RTO POLICY MANUAL

SRTOs 2015 and ESOS National Code 2018

Royal International College
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Assessment Policy and Procedure

Policy Context

This policy relates to:	
Registration Manager	Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
Conditions of Registration	VET Quality Framework (VQF)
Codes and Standards	Standards for RTOs 2015 – Standard: 1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4; 1.5; 1.6; 1.8; 1.9; 1.10; 1.11; 1.12; 1.13; 1.22; 1.23;
Legislation or other requirements	National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2012

Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure that RTO has in relation to the delivery of training and assessment services to meet the requirements specified in each training package or VET Accredited Course.

RTO only offer valid, reliable, flexible and fair assessments to all students within the boundaries of the associated Training Package. All assessments must comply with the Assessment Guidelines included in the applicable nationally endorsed Training Packages or the Assessment Requirements specified in Accredited Courses.

Objective

The objectives of this policy and procedure are that assessments must be designed to contribute to high quality student learning and underpin the development, delivery and quality assurance of units and courses.

Assessment should both help students learn (assessment for learning) and measure explicit evidence of their learning (assessment of learning).

Assessment:
- Must meet the national standards

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- Mapped to ensure compliance
- Meet the needs of the client and the unit of competency
- Must be standards-based and provide evidence of the level of achievement with respect to learning outcomes and graduate attributes;
- Must be a transparent process carried out with honesty, integrity and confidentiality in line with this policy;
- Must be comprised of a variety of tasks which are reasonably achievable by students;
- Must be fair, inclusive and equitable for all students.

Scope

This policy is applicable on the following RTO stakeholders:
- Staff
- Students

General Processes

1. Availability of Policy and Procedures

Policies and Procedures are made available to all staff by directly contacting RTO.

2. Principles

RTO is committed to and guided by the following principles:

- Procedures, methods and tools for assessment are explicit, sufficient, valid and reliable
- Assessment tasks reflect the learning outcomes as stated in the unit outline and unit of competency
- Students are made aware of assessment requirements in the first week of delivery
- Internal validation and moderation occur across qualifications at the level of individual unit assessment tasks.
- RTO maintains transparent and fair mechanisms for marking and validating and moderating assessments
- Validation and moderation processes are evaluated informally and formally.

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3.   What is Assessment?

Assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making judgments on the extent and nature of performance and other requirements, as described in a set of standards, or learning outcomes, resulting in a judgment of whether competency has been demonstrated.

Effective and objective assessment is vital to the successful implementation of competency standards in the workplace and in education. This is the judgment of performance and knowledge against the relevant industry competency standards. Assessment is carried out by the comparison of a candidate's evidence of skills and knowledge, against the requirements of the Standards.

4. What is competency-based assessment?

This is the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competence has been achieved. This confirms that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace as expressed in the nationally endorsed competency standards (where they exist), on competency standards developed by relevant industry, enterprise, community or professional groups, or on outcomes of accredited courses if there are no relevant nationally endorsed competency standards.

5.   What sort of evidence is collected?

Evidence collected may be direct, such as observation of workplace performance, indirect, such as formal testing, or supplementary, such as references from employers.

Evidence is used by an assessor to make a judgement about whether a student is competent.

It is the responsibility of the assessor to determine what and how much evidence is required to make the assessment judgement. Training Packages provide guidance on the types of evidence required, and further advice may be gained through moderation and industry consultation.

6. What is classed as evidence?

In general, basic forms of skills evidence include:

- Direct performance evidence current or from an acceptable past period from:
    o   Extracted examples within the workplace;
    o   Natural observation in the workplace; and

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- Simulations, including competency and skills tests, projects, assignments

- Supplementary evidence, from:

  - Oral and written questioning;

  - Personal reports; and

  - Witness testimony

- Appropriate and valid forms of assessment utilised for both skills and knowledge may include:

  - Evaluation of direct products of work;

  - Natural observation;

  - Skill tests, simulations and projects;

  - Evaluation of underpinning knowledge and understanding;

  - Questioning and discussion; and

  - Evidence from prior achievement and activity

- RTO ensures that assessment, including RPL complies with the Assessment Requirements of the relevant Training Package or VET Accredited Course and it is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence.

- RTO consults with industry at the time of assessment resources development and regularly meets with industry to ensure assessment tools are current and relevant.

- RTO also uses validation and moderation activities to ensure that assessment is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence.

7. What is "Competent" and "Not Yet Competent"?

We know whether an individual is "competent" after he/she has completed an assessment that verifies that all aspects of the unit of competency are held and can be applied in an industry context. If a student fails to successfully complete all aspects of the assessment, they will be deemed as "not yet competent".

Students must demonstrate competence by undergoing an assessment process. Assessment may involve a variety of assessment methods. Individuals can be assessed

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during their training, at the end of their training, or without even undertaking any training, e.g. if they believe that they are already competent.

8. **What is an assessment tool?**

A tool which contains both the instrument and the instructions for gathering and interpreting evidence:

- Instrument(s) – the specific questions or activities developed from the selected assessment method(s) to be used for the assessment (a profile of acceptable performance and the decision-making rules for the assessor may also be included); and

- Procedures – the information/instructions given to the student and/or the assessor regarding conditions under which the assessment should be conducted and recorded.

9. **What is the role of an assessor?**

The role of an assessor is to objectively assess and judge a candidate's evidence against a set of standards. To do this effectively, an assessor must have a sound knowledge of, and be skilled in, the relevant industry area. In addition, the assessor must have acknowledged competency in assessment itself and hold an appropriate Workplace Assessor qualification or equivalent i.e. TAE40116 – Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

An assessor must:

- Interpret and understand the criteria;

- Ensure that evidence meets the standards;

- Ensure that evidence is valid, authentic, reliable, consistent, current and sufficient; and

- Use expertise to make fair and objective judgements.

The training and ongoing professional development of assessors must include such areas as:

- Roles, responsibilities and ethics;

- Procedural and administrative duties;

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- Performance and knowledge evidence gathering and presentation;

- Interpretation and usage of standards;

- Selecting and using appropriate methods of assessment; and

- Requirements regarding processing and recording of results, progress and feedback.

It is crucial that assessors always understand and practice fair, objective, unbiased and flexible assessment processes.

10. Conducting the assessment

1.   Establish the assessment context

The trainer/ assessor establishes the context and purpose of the assessment by identifying the relevant competency standards, assessment guidelines and qualification framework, identifies the support materials that have been purchased and developed to facilitate the learning and assessment process.

2.   Prepare the student

The trainer/ assessor meets with the student to:

- Explain the context and purpose of the assessment and the assessment process

- Explain the competency standards to be assessed and the evidence to be collected

- Advise on self-assessment including processes and criteria

- Outline the assessment procedure, the preparation which the student should undertake, and answer any questions

- Assess the needs of the student and, where applicable, negotiate reasonable adjustment for assessing people with disabilities without compromising the integrity of the competencies

- Seek feedback regarding the student's understanding of the competency standards, evidence requirements and assessment process

- Determine if the student is ready for assessment and decide on the time and place of the assessment

- Implement the assessment plan

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3. Plan and prepare the evidence gathering process

The assessor must:

- Use the correct assessment tools to gather sufficient and quality evidence about the students performance to make the assessment decision
- Organise equipment or resources required to support the evidence gathering process

4. Collect the evidence and make the assessment decision

The assessor must:

- Establish and oversee the evidence gathering process to ensure its validity, reliability, fairness and flexibility
- Collect appropriate evidence and assess this against the elements, performance criteria, range statement and evidence guide in the relevant units of competency
- Evaluate evidence in terms of the four dimensions of competency: - task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills and job/role environment skills
- Incorporate allowable adjustments to the assessment procedure without compromising the integrity of the competencies
- Evaluate the evidence in terms of validity, consistency, currency, equity, authenticity and sufficiency
- Consult and work with other staff in the assessment process
- Record details of evidence collected
- Make a judgment about competency based on the evidence and the relevant Unit[s] of Competency.

5. Provide feedback on the assessment

The trainer/ assessor must provide advice to the student about the outcomes of the assessment process.

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This includes providing the candidate with:

- Clear and constructive feedback on the assessment decision
- Information on ways of overcoming any identified gaps in competency revealed by the assessment and an opportunity to discuss the assessment process and outcome information on reassessment and the appeals processes.
- An opportunity for reassessment if appropriate or requested by the student

6.   Record and report the result

The assessor must:

- Record the assessment outcome
- Maintain records of the assessment procedure, evidence collected and the outcome
- Provide signed and dated assessment outcomes to the Student Support Officer for updating in the Student Management system (SMS).
- Maintain the confidentiality of the assessment outcome

7.   Review the assessment process

On completion of the assessment process, the assessor must:

- Review the assessment process
- Report on the positive and negative features of the assessment to those responsible for the assessment procedures
- Make suggestions (if necessary) on improving the assessment procedures to appropriate RTO staff

8.   Participate in the reassessment and appeals process

The assessor must:

- Provide feedback and counselling to the student, if required, regarding the assessment outcome or process including guidance on further options

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- Provide the student with information on the reassessment and appeals process as per the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Report any assessment decision that is disputed by the student to the RTO Manager
- Participate in the reassessment or appeal according to RTO's policies and procedures

11. Reporting and recording results

It is the responsibility of the assessor to keep a record of the evidence presented by the student which enables the assessment decision to be made. When the assessment decision has been made, the assessor submits the results and evidence to the Student Support Officer for checking, who forwards it to Records Officer for updating the results in the Student Management System.

The assessor must submit all assessment outcomes within two weeks of the term finishing.

12. Student feedback and appeals processes

RTO will ensure that students are provided with feedback that includes details of the assessment outcome, the reasons for the outcome, recommendations for further training, and the appeal and reassessment options. Where students are assessed as not competent they will be provided with additional feedback on their assessment outcome to assist in achieving the required performance standard on reassessment.

13. Reassessments

Students who are dissatisfied with their assessment outcome may apply for reassessment by contacting their trainer or assessor. Students can apply for reassessment two times at no charge after the first assessment, after which there is a fee of $350 per unit.

14. RPL (recognition of prior learning)/ credit transfer (national recognition)

If students believe that they are already competent in a unit, they can choose one of two forms of assessment. The first is known as recognition of prior learning (RPL).

RPL is the term used to describe many assessment processes that formally recognise the competencies an individual has acquired through formal or non-formal learning, work experience and/or life experience.

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The principles and processes involved in RPL are consistent with other forms of assessment.

15. **Credit Transfer** exempts a student from enrolling in and being assessed in a unit or units because they have been granted recognition for having completed the identical unit or units at another registered provider **Student support**

    During the enrolment process, students are required to undertake a LLN test (Language, Literacy and Numeracy). This test helps RTOs to determine whether the learner requires any additional support services to meet the requirements of the course they are undertaking.

    Students are also advised that they can contact the Student Support Officer at any time throughout their enrolment if they require any support or assistance.

16. **Learners with special needs**

    One fundamental principle of an assessment system is that each student must have access to fair and open assessment. Students with special needs should be offered the same opportunities as any other student.

    As special needs extend to more than physical or learning difficulties, an assessor will also need to consider the best approach when dealing with students with needs such as low literacy, lack of confidence or non-English speaking background.

    An assessor must take special needs into consideration from the planning stage onwards and adopt assessment methods as appropriate. Depending on any specification given in the standards, the assessor may be able to accept alternative evidence from a student with special needs.

    If there is uncertainty, the assessor should call on other assessors or a verifier for assistance and guidance, as required. In such a case, the situation must be fully documented, with appropriate feedback being provided to the candidate at all stages.

Procedures

Items and Roles	Process	Comments

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Staff	All RTO staff involved with the training and assessment of VET courses must be able to demonstrate that they: · have the necessary training and assessment competencies as determined by the NSSC or its successors (currently TAE40116), and · have relevant training and assessment strategies, practices and resources related to the outcomes of industry engagement · have the relevant vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered or assessed, and · can demonstrate current industry skills directly relevant to the training/assessment being undertaken and · continue to develop their VET knowledge and skills as well as their industry currency and trainer/assessor competence.	The process for selecting, recruiting, inducting and assessing staff is given in Staff Recruitment and Appraisal Policy. Where a member of staff is recruited that cannot meet the requirement outlined in the Staff Recruitment and Appraisal Policy then they must be supervised while assessing students. They should also embark on training themselves to make up this shortfall. Refer to the Training Supervision Policy and Procedure.

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Facilities	RTO will ensure that the facilities provided will meet or exceed the requirements of the training package. This is to include number of seats and desk space, whiteboards, Data projectors (if required), trainer's desk and chair and any other aids defined in the training package.	For practical and or specialist classes, the facilities must match or exceed the specific requirements of the Training Package. Often this will cover a simulated workplace. RTO will make every attempt to simulate as closely as possible a real live workplace. Reference should be made to the industry advisors to ensure the match and the currency of the environment.
Timing	The training and assessing time should not exceed eight hours in any day. Classes will NOT start before 8.00 a.m. or go beyond 10.00 p.m. on any day.	

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Safety	RTO will assess each campus prior to courses being conducted to cover safety: in the classroom and other facilities in terms of any simulated training conditions In terms of access to the premises, especially after dark and at weekends – please speak to PEO of RTO, and RTO Manager.	
Equipment	As with the facilities and specific equipment required must match the requirements of the training package and must be currently used in the industry. All equipment must be checked for safety and should be cycled in line with the asset register requirements for this equipment by Campus operations, RTO. Thus, the life of the equipment will be determined, by its quality, its amount of use (and thus wear and tear) and its currency.	

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Delivery	All qualifications are made up of a number of Units of Competency.	
	Dependent upon the student's enrolment they may undertake just a single unit through multiple Units of Competency that cover one or more qualifications.	
	Each unit should have a common structure that defines what is to be taught, how it is to be taught (including sequence and timings) and how it is to be assessed.	
	The purpose of the above structure is to ensure consistency of delivery by one or more trainers / assessors.	
	This is not meant to stifle trainer creativity and quality examples. Rather to ensure that all the requirements of the Training Packages are met. Trainers and assessors will add value by applying their industry and worldly experience to customize training delivery to the client group, embellish, underline and clarify any points in the core structure.	

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Assessment	Assessments will be conducted strictly in accordance with the requirements of the Training Package.	
	Assessors are NOT at liberty to alter the assessments approved by RTO. For changes and improvements see Validation and Moderation below.	
	Assessors are expected to outline to the students:	
	· At the beginning of the unit how many assessments there are, when they will be assessed and how students are to behave – i.e. collaboration, closed book, project work etc.	
	· As each assessment is scheduled the assessor should walk the students through the task and how it is to be assessed and expected outcomes (based on the unit to be delivered).	
	· During the assessment the assessor is to support the students in any way possible without compromising the objectivity of the process or giving unfair advantage.	

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	· For a detail steps on assessment see Assessment Recording Policy.	
Offsite Training	RTO may offer training for groups of students that have specific requirements. E.g. a migrant community group requesting training together and want the training undertaken in a facility near their locality.	

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Offsite training takes place at a local facility close to the group and is run by RTO trainers and assessors (this should NOT be confused with work-based training).

Where such a group is identified, the PEO of RTO will meet with the organisers to agree:

· What contextualisation is required

· Where the training is to take place

· Contextualisation of the standard training material based on the main Training and Assessment Strategies required. This will, for example, use the group's experiences and needs or case studies to be a part of the teaching, but in no other way will the standard material be compromised.

These contextualisations (that still meets the Training Package requirements) will then become a Training and Assessment Plan for that employer and that cohort / group of students.

Each qualification should have a check list if any specific equipment / facility

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	requirements of the training package are to be met. This list must be completed. Once premises local to the student group is identified, RTO will inspect the premises and complete the Venue Checklist is to be completed to ensure the premises is suitable for training.	
Licensing requirements	Some Training Packages require that RTO work with the licensing authority or regulator. RTO will ensure that it obtains full approval from the body in accordance with rules set down in the training package in case such a course is on its scope.	
Legislation and regulatory requirements	All Training Packages will refer to one or more pieces of legislation or regulations. These are usually defined in the Training Package. It is the responsibility of all the trainers of that qualification to keep up to date with the current legislation. In addition, as a part of the audit process the list of legislation and or regulations related to all Training Packages will be annually reviewed to check currency, superseded legislation and or new legislation that has been enacted. Any changes identified will become items in the	

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	Continuous Improvement Register for updates to be completed in the Training and or assessment material.	
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	RTO will provide in each qualification package an RPL kit except EAL courses. This kit is to define how an assessor may award an applicant RPL (or not). It should be a vehicle that clearly sets out to the applicant the type of evidence required and how to get it. The assessor is to work with the student to help clarify responses to assesses whether there is sufficient evidence. If the applicant does not satisfy the Assessor, then he/she will be offered the option to enrol. The applicant may also choose to appeal the decision.	

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Validation and Moderation practices	In order to ensure that all qualifications offered and assessed by RTO are of high quality, RTO undertakes validation of all material presented and assessed for any given Units of Competency.	
	The RTO Manager will draw up a review list to ensure that all Units of Competency are cycled through and reviewed. This cycle should be a maximum of five years, but in practice should be more frequent.	
	In addition completed assessments are also moderated internally and externally. This process is to ensure that there is consistency across different groups of students and or assessors within RTO and consistency across different groups from different organisations. The process for Validation and Moderation is shown in Validation and Moderation Policy.	
Industry Input	During the development of qualifications and during the life of the qualification industry input is sought to ensure alignment with local industry needs and currency.	
	The RTO's training and assessment practices are relevant to the needs of	

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	industry and informed by industry engagement	

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Transition Planning	As courses become outdated, they are revised and updated. During this process, some Units of Competency are changed, some removed, and some added and new version of a qualification released.	
	RTO subscribes to various information sources to be advised when this will happen. For example:	
	· Training Packages@work	
	· Relevant Industry Skills Councils	
	· Relevant State Industry Training Boards	
	· Relevant State Curriculum Maintenance Managers	
	· Licensing Line	
	Once notification is received ALFIE will build a Transition Plan (Planning Document). This will be different for each qualification, but will cover:	
	· Scope of changes	
	· List of Units of Competency currently delivered that will remain current	

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· List of Units of Competency that have been deleted

· List of Units of Competency that have been substantially modified

· Plan to right new units and build new material for the new qualification

· Plan to have material externally validated by industry

· Time to notify regulator

· Plan for existing students which may cover migration / transition, continue old qualification

· Communication plan and agreement with students

· De-commissioning old qualification including removing from scope.

· The plan will be built and implemented within 12 months of the notification.

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Up-to-date with licensing and regulatory requirements	RTO's website is regularly updated with all up-to-date licensing and regulatory requirements.	
Document management and results recording	Assessors must submit the assessments to administration after the marking. Administration is to record this data in the Student Management System (SMS). ALL student completed scripts are to be stored for a minimum of two years following completion of the assessment (this can be in scanned format) In addition, the original version of the assessment and model answers shall be stored so that the students work can be compared against the instructions and questions given at the time.	

Continuous Improvement

A summary of all assessment related matters and concerns will be presented at the Management Meeting for review. The purpose of this is to ensure management become aware of:

- Common threads relating to the compliance and quality assurance.
- Repeat issues
- Any general adverse trends that needs correcting

Confidentiality and Privacy Statement

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For more Information, please refer to our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

Publication

This policy once approved, will be available to all students and staff by accessing RTO Intranet or on request. This policy will also be available through RTO's website as well.

This policy and procedure will form part of the information distributed and communicated during staff orientation.

Review processes

The policy will be reviewed annually by the RTO Manager.