

- POLICY -

Assessment Policy

Policy Statement

Assessment (including the assessment of recognition of prior learning) at TAFE SA will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of applicable regulatory frameworks, relevant training packages, vocational education and training (VET) accredited courses and higher education courses.

This will be achieved through:

- Implementation of the TAFE SA Assessment System
- All assessment being conducted by, or under the direct supervision of, appropriately qualified assessors
- Clear communications with students in relation to assessment requirement and their progress towards achieving successful outcomes
- Ensuring integrity in the conduct of assessment and assessment processes

Scope

This policy applies to all staff involved in the development, conduct or review of assessment of any vocational education and training, and/or higher education for which TAFE SA issues students with a nationally recognised outcome via an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification or Statement of Attainment.

Policy

Design and development of assessment

TAFE SA has established a system which enables its staff to design, develop and conduct assessment in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence.

The Principles of Assessment are:

Fairness

- The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process.
- Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner's needs.
- The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.

Flexibility

Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by:

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

Validity

Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner.

Validity requires:

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

Reliability

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

The Rules of Evidence are:

Validity

The assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.

Sufficiency

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

Authenticity

The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner's own work.

Currency

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

The suite of documents comprising TAFE SA's assessment system, Quality Education System (QES), is available to all staff via the intranet <http://in.tafesa.edu.au/quality/forms.php>

QES documents must be utilised in the design and development of any assessment. Only approved QES assessment tools are to be utilised in the conduct of assessment.

Contextualisation of VET assessment

Where contextualisation of assessment is required to meet the needs of a specific cohort, enterprise, project or client, educators will ensure that the contextualised

assessment tools are subject to the development and approval process as outlined in the TAFE SA assessment system.

Graded assessment

A non-graded assessment schema will be applied to all competency-based assessment, unless specific approval for the application of graded assessment has been provided by the Executive Director, Quality Teaching and Learning.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) – VET

Prior to enrolment, all students are VET students are to be made aware of the opportunity and process required to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

A student may apply for RPL at any time during their enrolment.

Assessors are responsible for guiding students through the RPL application process, using approved RPL processes and assessment tools.

Individual workgroups will make available assessors to support students through the RPL process.

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) – HE

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is also known as exemption, advanced standing and credit transfer.

A student may apply for CPL at any time during their enrolment using the CPL tool and supplying appropriate evidence (for example subject learning outcomes, transcripts, testamurs, employment records).

The subject coordinator or assessor compares learning outcomes from previous study or experience with the learning outcomes of the TAFE SA higher education subject. Due regard must be given to the volume of learning, assessment requirements and AQF level of the prior learning. Credit is awarded if equivalence between the prior learning and the TAFE SA higher education subject is established.

CPL may be granted for an unspecified elective if prior learning outcomes do not match a specific subject's outcomes but are relevant to Course Learning Outcomes and Graduate Attributes and the course structure includes unspecified or general electives.

Communicating Assessment Requirements

TAFE SA is committed to ensuring students are fully informed of the assessment requirements for each unit of competency in which they are enrolled.

At the commencement of each unit of competency, students will be provided with:

- an overview of the required assessment tasks
- due dates for submission or completion of assessment tasks
- grading criteria for graded assessment (where applied)
- information on how to:

- request extensions to due dates
- request special consideration or reasonable adjustment
- re-submit assessment
- reference appropriately (where required)
- appeal an assessment decision

Conducting Assessment

VET assessment will only be conducted by an assessor who meets the assessor qualification requirements as stipulated in the Standards for RTOs 2015, Schedule 1.

As per the Higher Education Standards Framework section 3.2.2, higher education assessment will be conducted by academic staff who have:

- knowledge of contemporary developments in the discipline or field which is informed by continuing scholarship or advanced in practice
- skills in contemporary teaching, learning and assessment principles relevant to the discipline, their role, modes of delivery and the needs of particular student cohorts
- a qualification in a relevant discipline at least one level higher than is awarded for the course of study, or equivalent relevant academic or professional or practice-based experience and expertise.

All assessors must conduct the assessment in a professional and objective manner using the standards of performance identified in the approved assessment tool.

Assessors will ensure there is no real or perceived conflict of interest in assessment processes. Examples include, but are not limited to the following circumstances:

- assessing a family member, relative or close friend
- assessing a colleague or business associate, particularly if the outcome of the assessment can be used to gain employment, promotion, pay increases or other benefits
- assessing another TAFE SA staff member, particularly where a supervisor/subordinate relationship exists
- assessing oneself.

Where a complainant has raised concern related to training and assessment delivery or knowledge or competency of the assessor an independent assessor will verify results applied.

If a real or perceived conflict of interest is identified, it is the responsibility of the assessor to discuss the situation with the Principal Lecturer and/or Business Unit Director at the earliest convenience. The Principal Lecturer in consultation with the Business Unit Director will decide whether the assessor should not assess in the specific case and/or, in circumstances where the assessor has already conducted part or all of the assessment, whether assessment should be confirmed/ validated by another assessor.

Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration

Students with a disability, medical condition or other personal circumstances impacting on their study may be eligible for reasonable adjustments or special consideration in assessment.

Assessors are to ensure that any reasonable adjustment or special consideration granted to any individual student does not compromise the assessment outcomes the student is required to achieve or the integrity of the subject and qualification.

Special consideration considers the impact of a student's circumstances during the assessment process.

Reasonable Adjustment

Reasonable adjustments are measures or actions taken to enable a student with a disability to participate in education or training on the same basis as a student without a disability.

In accordance with the principles of flexibility and accessibility in assessment, and obligations set out within Commonwealth Disability Standards for Education (2005), reasonable adjustments are provided in assessment to allow students with disabilities to participate on the same basis as other students. Reasonable adjustments can be made to course delivery, assessment and through provision of additional support. Reasonable adjustments should not lower the required competency standards of the course, as standards expected should be the same irrespective of the group and/or individuals being assessed.

Students seeking a reasonable adjustment in an assessment must notify TAFE SA Student Services and education staff prior to the commencement of scheduled classes or at the earliest possible time once the course has commenced. Students may be required to provide documentation to support their request for reasonable adjustment.

The response to requests for reasonable adjustments to assessment during the period of teaching must be communicated to the student in writing and copies of all reasonable adjustment documents are to be kept in student files.

Students may request further consideration of a decision made in relation to requests for reasonable adjustments by contacting Student Support Services for information regarding student appeals.

All information and supporting statements provided as part of an application for reasonable adjustment in assessment will remain confidential (in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Information Privacy Principle 4)).

Special Consideration

To request special consideration, students must discuss their requirements with their educator and submit appropriate evidence or documentation, for example a medical certificate. Grounds for special consideration in assessment include but are not limited to:

- illness / medical condition
- compassion
- religious observance
- community service (for example jury duty).

Provision of Feedback on Assessment

Students will be provided with feedback on their assessment performance within two weeks of completing and submitting the assessment.

Feedback provided to students will be constructive and support ongoing skills and knowledge development. Feedback is to be made available to students by accessing the online learning portal (TAFE SA Learn) or by direct contact with an assessor where appropriate.

Where a student has an unsuccessful assessment result, assessors will validate that they have provided clear, constructive feedback to support re-assessment.

Resubmission of Assessment – VET Students

Students studying VET subjects and courses are entitled to two attempts to satisfactorily complete each assessment task within any unit/subject enrolment period, following being issued with a not yet competent (NYC) result.

Where a student does not achieve competency after three attempts, the student will be advised of the need to re-enrol in the unit or be provided advice regarding alternative pathways. Course training fees are applicable for all repeated units.

Resubmission of Assessment – HE Students

Higher education students may be granted a resubmission for a subject at the discretion of the lecturer, who will consider special circumstances. Information relating to resubmission will be provided to higher education students on commencement of each subject.

Resulting

Assessors will enter into the Student Information System (SIS) a Final Result Decision within two weeks after finalising the assessment process for each unit of competency or subject delivered to a student.

Refer to the TAFE SA Resulting Policy for further guidance

<https://tafesaedu.sharepoint.com/teams/pas/pp/SitePages/Home.aspx>

Appealing an Assessment Outcome

TAFE SA recognises that students have a right to lodge an appeal related to an assessment outcome. An appeal must be lodged within one month of the student receiving notification of the assessment outcome, or the date of resulting in SIS (whichever is the latest date).

Throughout an appeals process, students have the right to be accompanied or represented by a support person such as a family member, friend or counsellor.

Students are encouraged to utilise TAFE SA Student Services when considering or lodging an appeal, if they feel they require additional support.

At all times the principles of natural justice and fairness will apply.

In the first instance, students should discuss their concerns with the educator / assessor directly, to resolve the disputed matter.

If unsatisfied with the response or time taken, a student may lodge an appeal by submitting the assessment appeal form to the respective Principal Lecturer and / or Business Unit Director. Students seeking advice on the contact details of the respective educational manager may contact the respective program area directly or email feedback@tafesa.edu.au for assistance.

Students who remain unsatisfied with the assessment outcome following the appeals process should refer to the Customer Resolution and Feedback Policy and Procedure for the internal and external stages of complaint handling and appeals process.

Assessment Record Retention

In accordance with the Standards for RTOs, 2015 all assessment records for each student will be securely retained to be produced in full at audit, if requested to do so by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), for a period of six months from the date on which the judgement of competence was made.

Further, all TAFE SA records are sentenced and retained in accordance with the State Records of South Australia Operational Records Disposal Schedule RDS 2015/21.

Assessment records (including RPL) must be retained for a minimum of two years after results are verified on the student database. RPL and Credit Transfer records must be retained for a minimum of 10 years after data is verified on the student database. Results recorded on SIS or predecessor databases, are permanent records.

Assessment Validation

TAFE SA has established procedures to implement plans to validate assessment that includes:

- when assessment validation will occur
- which training products will be the focus of the validation
- who will lead and participate in validation activities
- how the outcomes of these activities will be documented and acted upon.

To reflect requirements in the Standards for RTOs 2015, TAFESA validation plans ensure each VET training product is validated at least once every five years, with at least 50 per cent of products validated within the first three years of each five-year cycle, taking into account the relative risks of all of the training products on scope of registration, including those risks identified by the VET regulator

Validation and moderation of assessments for higher education subjects are implemented in accordance with the Higher Education Validation and Moderation Strategy that requires a rolling schedule is developed and implemented with outcomes reported to the Higher Education Academic Board.

Roles and Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Education Managers	All assessment is conducted by appropriately qualified assessors
Principal Lecturers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Only approved assessments are utilised ○ assessment appeals are managed and documented via the compliant management system ○ provision of educational leadership in the review, design and development of assessment instruments in accordance with the TAFE SA Assessment System and the Standards for RTOs, 2015
Education Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the use of the TAFE SA assessment system to design and develop assessments ○ ensuring students are fully informed of assessment requirements for the qualification, unit or competency, module or accredited course subject in which they are enrolled ○ conducting assessments using approved assessment instruments ○ conducting assessment in a professional and objective manner using the standards of performance identified in approved assessor guides ○ the provision of timely and constructive feedback on assessment and ensuring that feedback clearly outlines what needs to occur prior to re-assessment ○ accurate and timely entering of student assessment results into SIS ○ retention of completed records of assessment in accordance with the TAFE SA Assessment Retention Schedule

Definitions

Term	Definition
Word/phrase	Description
Accessibility	Assessment methods should be accessible to people from diverse backgrounds, including those with disabilities,

	utilising principles of universal design. Reasonable adjustments to assessment should be provided where necessary for students with disabilities.
ASQA	Australian Skills Quality Authority is the national regulator for Australia's vocational education and training sector. ASQA regulates courses and training providers to ensure nationally approved quality standards are met.
Assessment	Assessment means the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard required in the workplace, as specified in a training package or VET accredited course.
Assessment system	Assessment system is a coordinated set of documented policies and procedures (including assessment materials and tools) that ensure assessments are consistent and are based on the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence.
Assessment tools	Assessment tools at TAFE SA are mapped against the unit of competency requirements on an assessment mapping matrix and include the following components: the context and conditions of assessment; tasks to be administered to the student; an outline of the evidence to be gathered from the candidate; and evidence criteria used to judge the quality of performance (that is, the assessment decision-making rules).
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) means the framework for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training system, as agreed by the Commonwealth, state and territory ministerial council with responsibility for higher education.
Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) - Higher Education only	Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is awarded for previous study or experience that is equivalent to the learning outcomes of a higher education subject. It can include specified or unspecified credit, exemptions, advanced standing, credit transfers and other similar outcomes.
Final Result Decision	The final result (after any resubmission/re-sits have been assessed). The final result decision entered into SIS is a permanent record of student performance.
Graded assessment	Graded assessment is the process of awarding a student with a grade based on a higher level of performance once competency has been achieved.

Moderation of assessment judgment	Moderation of assessment judgment is a quality control process aimed at bringing assessment judgements into alignment, assuring consistency or comparability of assessment judgments across different assessors, programs or locations.
Reasonable Adjustment	Reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken by an education provider to enable a student with a disability to participate in education or training on the same basis as a student without a disability. It is not intended to offer a student with a disability an advantage, to change course standards or outcomes, or to guarantee success. Reasonable adjustment may take the form of additional time, or alternative form of assessment task
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an assessment process that assesses the competencies of an individual that may have been acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual meets the requirements specified in the training package or VET accredited courses. Formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction and is linked to the attainment of an AQF qualification, statement of attainment or micro credential. Non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction but does not lead to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment Informal learning refers to learning that results through experience of work-related, social, family, hobby or leisure activities
Special Consideration	Special Consideration in assessment may be provided to students whose performance or attendance has been affected by serious misadventure, accident or extenuating circumstances beyond their control. Special consideration may take the form of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •extension or extra time to complete assessment •provision of an additional opportunity to undertake the assessment or an alternative assessment task

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •adjustment to grade (for graded assessments) to take account of the circumstances.
Validation	<p>Validation is the quality review of the assessment process. Validation involves checking that the assessment tool/s produce/s valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence to enable reasonable judgements to be made as to whether the requirements of the training package or VET or HE accredited course are met. It includes reviewing a statistically valid sample of the assessments and making recommendations for future improvements to the assessment tool, process and/or outcomes and acting upon such recommendations.</p>

Associated Documents and References

Document Number	Document/Reference Title
PPMF TAFESA 1032	Customer Resolution and Feedback Policy
PPMF TAFESA 1099	Resulting Policy
PPMF TAFESA 139	Higher Education Policy
PPMF TAFESA 1021	International Students: Attendance and Course Progress
Standards for RTOs 2015	<p>National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011: Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015</p> <p>Users' Guide to the Standards for RTOs 2015</p>
Standards for Disability	<p>Commonwealth Disability Standards for Education (2005)</p> <p>https://www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005</p>
ESOS Act	Education and Training to Overseas Students Act 2000
TEQSA Act	<p>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</p> <p>https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00271</p>
Higher Education Standards Framework	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 (Cwlth)

	https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2015L01639
VET Student Loans Act, 2016	VET Student Loans Act 2016 (legislation.gov.au)
VET Student Loans Rules 2016	Federal Register of Legislation - VET Student Loan Rules 2016
VET Student Loans Ombudsman (VSLO) and the VET Student Loans Code of Practice	VET Student Loans Code of Practice - Commonwealth Ombudsman

Document Control

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