

P20- Assessment Principles and Assessment Conduct Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy and procedure is in place for the application of Assessment Principles and Policy and Procedures pertaining to the Conduct of Assessment. The policy and procedure is compliant with the requirements the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education to Overseas Students 2018* and *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*. This policy and procedure applies to both international and domestic students.

2. Responsibility

2.1 The Director of Studies is responsible for the implementation of this policy and procedure.

3. Definitions (Taken from the ASQA glossary)

3.1 **Competency:** Competency is understood as the consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments

3.2 **Assessment tool:** an assessment tool is made up of the following components:

- the context and conditions for the assessment;
- the tasks to be administered to the student;
- an outline of the evidence to be gathered from the student;
- the evidence criteria used to judge the quality of performance
- the administration, recording and reporting requirements.

The tasks to be administered to the student, the outline of the evidence to be gathered from the student and the evidence criteria used to judge the quality of performance are often referred to as the assessment instrument.

3.3 **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 a vocational education and training (VET) accredited course.

3.4 **An 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.

3.5. **Principles of assessment:**

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; and
- 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; and
- 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.

3.6. **Rules of Evidence**

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.

To accept evidence as authentic, an assessor must be assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the candidate's own work

4. **Assessors' roles and professional development for conducting assessment**

4.1 Assessors:

The role of an assessor is to objectively assess and judge a candidate's evidence against a set of standards. In order 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 training and assessment qualification or equivalent. An assessor must (Refer B01 Code of Practice and Code of Conduct for Staff B11):

- Interpret and understand the criteria;
- Ensure that evidence meets the standards/ training package;
- Ensure that evidence is valid, authentic, reliable, consistent, current and sufficient; and
- Use expertise to make fair and objective judgments.

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

- Roles, responsibilities and ethics;
- Procedural and administrative duties;
- Performance and knowledge evidence gathering and presentation;
- Interpretation and usage of standards/ training package;
- Selecting and using appropriate methods of assessment; and
- Requirements regarding processing and recording of results, progress and feedback.

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

5 Methods of assessment

Method	Description
Questioning (Direct evidence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of knowledge evidence • Assessment of a skill process • Assessment can be by written or oral questioning, conducting interviews and questionnaires
Direct observation (Direct evidence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessed in real time in the workplace. • Assessed in a simulated off-the-job situation that reflects the workplace.
Product based methods (Direct evidence)	Structured assessment activities such as reports, displays, work samples, role plays, and presentations.
Portfolio (Indirect evidence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A purposeful collection of work samples of annotated and validated pieces of evidence, compiled by the learner. • Evidence could include written documents, photographs, videos or logbooks.
Third Party Evidence (supplementary such as a supervisor's report)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence is often collected by the assessor. However, other people (third parties)—such as supervisors, trainers, team members, clients or consumers—can report what they see or hear to the assessor. • Evidence collected in this manner is called 'third party evidence'.

6 Requirements related to assessment

6.1. All assessment candidates are entitled to request for an appeal on an assessment decision.

6.2. Candidates with special needs:

- i) One fundamental principle of an assessment system is that each candidate must have access to fair and open assessment. Candidates with special needs should be offered the same opportunities as any other candidate.
- ii) As special needs extend to more than identifying physical or learning difficulties, an assessor will also need to consider the best approach when dealing with candidates with needs such as low literacy, lack of confidence or non-English speaking background.
- iii) An assessor must take special needs into consideration from the planning stage onwards and adopt particular assessment methods as appropriate. Depending on any specification given in the standards, the assessor may be able to accept alternative evidence from a candidate with special needs.
- iv) 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.

6.3. Eligibility for Assessment & Reassessment

- i) All candidates are eligible to sit for assessment, except:
 - Candidates who do not demonstrate a regular attendance pattern (e.g. 80% or better) are deemed as not acquiring sufficient knowledge of the module/unit, will therefore not be eligible to do any assessment. Student may have to pay the fee to re-study the module/unit (this will be at the discretion of the Director of Studies).
 - Candidates in English programs who do not achieve a minimum of 80% attendance.
- ii) **Re-assessment:** Candidates are permitted a maximum of 3 attempts for assessments; the assessor will review each attempt that is not satisfactory and recommend areas to focus on for further study. However, if after the 3rd attempt the student is still not satisfactory, the candidate will be counselled

and advised of the options that are available to them to progress to completing their chosen course of study.

- iii) Candidates who are dissatisfied with their assessment outcome may apply for reassessment by contacting their trainer or assessor.

6.4. Non-Attendance of Assessment

Not attending for an assessment will be counted as one assessment attempt for each occurrence unless:

- i) the candidate can provide a certificate from a registered medical practitioner indicating that the student was medically unable to attend the assessment; or
- ii) the candidate can provide independent evidence of exceptional compassionate circumstances beyond the candidates control, such as serious illness or death of a close family member to explain the non-attendance at the assessment

6.5. Plagiarism and Cheating

- i) See Plagiarism and Cheating Policy (P21) for policy and identification process
- ii) Candidates found to have cheated or plagiarised work will lose the right to re-take the assessment.
- iii) Candidates will be required to repeat the unit and pay the appropriate repeat fee.

6.6. Assessments Requirements

The Assessment Process section defines the procedure used for conducting assessments. The method applies to assessments conducted for the purposes of national recognition in both institutional contexts. Equally it applies to assessment only pathways, training and assessment pathways or Recognition of Prior Learning. All assessments must:

- i) Comply with the Assessment Guidelines included in the applicable nationally endorsed Training Packages or the assessment requirements specified in accredited courses;
- ii) Lead to the issuing of a Statement of Attainment or qualification under the AQF when a person is assessed as competent against nationally endorsed unit(s) of competency in the applicable Training Package or modules specified in the applicable accredited course.
- iii) Comply with the Principles of Assessment defined in paragraph 3.7;
- iv) Applicants are to be informed of the context and purpose of the assessment and the assessment process;
- v) Where an RPL assessment is conducted at the workplace to streamline the assessment, focus on the application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace and cover all aspects of workplace performance, including task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills and job role environment skills;
- vi) Involve the evaluation of sufficient evidence to enable judgements to be made about whether competency has been attained;
- vii) Provide for feedback to the applicant about the outcomes of the assessment process and guidance on future options;
- viii) Be equitable for all persons, taking account of cultural and linguistic needs; and
- ix) Provide for reassessment on appeal in line with the re-assessment policy referred to above.

7. Assessment Procedure

7.1 Assessment Process

i) Establish the assessment context:

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

ii) Prepare the student:

The assessor meets with the student to:

- Determine if the student is ready to commence the assessment based on whether they have acquired the appropriate skills and knowledge. This may also apply to students wishing to be assessed earlier than planned due to existing skills that were not sufficient for RPL, but allowed the student to make faster progress than expected
- 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 candidate should undertake, and answer any questions

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

iv) Seek feedback from the student by providing the prescribed form to each of them upon completion of any summative assessment; regarding the candidate's understanding of the competency standards, evidence requirements and assessment process

v) Determine if the candidate is ready for assessment and, in consultation with the candidate, decide on the time and place of the assessment

7.2 Plan and prepare the evidence gathering process

The assessor must:

- i) Use the approved Baxter Institute assessment tools to gather sufficient and quality evidence about the candidate's performance in order to make the assessment decision
- ii) Organise equipment or resources required to support the evidence gathering process
- iii) Coordinate and brief other personnel involved in the evidence gathering process.
- iv) Complete the reporting requirements and make a judgment in accordance with the assessment decision making rules and deem the candidate Competent or Not Yet Competent using the overall decision making rules.

7.3 Collect the evidence and make the assessment decision

The assessor must:

- i) Either supervise themselves or have an invigilator supervise the evidence gathering process to ensure that the conduct of assessment meets the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence
- ii) Ensure collection of the required evidence is relevant for the Unit of Competency assessment requirements
- iii) Incorporate allowable adjustments to the assessment procedure without compromising the integrity of the unit of competency

- iv) Record details of evidence collected
- v) Make a decision about the candidate's competency based on the evidence and the assessment criteria of the relevant Unit/s of Competency.

7.4 Provide feedback on the assessment

The assessor must provide advice to the candidate about the outcomes of the assessment process. This includes providing the candidate with:

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

7.5 Record and report the result

The assessor must:

- i) Record the assessment outcome
- ii) Maintain the collected assessment evidence and outcomes
- iii) Provide signed and dated assessment outcomes to the Student Support Department on time
- iv) Maintain the confidentiality of the assessment outcomes

7.6 Review the assessment process

On completion of the assessment process, the assessor must:

- i) Review the assessment process
- ii) Provide feedback of any improvements that the assessment tools and or instruments require
- iii) Make suggestions (if necessary) on improving the assessment procedures to the training manager, compliance team leader and the Director of Studies

7.7 Participate in the reassessment and appeals process

The assessor must:

- i) Provide feedback and counselling to the candidate, if required, regarding the assessment outcome or process including guidance on further options
- ii) Provide the candidate with information on the reassessment and appeals process
- iii) Participate in the reassessment or appeal according to the policies and procedures of the College.

8. Procedure for assessment tools development

In order to develop an assessment tool that ensures validity, reliability, fairness and flexibility, the following procedure must be followed (refer to ***Guidelines for developing assessment tools*** available at Baxter Institute portal)

Stage1: Planning

In planning for assessment, Baxter Institute considers how learners will be able to:

- Demonstrate the task
- Know what they need to do to complete the tasks and why
- Demonstrate that they have the ability to perform the tasks in different contexts and environments

Baxter Institute will:

- Identify the benchmark
 - i. Similar units of competency (including student feedback)
 - ii. Workplace activities requiring the sequential use of units of competency (industry consultation, trainer feedback)
 - iii. Workplace activities requiring simultaneous use of units of competency (or parts of competencies)
 - iv. Units of competency that build on each other
- Identify the evidence required
- Identify assessment methods
- Identify legislative requirements

Stage 2: Design and development

An assessment tool comprises a number of components which ensure assessment is conducted in a manner that is fair, flexible, valid and reliable. These components include:

- Context and conditions of assessment
- Task to be administered to the student
- An outline of evidence to be gathered from the candidate
- Evidence criteria used to judge the quality of performance
- Administration, recording and reporting requirements

Stage 3: Quality check (Reviewing and trialling assessment tools)

Prior to implementing a new assessment tool, Baxter Institute conducts several checks (including but not limited to):

- Inviting people for review to confirm if the content of the tool is correct and relevant to the workplace. Industry representatives could critique the tool for its clarity, content accuracy, relevance and appropriateness of language for the learners.
- Reviewing the tool with other trainers and assessors, who may not be industry experts but who have current skills and knowledge in vocational training, learning and assessment—including competency based training and assessment), can check whether:
 - the tools will address all assessment requirements of the training package or accredited course
 - the level of difficulty is appropriate to the unit or module
 - the tools will enable effective collection of evidence
 - you have provided clear instructions which can be easily understood by the learner, third party and assessor.
- Trialling the tool before it is used by learners tests the effectiveness of the tool without affecting a learner. When trialling a tool, select a group of individuals who have similar characteristics to, and levels of ability of, the target learner group. The findings of the trial will help predict whether the tool would:
 - be cost effective to implement
 - be engaging to the learner
 - produce valid and reliable evidence.

For all of the steps above, Baxter Institute retains evidence of this process for later reference and continuous improvement.

Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement is based upon assessment validation, which is defined as follows.

- Validation is a quality review process. It involves checking that the assessment tool produces valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence to enable reasonable judgements to be made as to whether the requirements of the relevant aspects of the training package or accredited course have been met. It includes reviewing and making recommendations for future improvements to the

Assessment validation includes but goes beyond assessment moderation which is defined as:

- A process of bringing assessment judgements and standards into alignment, it ensures that the same standards are applied to all assessment results within the same unit(s) of competency. It is an active process in the sense that adjustments to the lecturer's judgements are made to overcome differences in the difficulty of the tool and/or the severity of the judgements.