevant vocational competencies (or to assess in conjunction with someone who has the vocational competencies.) It can only be achieved when assessors share a common interpretation of the assessment requirements of the unit(s) being assessed.

**Valid**

An assessment is valid when the process is sound and assesses what it claims to assess. Validity requires that:

- assessment against the units of competency must cover the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance
- assessment of knowledge and skills must be integrated with their practical application

**Sufficient**

Judgment of competence must be based on sufficient evidence (that is, evidence gathered on a number of occasions and in a range of contexts using different assessment methods). The specific evidence requirements of each unit of competency provide advice on sufficiency.

5.2.4 Retaining assessment evidence

Apprenticeship and traineeship programs will require an assessment tool or task to be retained. You will need to check the requirements with the relevant contact in your Institute.

An auditor may also ask to see examples of work learners have done or are doing as part of the current assessment process. Some RTOs make photocopies of examples of written material learners have completed as assessment tasks. You will need to ask the learner’s permission to make copies of their work.
Learner’s assessment tasks do not need to be retained. It is the teachers’ records that must be retained.

Refer to TAFE Disposal’s Schedules for information on how long records must be kept.

5.3 Resources

Learning object repository network (LORN)

Validation and Moderation - Code of Professional Practice

Quality of Assessment Practices - Stage 1 Report - Part A

Quality of Assessment Practices - Stage 1 Report - Part B

Quality of Assessment Practices - Stage 2 Report
Section 6 Student assessment guides

This section covers:
  6.1 Student assessment guide (SAG) course
  6.2 Student assessment guide (SAG) unit

Teachers provide assessment information in the form of a Student Assessment Guide (SAG) for each qualification and a Student Assessment Guide (SAG) for units of competency. Guides are provided at the start of learner study.

Information downloaded from course and unit documents on CIDO populates Student Assessment Guides. These student assessment guides downloaded from CIDO do not contain enough information to meet requirements. Additional information must be added.

If downloading the Student Assessment Guide – Course and/or the Student Assessment Guide – Unit, save the documents in ‘Word’ and add additional information.

The Student Assessment Guides should provide information on:

- competence that is being assessed
- critical aspects of evidence
- how learner's will be assessed
- when and where they will be assessed
- when major assessments will be scheduled
- how feedback on learner progress will be provided
- how results will be recorded
- how to look up learner results on Student e-Services
- how to appeal if the learner believes the assessment has been unfair.

The teacher explains the content of the guides and asks the learner to sign to indicate that they have received the documents.

6.1 Student assessment guide – course

The ‘Student Assessment Guide (SAG) – Course’ can be downloaded from CIDO, saved as a 'Word' document and completed by the teacher. This Guide will need to be amended to provide sufficient information.

The downloaded information consists of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Course Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course qualification and name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE NSW Course Number &amp; Version No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Outcomes (possible occupational outcomes on course completion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What you must do to complete the course (Course structure including core and elective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Units and Pre-requisites

Requirements to receive the qualification *(statement about requirements what must be completed for the student to be course complete)*

Credit arrangements *(General information about credit arrangements formerly ‘Recognition’)*

More about Assessment *(This consists of a general statement which refers to, ‘Every Students Guide to Assessment’)*

The ‘Student Assessment Guide (SAG) – Course’ must also provide information about:

- course structure and particular requirements at a location
- how feedback will be provided and how and when results will be recorded and reported
- the availability of assistance
- Who to contact if there are problems with assessment
- Credit pathways which include credit transfer and recognition of prior learning
- the appeals process
- Review of results
- Consequences of late or missed assessments.

### 6.2 Student Assessment Guide – Units

The ‘Student assessment guide (SAG) – unit’ can be downloaded from CIDO, saved as a ‘Word’ document and completed by the teacher. This guide will need to be amended to provide sufficient information.

The downloaded information consists of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit of competency name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit of competency number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting of assessment outcomes <em>(how the result will be reported)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements to successfully complete this unit of competency <em>(Statement: Your teacher will advise you of assessment requirements for this unit of competency)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What you will need <em>(Statement: Your teacher will advise you of any resource requirements for this unit of competency)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More about assessment <em>(Statement: For information about assessment in TAFE please see &quot;Every Student’s Guide to Assessment in TAFE NSW&quot; which is available on the TAFE internet site at: <a href="http://www.tafensw.edu.au/courses/about/assessment_guide.htm">http://www.tafensw.edu.au/courses/about/assessment_guide.htm</a>)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional details for local assessment arrangements <em>(provided by the teacher)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The AQTF Users’ Guide to the Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration provides guidance on the need to inform learners about how and when assessment will be conducted, how feedback will be provided and how and when results will be recorded and reported.

Suggested approach for Student assessment guide (SAG):

Unit Name: ___ as per Training Package ____ Unit Code:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Unit purpose:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From NTIS for qualifications – from CIDO for courses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Element 1:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insert elements from the Training Package or learning outcomes and assessment criteria from the curriculum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Element 2:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insert elements from the Training Package or learning outcomes and assessment criteria from the curriculum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Pre-requisite units:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Note any unit(s) the students must have passed before enrolling in the current unit. This field need only be included if pre-requisites exist.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Assessment:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ availability of RPL or assessment - only pathway. Students need to be informed of these options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ grade code - how assessments are set and marked and, where relevant, how marks are converted to grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ assessment events - the specific types of events (for example test, assignment, practical, etc.) that will be used to assess the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ any other information, for example, additional Pass requirement conditions, which students must fulfil in order to pass a specific unit/module.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Assessment Events</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insert details of the assessment events. Include the marking guide or grading rubric so students know exactly what they need to do in order to achieve competence or a grade.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the assessments are in the form of tests, provide details of the type of questions that will be used (eg essay, short answer, calculation, True/False, multi-choice)

If the assessments are in the form of projects or similar long term events, provide the assessment instructions in advance together with the marking/grading guide.

Giving such information in advance allows students to (a) determine whether they want to request partial recognition, (b) determine whether they need to request reasonable adjustment and (c) plan their commitments to allow time for assessment activities.
Other information:

This is where you may include any other information such as (but not limited to) the following:

- Is there a **penalty for late submission** of assessment tasks?
- What is the procedure if a student is **absent** on the day of an assessment event?
- Will the teacher accept ‘**draft**’ assignments?
- All TAFE students are eligible to apply for credit for previous formal, informal and non formal learning. Refer to the Training and Education Support website for information about Credit pathways (**Articulation, Credit transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**).
- If you have a permanent or temporary condition that may prevent you successfully completing the assessment task(s) you should immediately talk with your teacher about **‘reasonable adjustment’**. This is the adjustment of the way you are assessed to take into account your condition and may include providing a support person or extra time. The assessment criteria can **not** be altered.
- If you do not agree with the mark/grade given for your assessment task, you may **appeal the assessment decision**. You should first discuss the assessment result with your teacher. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of that discussion you can access the appeal process through the staff in the campus administration office.
- For more information on assessment, refer to ‘**Every Student’s Guide to Assessment in TAFE NSW**’ which is available on the TAFE internet site at: http://www.tafensw.edu.au/courses/about/assessment_guide.htm
Section 7 Recording assessment

This section covers:

- 7.1 Recording and reporting assessment
- 7.2 Graded qualifications
- 7.3 Grade codes and result codes

7.1 Recording and reporting assessment

Results are recorded and reported using grades or marks, depending on the grade code.

- Marks are numerical results expressed as percentages.
- Grades are descriptive terms which indicate either:
  - A level of achievement such as a Pass, Credit or Distinction (referred to as graded assessment) or
  - Achievement of or unit/module criteria (referred to as ungraded assessment), with results reported as a Pass (ungraded).
  - Assessment outcomes are recorded by teachers and reported on the student transcript of academic record.

The majority of units delivered by TAFE NSW require a judgement of competent or not yet competent

7.2 Graded qualifications

Some courses are set up to provide a graded qualification, that is, the Testamur issued to the student on course completion will indicate a level of achievement, such as a Pass, Credit or Distinction.

The grade achieved is determined by a student’s results in the course modules/units specified as contributing to the award (or flagged in the course structure on CIS as ‘in-award’). Only modules/units with grade codes that provide for graded assessment can be used to contribute to the grading of the qualification. The qualification grade is calculated by averaging the numerical results achieved in each of the modules/units flagged as contributing to the qualification grading for a course.

7.3 Grade codes and result codes

A valid result or code (see above) must be recorded on a result sheet or CLAMS for each unit of competency for each learner. Each result must be supported by evidence of the learner’s achievement or participation.

TAFE NSW must retain learners’ records of attainment of units of competence and qualifications for a period of 30 years.

Refer to the Grade codes and result codes table on the TES intranet for a comprehensive summary of result codes and how results are reported.

Grade codes and valid result codes (table with guidelines)
Section 8 Assessment equity

This section covers:

8.1 Assessment equity
8.2 Review of learner results/appeals
8.3 Late or absent assessment
8.4 Attempts at an assessment
8.5 Repeat enrolment of students
8.6 Assessing and reporting the achievement of learners with disabilities
8.7 Reasonable adjustment for learners with disabilities
8.8 Concessional examinations
8.9 Use of bilingual dictionaries
8.10 Ethical practice and conflict of interest in assessment for purposes of learner selection, recognition of prior learning or achievement within a learning program
8.11 Issuing a testamur

8.1 Assessment equity

Assessment equity is met by identifying, negotiating, planning and implementing appropriate learning and assessment strategies to meet the needs of each learner.

8.1.1 The needs of learners are met by:

- Developing and implementing strategies for training delivery and assessment for each Training Package and Accredited course qualification within the scope of registration of each Institute
- Developing assessment strategies in consultation with enterprises/industry/community groups
- Identifying target groups, delivery and assessment modes and strategies, assessment validation processes and pathways
- Documenting these strategies and recording them on the Training and Assessment Strategy Form and stored on the teaching section's SharePoint site for ease of access and referral, and as a record for continuous improvement activities.

8.1.2 Assessment strategies are validated by:

- Regularly reviewing, comparing and evaluating the assessment processes, tools and evidence contributing to judgments made by a range of assessors against the same competency standards and
- Documenting any action taken to improve the quality and consistency of assessment on the teaching section's SharePoint site.

8.1.3 In developing, adapting or delivering training and/or assessment:

- There is evidence of industry/community consultation where appropriate
- The methods used to identify learning needs, and the methods for designing training and assessment, are documented in the teaching section’s SharePoint site
- The requirements of the Training Package or accredited course are met
• core and elective units, as appropriate, are identified
• All customisation meets the requirements given in the relevant Training Package or, for accredited courses, meets the NTQC customisation policy
• Language, literacy and numeracy requirements develop the learning capacity of the individual and are consistent with the essential requirements for performance specified in the units of competency or the outcomes of the accredited courses
• Delivery modes and training and assessment materials which meet the needs of a diverse range of learners are identified
• Where assessment or training is conducted in the workplace, we must negotiate the delivery and assessment strategy with the employer and learners, work with the employer to integrate any on-the-job training and assessment, and schedule workplace visits to monitor/review the training and assessment
• Where an Apprenticeship/Traineeship Training Contract is in place or being negotiated, individual Training Plans are developed, documented, implemented and monitored for each apprentice or trainee, encompassing all relevant off-the-job training and structured workplace training and
• Where assessment or training is conducted on-line or by distance, the RTO has effective strategies for learner support, monitoring and assessment
• access to the staff, facilities, equipment, training and the assessment materials needed to provide the training and/or assessment services to accommodate learner numbers, learner needs, delivery methods and assessment requirements (including off-campus and on-line).

8.1.4 The planning and delivery process must be documented.

8.2 Review of learner results and appeals

8.2.1 General information on assessment, review of results and appeals is to be available to learners and is given to them in the document Every Student’s Guide to Assessment in TAFE NSW on the TAFE NSW internet.

8.5.2 Review of individual learner results is the responsibility of Institutes.

8.2.3 Every Student’s Guide to Assessment in TAFE NSW informs learners that their results, awarded in any program in which they are currently enrolled no matter what the delivery mode, will be checked before they receive their Transcript of Academic Record. Learners are also informed that they can request a review of their results if they have a valid reason or they can ask for special consideration. Or they can lodge a formal complaint regarding the assessment process or decision.

8.2.4 Learners requesting a review of their results are advised on the back of their Transcript of Academic Record to contact their teacher or head teacher, or if they are unavailable, the Student Records Officer, within three weeks of receiving their results.

8.2.5 Educational staff should therefore be available at appropriate times of the year to address initial learner enquiries.

8.2.6 On a learner request for a review of a result, the designated member(s) of educational staff should carry out the following review using the checklist below:

1. Respond to requests for review as soon as possible. If possible, the
2. Provide learners with appropriate information such as advice on how to proceed. This information is probably in an Institute procedure in your Institute otherwise refer to Complaints Handling policy and guidelines on the DET Intranet.

3. Check that all relevant results have been accurately recorded at each stage, and ensure there are no clerical errors in the addition, processing or recording of marks.

4. Ensure that the assessment procedures have been valid, reliable, fair, and flexible.

5. Consider an appropriate response in line with the circumstances of the case. In some circumstances, this response may be the provision of an opportunity to attempt an additional assessment or to have alternative evidence of achievement considered.

6. Ensure that the result awarded accurately reflects the learner’s level of achievement as indicated by the evidence.

7. Record in the student record or equivalent any changes to results and the reason for the change and ensure the designated officer signs the document.

8. Submit an amended mark sheet or other relevant form if required in line with college/campus/Institute procedures.

9. Provide the learner with a response in writing in line with college/campus/Institute procedures.

10. Provide the learner with advice and counselling as to subsequent options as required.

8.2.7 For TAFE NSW guidelines refer to Review of results and appeals which covers the following:

- requests for review of Category A or B assessments
- reviewing borderline competence
- student Information System (SIS) Student Performance Report (SPR) and the performance Exception Report (PER)
- contact details to be provided in assessment information for students
- appeals on assessment must address and record any complaints

8.2.8 For the TAFE NSW procedure refer to Individual review of results and appeals procedure – TAFE NSW on the TES Intranet.
8.3 Late or absent assessment

8.3.1 The ‘late’ or ‘absent’ assessment guidelines have been designed for use in all delivery situations, including online and workplace delivery, in instances where a learner:

- Does not submit by the due date a project, assignment or other form of evidence required for assessment, and/or
- Is absent from a scheduled assessment event in the workplace or for an in-class assessment activity.

8.3.2 These guidelines do not apply to Category A and Category B examinations, that is, examinations that are centrally set and timetabled.

8.3.3 Within its resources, TAFE NSW provides learners with every reasonable opportunity to have their work assessed and where possible each case of learner absence from an event will be considered on an individual basis. However, where there are no extenuating circumstances, the following penalties apply:

- Where the results of the unit are recorded in marks, when the assessment event is up to seven days late the result achieved by the learner is reduced by 15%
- When the assessment event is more than seven days late, the result recorded is not yet competent
- For non-attendance at an assessment on a negotiated date, the result is not yet competent.

8.3.4 In cases of lateness or absence in assessment, negotiation may occur between the teacher and the learner. This may relate to the timeframe for submitting/attempting the assessment task or to an alternative form of assessment evidence to be used for assessing the learner’s level of achievement.

8.3.5 Teachers should be aware of and make allowance for learners who may have difficulty in negotiating because of their cultural background, language difficulties or personal factors. It is allowable for an advocate to represent the learner in the negotiation process.

8.3.6 Where a learner is, or expects to be, absent from an assessment event or is unable to submit an assessment event/evidence by the due date, the following apply:

- the learner must notify the class teacher/Head Teacher if possible before the due date or, if this is not possible, at the first opportunity after the event or within 7 days (whichever is the sooner)
- the learner should give a reason to the class teacher/head teacher for not attending/completing/submitting evidence for the assessment event and provide supporting evidence where possible
- the teacher will note the details relating to the late or absent assessment in the appropriate learner record with due respect for learner privacy.

8.3.7 A ‘deferred result’ (DR) should be recorded where appropriate to indicate that a learner has not yet completed the assessment requirements of a unit but has an acceptable reason for this and a reasonable expectation that the unit will be completed in the near future.
8.3.8 In the case of workplace assessment or block release it is expected that the results for outstanding assessment events would be finalised on the first day of the next attendance.

8.3.9 A learner has the right to appeal within **14 days** of receiving notification of the decision made in relation to late or absent assessment through the college/campus officer delegated by the Institute Director to hear such appeals.

Refer also to **section 8.8** for information on concessional examinations and the **Concessional examinations guidelines**:

Concessional examinations (guidelines)

8.4 Attempts at an assessment

8.4.1 In some training packages and industry areas, more than one attempt may be allowed because of the nature of the learning program or for other reasons.

8.4.2 But in most cases we are not obliged to provide more than one attempt at an assessment activity by a learner.

8.4.3 In some cases, however, in the Teacher’s/Head Teacher’s judgment it may be warranted. For example a learner may request another attempt due to illness or to a justified complaint about the assessment process itself.

8.5 Repeat enrolment of students

8.5.1 Learners who wish to re-enrol in a unit they have already successfully completed should be only allowed to if places exist or they should pay a commercial fee for it.

8.5.2 TAFE NSW has an obligation to provide access to courses for as many people as possible within budget constraints. Permitting learners to re-enrol in successfully completed units may deny access to newly enrolling learners and use resources which may be better utilised in another area.

8.5.3 Refer to the guidelines on the TES Intranet **Repeat enrolment of students** for more information. These guidelines cover:

- repeat enrolment when the learner has successfully completed a unit
- enrolment of learners who have failed to achieve competence more than once in a specific unit
- learners withdrawing from a unit more than once
- non participation of learners enrolled in TAFE
- refund

Repeat enrolment of students (guidelines)

8.6 Assessing and reporting the achievement of learners with disabilities

8.6.1 When assessing and reporting the achievement of learners with an **existing and ongoing disability**, it is essential that emphasis is placed on making use of all options,
including the use of adaptive technology. This will support learners in the provision of evidence of achievement so that, wherever possible, sufficient evidence is made available that all required outcomes have been attained.

8.6.2 Reasonable adjustment provisions for assessment are available for people with disabilities within TAFE NSW.

8.6.3 In TAFE/School Traineeship and Apprenticeship Higher School Certificate qualifications, learners with a disability who have applied themselves diligently and have achieved some progress towards the unit(s) outcome and who are deemed to be Satisfactory under the terms of the Higher School Certificate will receive the award of Received Tuition (RT) as their TAFE NSW result (see Result Codes 1.6. Resources)

8.6.4 When a learner with a disability has substantially achieved the unit purpose but has been unable, because of a disability, to reach the required level of competency in specific aspects of the unit, an ad-hoc committee is to be established in each case in order to assess the learner's level of achievement.

8.6.5 For TAFE NSW guidelines refer to Assessing and reporting the achievement of learners with disabilities which also covers the implementation guidelines associated with Ad hoc committees.

8.7 Reasonable adjustment for learners with disabilities undertaking assessment

8.7.1 TAFE NSW must provide equitable, efficient and timely reasonable adjustment\(^3\) for learners with disabilities who undertake assessments, while maintaining the integrity of those assessments. This applies to all assessment events including those in the workplace and online and for Category A and Category B final examinations.

8.7.2 On the Enrolment Form, learners are asked whether they consider they have a disability, impairment or long term condition. They are then required to declare whether they are seeking assistance from a TAFE NSW Teacher/Consultant for Students with Disabilities. This information assists TAFE NSW to provide reasonable adjustment, on a unit basis, in a timely manner.

8.7.3 If the learner presents with a temporary disability or a disability not disclosed on the Enrolment Form, the learner is required to provide documentary evidence such as a medical certificate before reasonable adjustment to assessment can be provided.

8.7.4 Reasonable adjustment In TAFE NSW is provided in accordance with the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Section 4.

8.7.5 For TAFE NSW implementation guidelines refer to Assessing and reporting the achievement of learners with disabilities which also covers:
   - disability, in relation to a person
   - reasonable adjustment in assessment
   - reasonable adjustments to an assessment paper

\(^3\) Reasonable adjustment is any approved modification or allowance made in assessment to accommodate a disability related function. Reasonable adjustment allows a learner with a disability to participate equitably in assessment procedures and demonstrate required skills and knowledge.
- category A and Category B examinations – modified
- category A or Category B Examination paper – access

Assessing and reporting the achievement of learners with disabilities (guidelines)

8.7.6 For TAFE NSW procedure on reasonable adjustment refer to Reasonable adjustment for learners with disabilities undertaking assessment

Reasonable adjustment for learners with disabilities undertaking assessment (procedure)

8.7.7 Refer to the TAFE NSW procedure modifying a category A or category B examination

Modifying a category A or category B examination procedure – TAFE NSW (procedure)

8.7.8 Refer to the appropriate policies and procedures on the Social Inclusion policies and procedures intranet

8.8 Concessional examinations

8.8.1 Concessional examinations guidelines apply to all learners who have missed a Final Examination or who have requested a result review because of trauma. In granting a request for a result review because of trauma the full range of evidence is examined relating to the learner's current and previous achievement in the course, particularly in relation to examinations. Professional judgement is used to modify the mark accordingly, or the learner is granted a concessional examination.

8.8.2 A concessional examination may be granted to a learner who:
- due to extraordinary circumstances, was unable to sit for the final examination in a unit at the original scheduled date and time; or
- because of a trauma, has requested a result review; or
- has been identified through the automatic review of borderline fails.

8.8.3 A learner who qualifies for a concessional examination will be:
- permitted to sit for the next scheduled examination during the following semester without having to attend further classes in that unit, or
- granted a special examination if the examination in the unit is not scheduled during the semester following the date of the missed original Final Examination.

8.8.4 A special examination is a concessional examination which is developed and provided outside the normal examination time.

8.8.5 For implementation guidelines refer to Concessional examinations on the Training and Education Support Intranet.

Concessional examinations (guidelines)
8.9 Use of bilingual dictionaries

8.9.1 Learners are permitted to use bilingual dictionaries during final timetabled examinations. This is in accordance with, and in support of, the procedures on Multicultural Education and the Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000.

8.9.2 Bilingual dictionary: a dictionary which translates from one language into English and vice versa.

8.9.3 Additional reading time will NOT be granted to learners who use a bilingual dictionary during an examination.

8.9.4 Refer to the implementation guidelines on the Use of bilingual dictionaries.

8.10 Ethical practice and conflict of interest in assessment for purposes of learner selection, recognition of prior learning or achievement within a learning program

8.10.1 A conflict of interest occurs when a public official is in a position to be influenced, or appear to be influenced by their private interests when doing their job (taken from the DET Code of Conduct).

8.10.2 The purpose of this guideline is to promote ethical conduct and ensure that appropriate action is taken by TAFE NSW staff to avoid a real or perceived conflict of interest when undertaking assessment for purposes of:

- Learner selection
- The granting of recognition of prior learning (RPL)
- Determining the level of skills and knowledge acquired within a program of learning.

8.10.3 This guideline applies to any circumstances where there may be a real or perceived conflict of interest in decisions made by TAFE NSW staff in the performance of their duties. Each Institute develops appropriate procedures to ensure the integrity of decisions that are made by its staff in each of the contexts listed above.

8.10.4 Refer to the TAFE NSW implementation guidelines associated with Ethical practice and conflict of interest in assessment for purposes of learner selection, recognition of prior learning or achievement within a learning program.

8.11 Issuing a testamur

8.11.1 Upon successful completion of the qualification, a standard testamur is issued to the learner.

8.11.2 Wherever possible, issue of the standard testamur is desirable.
8.11.3 Learners have the right and the responsibility to select units in line with qualification requirements, as they see fit. However, where they are unable to meet all unit assessment requirements because of a disability, they should be informed if alternative units exist which may enable them to complete the qualification and which may not present the same barriers to achievement in relation to their particular disability.

8.11.4 Where a modified testamur is awarded to a learner and the learner has completed all the units contributing to the grade of award, a graded award is issued in line with the learner's level of achievement.

8.11.5 Where a modified testamur is awarded, a statement of clarification will be added to the testamur clearly indicating the details of the modification and emphasising the learner's achievement.

8.11.6 The precise wording in each case is to be decided by the ad hoc committee, but will generally take a form of words similar to that indicated in the italicised words below:

(Learner’s name) has completed (number) units of competence and achieved the theory outcomes of the combined theory/practical (unit name). This is therefore a Modified Testamur.

8.11.7 The wording on the testamur as decided by the ad hoc committee will appear in the event that the testamur is re-issued.

8.12 Resources

Key policies procedures and guidelines associated with equity are found on the DET Policies and procedures intranet, Student administration on the Customer support intranet, Social Inclusion and Assessment policy and procedures on the Training and Education Support intranet.