

ASSESSMENT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy has been developed to ensure JMD Business Institute trading as State Institute of Training's compliance with Standards for RTOs 2015

POLICY

State Institute of Training's (SIT) assessment systems have been developed and implemented in such a way that it ensures that:

- assessment judgements made by SIT's Assessors are consistently made on a sound basis
- SIT will gather evidence from a variety of sources.
- Assessments of evidence and judgements about competency will be undertaken by SIT assessor who meets the specific requirements for an assessor in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015.
- validation of SIT's assessment judgements is carried out with at least 50% of SIT's Training products being validated within the first three years of each five year cycle, taking into account the relative risks of all of the training products on SIT's scope of registration (including those risks identified by the VET regulator).
- SIT's assessments will always be based on the performance of the individual learner

SIT's assessment system will ensure that assessment (including Recognition of Prior Learning):

- complies with the assessment requirements of relevant the Training Package or VET Accredited Course; and
- is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence

For a learner to be assessed as competent, by SIT the learner must demonstrate their:

- ability to perform relevant tasks in a variety of workplace situations, or simulated workplace situations
- understanding of what they are doing, why they are doing it and when they need to perform tasks
- ability to integrate performance with understanding, to show they are able to adapt to different contexts and environments.

SIT learner will:

- be assessed against the assessment requirements as outlined in the unit of competency
- be assessed in a safe environment where evidence gathered demonstrates consistent performance of typical activities in a workplace (where applicable)

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Each unit of competency contains assessment requirements grouped into three areas:

- performance evidence
- knowledge evidence
- assessment conditions.

Performance and knowledge evidence describe what a learner must demonstrate in order to be considered competent. Assessment conditions describe the conditions under which a learner must demonstrate this, including any specific requirements for resources, trainers and assessors and the context for assessment.

Some training packages and courses may not have been updated to this format. In these cases, 'required skills and knowledge' and 'evidence guide' or similar terms are used.

When planning assessment, SIT will ensure all of the requirements of the unit or module. To achieve a 'competent' result, learners must meet all the requirements of the unit.

IMPLEMENTING THE PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

No matter what assessment pathway or methods are used, the principles of fairness, flexibility, validity and reliability must be met.

Fairness

- At enrolment or prior to commencement of training, make recognition of prior learning available to all learners. SIT will ensure any required adjustments are made to the training and assessment program for each learner.
- SIT will consider the learner's needs in the assessment process and make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the learner (such as providing oral rather than written assessment). However, the rigour of the assessment process won't be compromised.
- SIT will ensure the learner is fully informed of the assessment process and performance expectations before undertaking assessment.
- If a learner is unable to complete the required task to the level described in the assessment requirements, SIT will consider whether they need further training before being reassessed.
- Sound enrolment processes will help to identify the needs of learners and avoid learners being enrolled in a course that they will not be able to complete.
- SIT has an appeals process to provide an avenue for learners to challenge an assessment decision and to have it reviewed objectively.

Flexibility

- SIT will at enrolment or prior to commencement of training, make recognition of prior learning available to all learners. SIT will ensure any required adjustments are made to the training and assessment program for that learner.
- SIT will take the learner into account in the assessment process, and recognise that they may already have demonstrated some aspects of the unit through other means. If individual learners have demonstrated current skills and knowledge, they should not be required to be reassessed in those areas, unless the previous demonstration of skills or knowledge is in a significantly different context or environment.
- SIT will use a range of assessment methods to help produce valid decisions and recognise that learners demonstrate competence in a variety of ways.

Validity

- As part of assessment, SIT requires learners to demonstrate skills and knowledge across a range of environments and contexts relevant to the unit or module. Assessing in a variety of contexts shows that the learner is able to apply the skills and knowledge in other situations, and can apply their knowledge in a practical way.
- SIT will ensure that assessment tasks and methods match assessment requirements.

Reliability

- SIT will make assessment decisions consistently across different learners and different assessors in the same unit or module.
- SIT will have a well-designed assessment system that includes measures to minimise variation between assessors. The same evidence presented by different learners or to different assessors should result in the same decision.
- SIT will develop evidence criteria (i.e. decision-making rules) to judge the quality of performance. This will help assessors make consistent judgements about competence. Evidence criteria could include:
 - model answers (where appropriate)
 - descriptions of observations needed to assess skills and application of knowledge in a practical activity.
- Benchmarks for practical activities must necessarily be broad enough to allow for variations in the precise task being undertaken and any variations in the context, but must include ‘observable behaviours’—the behaviours which must be exhibited by the learner when carrying out the task.

IMPLEMENTING THE RULES OF EVIDENCE

The evidence used to make a decision about competence must be valid, sufficient, authentic and current.

Validity

- SIT will ensure that evidence is directly related to the competency being assessed.
- SIT will ensure there is a direct relationship between the assessment tasks or activities learners undertake, the evidence presented and the assessment requirements.

Sufficiency

- SIT will gather enough evidence to make a valid judgement of competence or otherwise.
- The quantity of evidence may vary between learners. Some may take longer or need to complete a greater number of tasks to demonstrate competence. Others may, despite repeated opportunities, not be able to achieve competence.

Authenticity

- SIT will ensure that evidence gathered ‘belongs’ to the learner being assessed and provides evidence of that person’s skills and knowledge.
- SIT will verify that the person you are enrolling, training and assessing is the same person that will be issued with a qualification or statement of attainment

Currency

- Decide how valid the evidence is, given the time that has passed since the evidence was generated. Currency is important in determining if a learner is competent. Currency is a particular risk with recognition of prior learning, as you may be presented with a range of evidence gathered over a number of years. This does not mean evidence that is not recent is not valid; there must be sufficient evidence of the person’s competence at the time of the assessment decision.
- SIT must determine whether the evidence is recent enough to show the learner is competent at the time of assessment decision.

INTEGRITY

The academic standards and integrity of SIT will be maintained throughout every aspect of the assessment process. SIT will ensure the integrity of its assessment processes by ensuring that the following principles are adhered to:

- Assessments will be planned and delivered by qualified SIT Assessors
- Assessors will inform students of the assessment requirements and will ensure that the students have every opportunity to complete all assessments for all units of competency (within the period that the student is enrolled at SIT). This clause ensures that:
- Assessors will only use SIT version controlled documentation
- All SIT students will be encouraged to undertake formative activities before commencing a summative assessment task.
- All SIT students will be provided with timely feedback on the evidence that they have provided in order to be deemed competent
- All SIT assessments that require the student to provide evidence of competency, will be designed to ensure that they are:
 - Valid - the evidence presented demonstrates the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the unit of competency and assessment requirements
 - Sufficient - the quality, quantity and relevance of evidence presented enables a judgement to be made of a learner's competency
 - Current - the evidence presented is from either the present or the very recent past, and
 - Authentic - the evidence presented for assessment is the learner's own work.

SAFEGUARDS

SIT will safeguard its assessment processes by ensuring that:

- All Trainers/Assessors employed by SIT will up-date their Trainer Matrix on an annual basis; which will be maintained on their personal file.
- During the induction of all SIT Trainers, they will be provided with information on the process of assessment at SIT
- All Trainers employed by SIT will have access to a version controlled 'trainers only copy' assessment criteria/model answers for each assessment task
- SIT understands that 'there is no hierarchy of evidence and while training packages describe the outcomes of assessment and provide advice about the scope and context for assessment, neither the Standards nor training package guidelines prescribe exactly what type of evidence, or how much evidence, must be collected, SIT has reached an appropriate balance and will ensure that, overall, the evidence collected meets the rules of evidence.
- SIT recognises that it is the quality of all evidence collected that is important to making a sound judgement about competence—rather than the quantity, type and form of evidence, where it was collected or who collected it.
- All assessments used by SIT will go through a validation process.

VALIDATION

SIT will implement a plan for ongoing systematic validation of its assessment practices and judgements for each training product on the SIT's scope of registration. This plan will identify:

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

SIT's relevant Training Coordinators will be responsible for developing and implementing a validation plan for the training products on SIT's scope of registration for which they are responsible. In developing this plan the Training Coordinator will ensure:

- that each Training Product will undergo validation at least once every 5 years
- that at least 50% of the Training Products are validated within first three years of that cycle
- that certain Training Products may need to be validated more often where specific risks have been identified e.g. through industry engagement or advised by the VET regulator

In addition SIT's Training Coordinator's will systematically conduct validation activities to confirm assessment judgements. It is not intended to validate every assessment judgement, the relevant Training Coordinator will conduct a valid sampling approach in order to conduct a quality review process and that will allow a reasonable inference to be made that assessment judgement have been valid overall. They will also ensure that the sample chosen is random and that it is representative of all assessment judgements. With this approach SIT can reliably predict the likelihood of any assessment judgement being valid.

SIT's assessment practices and judgements will be undertaken by one or more persons who are not directly involved in the particular instance of delivery and assessment of the training product being validated, and who collectively have:

- vocational competencies and current industry skills relevant to the assessment being validated;
- current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning; and
- the relevant TAE training and assessment qualification

SIT's relevant Training Coordinator will undertake a team approach to this validation activity whereby SIT's Assessors can be involved in this validation activity as long as they were not directly involved in deciding the validation outcome for their assessment decisions.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

SIT will offer Recognition of Prior Learning to potential learners prior to enrolment, in order that SIT can determine the amount of training it will provide to each learner with regard to their existing skills, knowledge and the experience of the learner. SIT will conduct RPL as an assessment process that assesses the competency(s) of a potential learner that may have been acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that learner meets the requirements specified in the training package or VET accredited courses. SIT's RPL evidence gathering process will include the RPL conversation record together with the evidence the student will provide to the RPL Assessor. This will form a pool of evidence that the RPL Assessor will use to assess RPL credit.

Where an RPL Assessor determines that it is appropriate to collect third party evidence SIT will provide sufficient guidance to both the RPL Assessor and the third party by:

- Providing SIT RPL Assessor with comprehensive guidance about how to select the best third party i.e. the most appropriate person to observe or report on the performance of the learner who is in a position to make a valid comment on the learner's performance.
- Providing quality materials for collecting evidence i.e. these materials will seek/solicit/allow for feedback that is directly related to the relevant unit(s) of competency on the learner's performance.
- Providing the third party with comprehensive information about their role in the evidence-gathering process i.e. providing clear guidance and instruction on when, how, how often and over what period of time the evidence is to be collected. The materials will explain the form in which the evidence will be collected—namely observation checklist that clearly identifies what was observed or performed.
- Obtaining confirmation that the third party understands their role in the process i.e. this will include confirmation that the third party has agreed to participate in the evidence-gathering process and that they understand when and how to collect evidence and the conditions under which the work activity is conducted.

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

SIT Trainers/Assessors will advise students at or prior to the commencement of a unit of competency of the following:

- The context and purpose of the assessment and the assessment process (formative and summative)
- The methods of assessment and evidence requirements, including the skill and knowledge assessment criteria
- Timelines for assessment, including dates by which the assessment is to be finalised
- Timelines for the return of the assessment, where applicable
- Results categories assessment Tasks to be used i.e. either: S - Satisfactory or NYS – Not Yet Satisfactory
- Results categories to be used for units of competencies i.e. either: C - Competent or NYC - Not Yet Competent
- Details of materials and equipment that may or must be used in assessment tasks
- The advisability of retaining a copy of submitted materials where appropriate
- Reassessment and re-sit options. Students will be given 2 chances for resubmission of evidence.

Strategies for assessing achievement of student outcomes:

- Student will undertake formative activities, which will not be assessed, so that they will be provided with feedback on these activities by the trainer, prior to commencing the summative assessment activities
- Students will collect evidence as specified in the Summative Skills and Assessment documentation, and will be required to present their evidence to their Assessor so that the evidence can be assessed as either S – Satisfactory or NS – Not Satisfactory (for each piece of assessment)
- If the evidence is assessed as NS – Not Satisfactory the student will be given 2 re – submit opportunities
- In all cases the Assessor will provide feedback to the student (e.g. where a student has been assessed as a NS they will be provided with clear and constructive feedback based on the summative assessment decision so that they can improve their skills / knowledge prior to reassessment)
- Only when all assessments have been assessed as S - Satisfactory will a student be deemed C – Competent; if a student does not satisfactorily complete all the assessment tasks they will be deemed NYC – Not Yet Competent (and will be required to re-enrol in the unit)
- Students will have every opportunity to complete all assessment tasks for a unit of competency during the enrolled period.
- The Assessor will use the checklists (which are part of the Skills and Knowledge documentation) to ensure that all the criteria has been assessed; and make comments where appropriate or necessary
- If a student requires allowable adjustments to any assessment activity/task they will be encouraged to discuss their particular requirement with their assessor at the beginning of the delivery for each unit.
- If a student is dissatisfied with an assessment decision they can appeal the decision (as per RTO Standards 6.2).
- After students have submitted the summative evidence of competence (skill and knowledge), the Assessor will provide individual feedback each student, on a unit by unit basis and provide a summary of their feedback on the front page of the Skill and Knowledge Assessment tool.

ASSESSMENT RECORDING

SIT will record results within 10 working days of the completion of a unit of competency.

ASSESSMENT MISCONDUCT**Identification of misconduct**

If SIT Assessor believes there has been a serious and/or pre-meditated irregularity or act of misconduct during an assessment, a meeting between the Assessor and the relevant Training Coordinator will be convened to investigate the matter. The student will be advised on the procedures of the investigation. The piece of assessed work in which the irregularity is suspected will be retained by the Assessor until the investigation, including any appeal, is complete or the agreed date for the return of assessed material – but within the student’s enrolment period.

Disciplinary action

If the SIT Assessor, in consultation with the relevant Training Coordinator, finds that an irregularity has occurred they may, whilst taking into account the seriousness of the occurrence and the circumstances, decide that:

- a) The case against the student will be dismissed
- b) The student will be required to undertake further assessment
- c) The student may be reprimanded by the SIT CEO
- d) An 'NYC' result will be recorded for the Unit of Competency

The student will be informed in writing of the decision, the reason(s) for the decision and the appeal mechanism within two (2) working days of the decision being made. The relevant Training Coordinator will retain copies of all documentation, including any evidence collected.

GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of their assessment review in the first instance should discuss their concerns with the Assessor and/or relevant Training Coordinator. If the issue is not resolved and requires escalation to a higher authority, the student may appeal the decision(s) on one or more of the following grounds according to SIT's Complaints and Appeals process:

- a) That a procedural irregularity has occurred
- b) That evidence was inappropriately assessed