QAT Policy P027

Teaching, Training and Assessment

References: SNR 15.5, 16.4, 16.5
National Code Standard 10.2

1.0 Purpose

This policy has been defined as a means of ensuring quality training and assessment practices and procedures for VET and ELICOS courses at Queensland Academy of Technology (QAT). This policy will outline how training and assessment tools are developed, as well as the delivery and monitoring of student assessment.

All the vocational education and training conducted at QAT is competency-based and QAT will always ensure that students are able to understand in theory and practice the standard level of knowledge and skills required by industry in Australia.

2.0 Background

Best practice for the development, delivery and monitoring of assessment is outlined Standards 15 and 16 of the Standards for National VET Regulator (NVR) Registered Training Organisations. Further, for ELICOS students, the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007 outlines the necessity for assessing satisfactory course progress.

SNR 15 The RTO provides quality training and assessment across all of its operations, as follows:

15.5 Assessment including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):

a) meets the requirements of the relevant Training Package or VET accredited course and
b) is conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence and

c) meets workplace and, where relevant, regulatory requirements and
d) is systematically validated.

SNR 16 The NVR RTO adheres to the principles of access and equity and maximises outcome for its clients, as follows:

16.4 Employers and other parties who contribute to each learner’s training and assessment are engaged in the development, delivery and monitoring of training and assessment.

16.5 Learners receive training, assessment and support services that meet their individual needs.

National Code Standard 10 – Monitoring Course Progress

10.2 The registered provider must have and implement appropriate documented course progress policies and procedures for each course, which must be provided to staff and students, that specify the:

b) process for assessing satisfactory course progress
3.0 Policy

4.1 Development of training and assessment tools (VET)

The CEO, in consultation with the relevant Program Coordinators, will source quality commercial training and assessment materials where available, in order to reduce in-house development. Where there are no available commercial materials, the CEO will delegate the responsibility of developing these materials to the relevant Program Coordinator; further delegation to trainers may be necessary in some instances. All development will take place through effective consultation with industry and colleagues, and in accordance with the training package rules.

Training materials and assessment tools, whether commercial or created in-house, will be validated in accordance with QAT’s Policy on Validation and Moderation (P005) in order to ensure that any gaps in training are identified and recommended changes actioned. Each department will share the workload of amending materials as instructed by the CEO or Program Coordinator. Training materials are listed in the relevant Training and Assessment Strategy, as well as course session plans. At a minimum, an annual trainer survey will be conducted concerning the courses they are teaching on, in order to assist in the review process.

4.2 Development of learning and assessment materials (ELICOS)

Teachers shall be proactively included in the development of both formative and summative assessment tools in order to encourage a sense of teacher ownership of the coursework and to ensure that the assessment tools are appropriate to the abilities and needs of the students and accurately test their progress. All development work will be reviewed by the Director of Studies.

It is essential to review and revise courses appropriately. Course review procedures will be conducted with teachers via a simple questionnaire and discussion process. Each month, students will receive and complete a questionnaire, which is then to be reviewed by the Director of Studies. At a minimum, an annual teacher survey will be conducted concerning the courses they are teaching on, in order to assist the Director of Studies in the review process. The Director of Studies will then take any necessary steps to revise the syllabus or any other aspect of the course, materials or resources which may require attention.

Practice material produced at QAT by teachers will be kept in a central filing system where it may be accessed and reused by other teachers.

Another central plank of this approach is that PD sessions for teachers on the implementation of the curriculum and the development of materials and assessment items be held regularly.

4.3 Assessment methods

QAT provides flexible learning and assessment procedures which take into account the learning styles and preferences of learners. QAT will endeavor, to the best of its ability, to support each student and aim to offer ongoing assistance to enable each student to achieve success in their studies.

QAT assessment principles are as follows:
• Open and accountable with emphasis on fairness and openness to the student being assessed.
• Outcome oriented - QAT has a focus on the achievement of learning outcomes.
• Flexible - encompassing a wide variety of assessment materials and methods depending on the circumstances surrounding the assessment.
• Validity - assessment methods will assess what they claim to assess.
• Reliability - assessment procedures will result in consistent interpretation of evidence from the students within given contexts.
• Fairness - assessment procedures will be fair and not disadvantage particular students.
• The assessments will take place in class, by self-study and/or in vocational placements.
• The methodology may vary in regards to group sizes (individuals, pairs and small groups) and theoretical or practical activities.
• Students will receive either written or verbal feedback for all assessments submitted.
• (VET Only) Students will be assessed against set criteria specified in the Training Package.
• (VET Only) In cases when students do not pass, they will be allowed to re-submit the assessment two more times (three attempts in total) following the trainer’s instructions.

Assessment delivery involves making learners aware of the criteria by which their work or performance will be judged. Teachers and trainers employ a collaborative approach to assessment, with a focus on equity and cultural sensitivity. Reasonable adjustment is made by the teacher or trainer if the learner has language, literacy, numeracy, or other special needs. QAT also provides flexibility by offering learners multiple opportunities to sit each assessment. Please see 5.1 below.

For VET students, QAT offers Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Students must be able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge, matched to the competencies outlined in the course they are hoping to gain a qualification in. Students are required to prepare a portfolio of evidence and attend an interview as part of their submission. Their knowledge/skills must be current i.e. they should have been acquired within the last 5 years. For more detailed information on RPL and Credit Transfers, please see 5.3 and 5.4

4.4 Responsibility

• QAT’s CEO, through the Director of Studies and Program Coordinators, is responsible for the implementation of this strategy, and also ensuring that staff members and students are aware of and following this policy.
• The Director of Studies is responsible for liaising with teaching staff in the development of assessment materials, practice tests and resource bank contributions.
• Program Coordinators are responsible for the development of Training and Assessment Strategies, assessment tools, and ongoing validation/moderation.
• The trainer and/or assessor will be responsible for determining students’ competency. In conjunction with admin staff, all results will be entered into a central database in a timely manner. The trainer is responsible for developing and adjusting session plans as required.
• The teacher is responsible for administering and marking assessment materials, as well as developing and making a record of lesson plans in the form of a teaching log.
5.0 Procedures

5.1 In-class assessment (VET)

Any Student:

- The trainer/assessor (T/A) prepares enough copies of the appropriate assessment tools, instructions, and marking guides prior to each session by checking the Course Mapping document.
- The administration department provides each T/A with an assessment results page. The T/A fills in the relevant assessment code and checks the list of names against their class roll.
- Students are informed at Orientation that assessment is delivered in class, and are aware of all due dates as they appear on their individual training plan.
- In class, the T/A explains clearly the conditions and method of assessment, as well as the performance criteria that the students will need to be deemed competent in. Students are given the opportunity to ask questions/clarify anything they do not understand.
- The T/A hands out the assessment material and conducts the assessment as per instructions on the assessment tool.
- The T/A marks the assessment item, and records the result on the cover sheet, the student achievement summary located in each student file, and the assessment results page as either ‘Satisfactory’, ‘Unsatisfactory’, or ‘Did not Submit’.
- The T/A informs the class of their result the following week in class (or via email if the student is on a prescribed holiday).

International Students:

- Any international student with an ‘Unsatisfactory’ result has 10 business days from the due date in order to resubmit their work, at a mutually agreeable time. After this time, the student will need to pay the QAT late assessment fee of $50 in order to resubmit (maximum three submissions).
- Any international student with a ‘Did not Submit’ result will need to pay the QAT late assessment fee of $50 in order to sit the assessment. An exception to this is if students can provide proof of compassionate or compelling circumstances to explain their absence (e.g. medical certificate, other documentary evidence).
- In both of the above cases, if a student attains a result of ‘Satisfactory’, the T/A will amend the record on the relevant forms.
- After the 10 business days has elapsed, the trainer submits the final results to admin and they are uploaded to the student management system (SMS).
- At this point, the trainer must ensure that all assessment evidence has been placed in the student’s individual file.

Domestic Students:

- Any domestic student must submit their assessments by the due date, unless an extension has been granted by the Program Co-ordinator.
- If the student does not submit any assessment items by the due date the student will be withdrawn from the unit of competency (applies only for students enrolled in the Certificate III Guarantee Program) or will fail the unit of competency (applies to all domestic students that are not enrolled in the Certificate III Guarantee Program).
- If the student does submit the assessment items by the due date, and the student does not satisfy the assessment criteria on their first submission, the trainer will provide feedback and shall give up to 5 days to resubmit the assessment item/s. A maximum of three submissions may be granted for each assessment item. If the student does not...
resubmit their assessment items by the due date, the student will be given a ‘not yet competent’ result for the unit of competency.

- Students who are ‘withdrawn’ or ‘not yet competent’ for a unit of competency after the finalization date will need to re-enrol and pay the prescribed fees.

5.2 In-class assessment (ELICOS)

- Progress in General English is assessed by six-weekly tests (consisting of a listening test, a reading test, a writing test and a speaking test) and also on an on-going basis.
- Set tasks and homework, prepared by teachers, assist assessment, consolidation and feedback. Each 12-week study period, this formative assessment is used to monitor course progress.
- Test results and examples of language learning progress across the four macro skills are collected and collated in separate student files for reference.
- This information is used to inform decisions regarding academic performance and class-level promotion. A pass of 80% is required to move between levels.
- Progress in the IELTS program is assessed by three-weekly tests (four-weekly in the evening) and also on an on-going basis.
- Set tasks and homework, prepared by teachers, assist assessment, consolidation and feedback. Each 12-week study period, this formative assessment is used to monitor course progress.
- In designing these tasks, teachers take into account the types of tasks and assessment criteria typically confronting students in the IELTS exam.
- The practice tests consist of a speaking test, a writing test, a reading test and a listening test, and also play a key role in the ongoing assessment process and involve an ongoing process of teacher evaluation and feedback.
- Results of students’ language learning progress across the four skills are collected and collated in separate student academic files for reference.
- Movement between classes is dependent on the results of the practice tests.

5.3 Credit Transfer (VET only)

- Students provide QAT with original or certified copies of qualifications or Statement of Attainments issued by other RTOs. Students may also submit qualifications or Statements of Attainment issued by QAT.
- A QAT assessor assesses the relevant credit to be given and documents the extent of credit granted on the Student Achievement Summary. A copy of the documentary evidence is kept on the student’s file.
- If the course credit results in a shortening of the student’s course, and the student has enrolled, and the student’s COE has been issued and a student visa granted, then the QAT PRISMS officer notifies the Secretary of DEEWR through PRISMS of the change in study duration and a new COE is generated for the student.
- If the student has enrolled, but the COE has not been issued, and the student visa has not as yet been granted, then only the actual net course duration (after deduction of the course credit) is indicated on the student’s COE.
- A shortened course also results in reduced tuition fees. The student is officially notified of this via email, and an amended written agreement with the school is signed.

5.4 Recognition of Prior Learning (VET only)

- Students are informed of the existence of QAT’s RPL process prior to enrolment via the QAT website. Upon entering into a written agreement with QAT, students confirm that they have read the handbook, which outlines the availability of RPL and the associated fees.
- If the student wishes to apply for RPL, they are issued with the QAT RPL Application Form (F006) which provides a template for submitting evidence to support their claim.
There are also detailed instructions on how to approach the RPL interview, which takes place after students have gathered enough evidence of their skills and knowledge.

- The student meets with a QAT assessor for an interview. This is to ensure that the student has completed the application correctly, and also to determine the need for any additional evidence or assessment which may enhance the claim.
- After the interview, any further evidence is gathered.
- The entire portfolio of evidence is assessed against the relevant performance criteria, and a summary is forwarded to the RPL applicant. A copy of the documentary evidence is kept on the student’s file.
- If the RPL results in a shortening of the student’s course, and the student has enrolled, and the student’s COE has been issued and a student visa granted, then the QAT PRISMS officer notifies the Secretary of DEEWR through PRISMS of the change in study duration and a new COE is generated for the student.
- If the student has enrolled, but the COE has not been issued, and the student visa has not as yet been granted, then only the actual net course duration (after deduction of any RPL-assessed modules/units) is indicated on the student’s COE.
- A shortened course also results in reduced tuition fees. The student is officially notified of this via email, and an amended written agreement with the school is signed.

5.5 Extensions (VET Courses). Please see WP011 for further detail.

- Where compelling or compassionate circumstances apply, a student may apply for an extension of their assessment due date(s) through the QAT Assessment Extension Request Form with evidence to support their reason/s. If evidence is not able to be presented at the time of request, the student will be allowed 5 business days to provide it. If the evidence is not provided within this timeframe, the result for the assessment will be immediately finalised.
- The maximum length of time for any extension is two weeks.
- A maximum of two extensions may be granted to any one student, provided they are separate cases.
- Work reasons are never considered as compassionate or compelling for an international student on a student visa.
- If the extension request is greater than two weeks, an international student on a Student Visa will be assessed for an extension under the procedures set out in QAT’s policy on Assessing Deferments, Suspensions and Cancellations (P015). This is due to the fact that any official extension of this length may involve a variation of the student’s Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE). Domestic students would be required to provide detailed evidence if seeking an extension of greater than two weeks.
- Any extensions must be approved by the Program Co-ordinator.
- Once granted, the new end date and due dates are submitted to VET Admin and an official notice is sent to the student.
- A student who has submitted a formal request will be responded to within 5 working days.

6.0 Forms

- RPL Application Form
- Assessment Cover Sheet
- Marking Guides
- Learner and Trainer Instructions
- Assessment Tools
- Course Mapping documents
- Assessment results page
- Student Achievement Summary
- Extension Request Form
7.0 References

1. Standards for National VET Regulator (NVR) Registered Training Organisations


3. QAT Student Handbook

4. AVETMISS Date element definitions (Edition 2.1 July 2011)

Version history

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