

## TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY POLICY

### Purpose

This policy outlines ACTB's approach to developing and implementing training and assessment strategies that align with regulatory requirements, industry needs, and learner expectations. It ensures that all training and assessment practices are compliant with the Standards for RTOs and deliver high-quality, nationally recognised outcomes.

### Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff, learners, and clients; and
- All of our training and assessment services, and related business functions.

### Software

- Student Management System

### Responsibilities

#### 1. Director

- Ensures compliance with legislation, regulations and Standards for RTO.
- Approves of all training and assessment strategies, practices and materials.

#### 2. RTO Manager

- Oversees the development, implementation and review of the training and assessment strategies and materials.
- Ensures strategies and materials are updated to reflect current industry practices and audit findings.
- Conducts induction and refresher training on training and assessment requirements.

#### 3. Trainers & Assessors

- Develops, delivers, and reviews training and assessment strategies and practices to ensure relevance and compliance.

## General Principles

As an RTO, ACTB is committed to:

- Developing engaging training programs that produce job-ready graduates.
- Ensuring our training and assessment strategies and practices, including the amount of training we provide, are consistent with the requirements of the respective training package or VET-accredited course and consider:
  - The learner's existing skills, knowledge and experience;
  - The mode of delivery;
  - Their educational and working background; and
  - Their existing skills and knowledge.
- Undertaking meaningful and regular industry consultation activities to ensure our training programs will adequately prepare the learners for the workplace and benefit the industry by ensuring our learners are properly and adroitly skilled.
- Confirm the compliance, quality and integrity of our training programs by undertaking regular industry engagements, internal audits, and assessment validation and moderation activities.
- Clearly detailing information about the training program in the Training and Assessment Strategy (TAS), including, but not limited to:
  - o RTO number and CRICOS Provider number
  - o Qualification code, title and CRICOS course code
  - o Training product information
  - o Location of the training program
  - o Mode of delivery
  - o Duration of the training program (including the taught weeks, and breaks, where applicable)
  - o Units of competency or modules and their sequencing
  - o Volume of learning
  - o Pre-requisite and core skills requirements
  - o Licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification considerations (if any)

- o Names of the Trainers & Assessors delivering the training program (to ensure sufficiency and clarity), including their vocational qualifications and relevant work experience requirements – where a third-party is delivering any training or assessment for the training product, it should be clearly stipulated and explained. Where an Assessor does not hold the required training and assessment competence, but is a recognised industry expert, we will put appropriate supervision arrangements in place to support the gathering of valid evidence. Refer to our Third-Party Arrangements policy for further guidance on this.
- o Trainer to student ratio, which is to be decided upon based on:
  - Mode of delivery,
  - Number and type of training products offered,
  - Student cohort size, diversity and composition,
  - Scheduled delivery hours, and
  - Assessment dates.
- o Information and characteristics about the learner cohort(s)
- o Qualification and training program information
- o Educational and support services to meet the needs of the learner cohort(s)
- o Learning and assessment resources to enable learners to meet the requirements for each unit of competency, which are accessible to the learner regardless of the location or mode of delivery
- o Resources – human, physical and virtual resources and facilities (ensuring they are suitable, safe, accessible, sufficient, and adequate to accommodate and support the number of learners undertaking the training program)
- o Outline of the learning sessions and assessment activities
- o Plan, strategies and activities to maintain learner engagement
- o Assessment process and methods, including providing feedback and the recording of assessment outcomes
- o Simulated workplace environment
- o Possible workplace simulation strategies
- o Workplace agreement details (where applicable)
- o Reasonable adjustments

- o Benchmarks
- o Re-assessment and appeals information
- o Assessment validation process
- o Student completion, progress and attendance information
- o Industry consultation information
- o Continuous improvement process

## Training Program Development

In developing a compliant and engaging training program that is fit-for-use, we adhere to the following:

- Confirm the chosen training product is suited to our needs and aims, and has not been superseded.
- Ensure we thoroughly review and conform to the requirements of the training product, as listed on the National Training Register:
  - o Entry requirements (if any);
  - o Pre-requisites (if any);
  - o Packaging rules – including the rules surrounding the selection of elective units;
  - o Resources required;
  - o Assessment requirements – including performance and knowledge evidence requirements; and
  - o Assessment conditions – including Assessor and resource requirements.
- Logical and meaningful industry consultation is undertaken to enable us to develop an industry-relevant training program that captures:
  - o Industry needs, expectations, concerns and skill shortages;
  - o Future of the industry and employment trends;
  - o What they are looking for in the graduates;
  - o Suitable elective units;
  - o Expectations and currency of Trainer & Assessor’s qualifications and work experience;
  - o Validation frequency of training and assessment resources and strategies;
  - o Legislation, regulations and standards that apply to the industry;

- o Technology(ies) used by the industry;
  - o Current knowledge, skills and practices of the particular roles (job outcomes of the training product);
  - o Preference about the way in which a program is delivered – including the delivery structure (i.e. the scheduling of the units of competency or cluster) and mode(s);
  - o Appropriateness of the duration of the training program, as well as the breakdown of the allocation of hours for training and assessment;
  - o Where we are delivering similar or complementary units, if it is appropriate to cluster (and to document the rationale behind it);
  - o Whether our training activities and resources are engaging and detailed enough to support our teachings;
  - o Resources required for the delivery of the training program;
  - o Advice on contextualising or adapting purchased assessment materials to suit workplace contexts;
  - o Our assessments reflect the knowledge required and how tasks are undertaken in the workplace;
  - o Facilities, equipment and supervision that will be available for work placements, if applicable;
  - o How we would structure, schedule and integrate any work placement programs into our course, if applicable.
- The outcomes of the industry engagement are used to inform our training and assessment strategies, practices and resources.
  - The delivery mode selected is suitable for the requirements of the training product – for example, it is not suitable to deliver training and assessment for a Certificate III in Commercial Cookery program online, as there are aspects of the training and assessment that require the learner to complete practical activities in a commercial kitchen setting. When deciding on a delivery mode, the following actions are to be undertaken:
    - o Review of the unit of competency:
      - Elements

- Performance Criteria
  - Performance Evidence
  - Knowledge Evidence
  - Assessment Conditions
  - Any licensing or regulatory rules are to be undertaken to confirm the suitability of a delivery method
- Feedback is to be obtained from industry contacts to confirm that the delivery mode(s) will enable the learners to attain the skills and knowledge required.
  - The duration of the training program is adequate in delivering high-quality learning and assessment sessions, taking into account:
    - Target student cohort
    - The number of units of competency in the program
  - Time required to undertake the learning activities for the learner to acquire the knowledge and skills required
    - Time required for any self-paced learning and/or revision of material
    - Time required for the assessment activities
    - Work-based training requirements (where applicable)
    - Resources involved in delivering the training program
    - Industry expectations.
  - A guide that can be used is the expected volume of learning published for each qualification in the Australian Qualifications Framework:
    - Certificate I program – 6 months to 1 year
    - Certificate II program – 6 months to 1 year
    - Certificate III program – 1 to 2 years
    - Certificate IV program – 6 months to 2 years
    - Diploma program – 1 to 2 years
    - Advanced Diploma program – 1 to 2 years
  - Feedback from industry contacts, as well as feedback from Trainers & Assessors already delivering a similar training program, is to be sought to confirm the suitability of the amount of training.

- o Whilst it is not our practice to deviate from the AQF guide, where the amount of training to be delivered is of a shorter duration than the expected volume of learning listed above, all research, industry consultation and reports prepared are to explain why the volume of learning is shorter than the expected hours are to be clearly documented and saved.
- o The sequencing and organisation of the training and assessment are logical and meet any training product and industry requirements.
- o The structure and pace are suitable for learners to learn the knowledge and skills needed, and the time allocated is sufficient for instruction, practice, feedback and assessment.
- o The assessment process, strategies and methods are compliant with the Standards and meet all of the training product requirements.
- o Where work placements are a mandatory component of the training program, clear parameters and conditions of the work placements, including the details of the agreements with workplace hosts, the resources and facilities, the learning and assessment arrangements, and the supervision provisions, are developed to meet training product requirements and industry expectations to produce practical training outcomes.
- o Monitoring and evaluation systems are in place to enable effective review of our strategies and resources, so that it continues to meet industry requirements. Refer to our Monitoring and Evaluating Training and Assessment Procedure detailed below for more information.
- The developed training and assessment strategy for the training program is approved by the CEO, and all research and industry engagement records to support the developed training and assessment strategy are saved in the training program folder.

## **Assessment Strategy**

The assessment strategy is an essential component of the development of the training program as it defines how evidence will be gathered from the learners and demonstrates how the assessment activities will meet the training product requirements, meet the rules of evidence, and be conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment.

ACTB will apply a best practice, fit-for-purpose approach as follows:

- Our assessment system complies with the assessment requirements and assessment conditions of the relevant training product or VET-accredited course.
- Determines what competence looks like based on the unit elements, performance criteria and assessment requirements.
- Assessment tools are contextualised to:

- o The student cohort and industry or work context,
  - o Is at an appropriate level of difficulty,
  - o Have a balance of theory with practical, and
  - o Show how the integrity of assessment is maintained when there are variations to the duration of training.
- Assessment is conducted in accordance with the **Principles of Assessment:**
    - o **Fairness** – our assessment approach incorporates the candidate’s needs in the assessment. We do this through making reasonable adjustments where appropriate and providing clear communication with the candidate to ensure they are fully informed about the assessment objectives, the assessment process, the re-assessment opportunity, and the Appeals policy. This information is provided to the candidate in our Student Handbook, and also in the Introduction and Instruction pages of each assessment tool, prior to them undertaking the assessment tasks.
    - o **Flexibility** – we strive to provide assessment opportunities that reflect a candidate’s needs by reflecting on the candidate’s needs, assessing competencies held by the candidate 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 candidate themselves.
    - o **Validity** – we ensure that any assessment decision is justified, based on the evidence of the performance of the candidate. We undertake assessment mapping, moderation and validation activities for the units of competency we deliver which covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance, knowledge and skills integrated with their practical application, based on evidence that demonstrates a candidate can demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations, and judgement of competence is based on evidence of candidate performance aligned to the units of competency and associated assessment requirements.
    - o **Reliability** – we seek to gather and interpret evidence in a consistent manner that provides for reliable assessment both for the candidate and for the Assessors. We achieve this by using Assessors who have the required competencies in assessment and the relevant vocational competencies. Our Assessor marking Guides also provide for standardised outcomes supported by model answers and clear benchmarks to guide Assessors in their judgements. Reliability is also supported by the moderation of assessment judgements across our Assessors.

- Evidence gathered meets the **Rules of Evidence**:
  - **Validity** – the Assessor is to ensure that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and the associated assessment requirements. We collect evidence that directly aligns with the components documented within each unit of competency. The mapping tool for each unit of competency details the alignment of assessment activities with the corresponding component of the unit of competency. The collected assessment evidence must replicate the outputs of the task as though it were being performed within an actual workplace (or in a closely simulated workplace environment). This may include the observation of the candidate performing the tasks relevant to the unit of competency or the collection of a completed workplace product.

Assessment evidence that is purely academic in nature, such as written knowledge tests, should be given a lesser priority than the collection of evidence that relates directly to the candidate performing the tasks indicative of the unit of competency, such as role plays or simulated workplace and practical activities.

- **Sufficiency** – the Assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enable a judgement to be made of a learner’s competency. We ensure the collection of valid assessment evidence in such quantity to ensure that all aspects of competency have been satisfied and that competency can be demonstrated repeatedly. The collection of sufficient assessment evidence will be supported by using a range of assessment methods, which lead to the collection of evidence over time based on a range of performances. We have developed assessment tools for each unit of competency or assessment cluster, which includes both theoretical and practical components to ensure a comprehensive and sufficient range of assessments.
- **Authenticity** – the Assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the candidate’s own work. Our Academic Integrity policy, combined with the Assessor’s requirements to check the student’s valid and current photo ID, such as with their driver’s license or passport, before commencing the assessment, and the requirement for the student to sign a declaration which states that:
  - The work is their own, and they have not copied any part of it from any other source, except where due acknowledgement is made;
  - They have not previously submitted the work for any other course or unit; and
  - No part of the assessment has been written or completed by another person. We conduct practical assessment activities, including role plays and simulated workplace

assessments, which are observed or supervised by our Assessors. These types of assessments minimise the risk of candidates submitting work that is not their own.

- o **Currency** – the Assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency, which requires evidence to be from the present or the very recent past. Questions of evidence currency will mostly relate to recognition of prior learning applications where a candidate has been in the workplace for many years and is seeking recognition of skills and knowledge obtained through workplace experience or previous training. In all situations, Assessors must validate the currency of a candidate’s knowledge and skills.
- Evidence is gathered over a period of time in a logical manner involving several assessments, rather than collecting assessment evidence all at once.
- Use a range of assessment methods to rigorously assess a candidate’s ability to meet the performance and knowledge evidence as outlined in the relevant unit of competency and contextualised to the target industry’s requirements.
- Gather evidence based on a candidate’s ability to perform in a real or simulated work environment, ensuring the activities realistically reflect the way tasks are completed in the workplace.
- Implement assessment validation practices to ensure the assessment strategies, resources and tools are continuously reviewed for improvement and remain industry-relevant. Validation methods include assessment moderation exercises between Assessors to promote consistent judgments and interpretation of evidence, and the internal audit of assessment strategies. This is to take place before the issuing of the student outcomes to ensure the same decisions are applied to all assessment results within the same unit of competency.
- Clearly outlines the systems and processes we have in place to assess RPL applications.
- Identify appropriate assessment methods to gather the required evidence from the candidate. The choice of assessment methods will be informed by a range of factors, including the evidence guide requirements in the relevant unit of competency, appropriate to the context, the assessment guidelines in the applicable training package, the scope and nature of the skills and knowledge being assessed, as well as reflecting the learner and industry needs. Assessment methods may include – knowledge questions, role plays or demonstration of workplace tasks, direct observation of workplace tasks being performed, project work, work placements, a review of the candidate’s portfolio.
- Undertake accurate assessment mapping exercises to ensure each assessment activity maps to the requirements in the unit of competency. The assessment mapping document will confirm what evidence is to be collected in order for the candidate to meet all of the requirements in the unit of competency. The exercise will also demonstrate if there are any requirements not met or if there is an overlap in assessment, which provides the opportunity to combine or cluster activities or

questions to create efficiencies in the assessment process.

- Ensure all resources, whether human, physical or virtual, are available and accessible for the candidate, such as:
  - Adequately qualified Assessors
  - Suitable environment to support candidate performance
  - Appropriate evidence gathering tools, activities and instructions
  - Assessment materials, resources and equipment
  - Simulated workplace documents
  - Workplace venue or simulated workplace environment
- The process for assessment is clearly detailed in the strategy document and also relayed to the candidate in the Student Handbook:
  - Prepare for the assessment
  - Prepare the candidate and ensure they are ready prior to the assessment activity taking place
  - Plan and prepare the evidence-gathering process
  - Collect the assessment evidence and make an assessment judgement
  - Provide feedback on the submission
  - Record and report the result
  - Review the assessment process
  - Participate in the re-assessment and appeals process (if applicable).
- Assessment instructions to the Trainer & Assessor, and the candidate are clearly documented in the assessment tool.
- Assessment decisions are justified, based on the evidence of the performance of the individual candidate. Validity requires assessment against the unit(s) of competency, and the associated assessment requirements cover the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance.
- Use the content of the respective component of the units of competency as the primary benchmark for assessment when making assessment decisions.

## Context of Assessment

Assessment practice is not something that can be considered in isolation. The candidates, Trainers & Assessors, the industry, and the training product, are some of the factors that influence how assessment is designed, delivered, received and regarded.

ACTB recognises the importance of establishing the right context for candidates for their assessments. The assessment context may be considered the key to understanding assessment in action. It is important to ensure that in establishing the context of assessment, the transferability of the unit of competency is not affected. It is our responsibility to ensure that candidates are provided with the right context to undertake their assessment activities with the following strategies:

- Incorporation of workplace policies and procedures into the assessment scenario or activity.
- Have the candidate perform real workplace tasks (where possible).
- The integration of relevant industry codes of practice into the assessment activity.
- The incorporation of licensing, certification or legislative requirements (where applicable).
- Tailoring the program outcomes to meet the organisational training needs without compromising the training package requirements.
- Develop assessment activities that will require the candidate to conduct specific research relating to industry situations and occurrences (where applicable).
- Provide a realistic simulated workplace.

## Assessment Tools

At ACTB, our assessment activities are to be supported by clear assessment instructions and information that will provide for a reliable assessment process across our operations. The assigned Trainers & Assessors are to prepare suitable assessment information and instructions and are to gain approval from the RTO Manager for the use of the assessment resources and tools.

Assessment tools are used to gather evidence about a candidate's competence. We have developed assessment tools that support the assessment of applicable units of competency in accordance with the requirements of the training packages.

It is important that in our development process we ensure the assessment tools reflect the needs of our clients, the industry and of any licensing, certification or legislative requirements that may apply.

Each assessment tool should contain clear and concise information to draw out a response from a candidate, such as:

Instructions to set the framework for the activity.

- The expected outcomes of the assessment should also be included in the instructions, and it is critical that they are aligned with the candidate's preparation during their training or through other competency development pathways.
- Scenario information includes information that sets the context for a simulated assessment activity. This may be a simple case study or a deep scenario that requires analysis and interpretation. It is important to note that the higher the AQF qualification level, the greater the requirement.
- Analyse and apply cognitive skills to produce workplace outcomes. Refer to the AQF guide for more information on the various AQF levels and their requirements.
- Industry information such as codes of practice, policies and procedures, legislation and regulations.
- It is crucial for ACTB to retain completed assessment tools in accordance with our Record Keeping and Access policy.

## Re-assessment

Candidates who are assessed as 'Not Yet Satisfactory' will be provided with detailed verbal and written feedback to assist them in identifying the gaps in their knowledge and skills to be addressed through further training.

Learners will be required to pay a fee for additional training and re-assessment. Refer to the current Fees and Charges schedule in their letter of offer. Candidates requiring additional learning support are to be brought to the attention of the management team so that the progress of the candidate can be monitored closely and additional support services can be applied. Where candidates repeatedly do not demonstrate competence following significant learning and assessment support, their enrolment can be determined through mutual agreement.

Where the candidate decides to appeal the assessment outcome, the Assessor should also communicate ACTB's Appeals policy to them and direct them to the Student Handbook.

## Compliance

This policy aligns with:

### 1. Standards for RTOs 2025:

- o **Standard 1.1** – Training is engaging and well-structured and enables VET students to attain skills and knowledge consistent with the training product.
- o **Standard 1.2** – Effective engagement with industry, employer and/or community representatives informs the industry relevance of the training.
- o **Standard 1.3** – The assessment system is fit-for-purpose and consistent with the training product.
- o **Standard 1.4** – The assessment system ensures assessment is conducted fairly and appropriately and enables accurate judgments of VET student competency.
- o **Standard 1.8** – Facilities, resources and equipment for each training product are fit-for-purpose, safe, accessible and sufficient.
- o **Standard 2.1** – VET students have access to clear and accurate information, including to make informed decisions about the training product and the RTO, and are made aware of changes that affect them.
- o **Standard 3.1** – Effective workforce management ensures appropriate staffing to deliver the services.
- o **Standard 4.1** – The RTO operates with integrity and is accountable for the delivery of quality services.
- o **Standard 4.2** – Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood.
- o **Standard 4.3** – Risks to VET students, staff, and the RTO are identified and managed.
- o **Standard 4.4** – The RTO undertakes systematic monitoring and evaluation to support the delivery of quality services and continuous improvement.

Failure to comply with this policy can have serious consequences, including but not limited to:

- **For the RTO** – breaches of legislation or regulatory requirements may result in financial penalties, loss of registration, reputation damage, or regulatory enforcement actions.
- **For Staff Members** – staff found to have knowingly or negligently failed to comply with this policy and any associated legislative or regulatory requirements may face disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment.
- **For Learners and Clients** – non-compliance could lead to disruptions in training and assessment services, invalid qualifications or compromised learning outcomes, potentially affecting future employment opportunities.

## Continuous Improvement

- An internal audit is to be conducted at least once per year to assess our compliance with this policy and the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements. The audit schedule is outlined in our *Continuous Improvement Schedule*, and areas for improvement are documented in our *Continuous Improvement Register*.
- Feedback from staff, learners, clients and industry stakeholders will be used to inform improvements to compliance processes and the effectiveness of our operations.
- Internal audit review questions for self-assurance purposes should include:
  - o How do you know your training design and delivery is fit-for-purpose and consistent with the requirements of the training product?
  - o How do you identify relevant industry, employer and/or community representatives and engage with them to ensure your training reflects current industry requirements, expectations and practice?
  - o What has informed your understanding that the structure and pacing of training allows students to achieve the outcomes set out in the training product? How do you adjust this for different student cohorts?
  - o How do you ensure trainers are appropriately skilled, qualified and resourced to deliver training in an effective and engaging way?
  - o How do you collect industry, employer and/or community representatives and student feedback and use this to inform improvements to training design and delivery?
  - o How do you evaluate whether work placements provide students with sufficient opportunity to gain the necessary industry-relevant skills and knowledge?

- o How do you know your assessment system is fit-for-purpose for all intended cohorts and consistent with the requirements of the training product?
- o How do you validate the authenticity of a student's assessment evidence?
- o What due diligence do you undertake to ensure that your Trainers and Assessors meet the requirements of the Credential Policy?
- o How do you monitor your assessment system and assessment outcomes and make any necessary changes to assessment tools and other materials?
- o How does the design of your assessment system support assessment in line with the principles of assessment and rules of evidence?
- o What systems and processes do you have in place to undertake regular, structured and impartial validation of assessment practices?
- o Do the training product requirements include specific facilities, resources or equipment?
- o How has industry, employer, community, staff and student feedback influenced the facilities, resources and equipment you use?
- o How do students access the facilities, resources and equipment? Do all students have reasonable and equitable access?
- o What risks are associated with the facilities, resources and equipment and how are these risks proactively managed, including by your third parties, to ensure the safety of students and staff at all times?
- o Are there any specific risks associated with facilities, resources or equipment used for work-integrated learning, work placements or other community-based learning? If so, how are these being managed?
- o Consult with the industry to confirm that the content of the tools is correct and relevant to the workplace.
- o Trial the tools with a select group of individuals who have similar characteristics and abilities to our student cohort.
- o Moderate the tools with other Trainers and Assessors who have current skills and knowledge.

## Related Documents

- AQT Learner Questionnaire
- AQT Employer Questionnaire
- Assessment Authenticity Declaration
- Assessment Mapping template
- Assessment Plan template
- Continuous Improvement Register
- Continuous Improvement Schedule
- Student Unit Evaluation Survey
- Suggestion and Feedback Form
- TAS Qualification template
- TAS Short Unaccredited Course template
- Training and assessment resources