Quality Training and Assessment Policy and Procedure
RTO PP003

Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline the approach taken by ACF to deliver high-quality training and assessment to its students and ensure responsiveness to industry and student requirements whilst meeting the full requirements of the qualifications and courses provided.

Responsibilities

The National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO is accountable for ensuring this policy and procedure is implemented, supported by Support Services and Course Coordinators

Scope

This policy and procedure covers all of ACF's RTO training and related services.

Definitions

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) means the framework for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training system, as agreed by the Commonwealth, State and Territory ministerial council with responsibility for higher education.

AQF certification documentation is the set of official documents that confirms that an AQF qualification or statement of attainment has been issued to an individual.

AQF qualification means an AQF qualification type endorsed in a training package or accredited in a VET accredited course.

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 VET accredited course.

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 Rules of Evidence contained in Standards for RTOs (2015).

Assessors are persons who assess a student's competence under Clauses 1.13 to 1.16, Standards for RTOs (2015). Facilitators are qualified trainers and assessors who may be involved in the delivery of training or assessment or both.

Competency means 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.

Current industry skills are the knowledge, skills and experience required by VET trainers and assessors and those who provide training and assessment under supervision to ensure that their training and assessment are based on current industry practices and meet the needs of industry.

Policy

ACF will:

- Offer consistent, best practices in education, training and assessment for all students
- Design, develop and deliver training and assessment following the principles and parameters of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and nationally endorsed Training Packages
- Offer innovative and industry-responsive training, informed through its industry engagement activities, and
- Encourage continuous improvement in its vocational education and training (VET) and assessment practice.

To ensure consistent and compliant training ACF develops Training and Assessment Strategies (TASs) that relate to each of the Training Package qualifications on its scope of registration. These TAS documents include the following components:

- An overview of the qualification
- Packaging rules
- Units of competency
- Target audience
- Course delivery options including:
  - o Location and environment
  - o Duration and amount of training
  - o Modes of delivery
- Pathways
- Entry requirements including foundation and LLN skills
- Recognition processes
- Student support services
- Physical resources required
- Course structure, delivery and assessment
- Training and assessment staff
- Validation processes
- Feedback and evaluation processes
- Transition arrangements
- Industry engagement processes

In addition, for each cohort of students or individual delivery mode (for example, Blended delivery) ACF develops a delivery and assessment plan (DAP) to supplement the information contained in the TAS. These DAP documents include:

- Delivery Mode
- Cohort information
- Delivery dates
- Detailed course structure and delivery schedule
- The total amount of training hours, broken down into individual components
- Assessment process including:

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- o Assessment resources
- o Evidence gathering techniques
- o Assessment matrix
- o Assessment schedule
- o Assessment mapping (high level)
- A list of delivery and assessment staff

To support quality outcomes for students, learning and assessment resources are designed, developed, or sourced ensuring:
- The learning materials are relevant to the units of competency and cover all the required content
- All learning and assessment materials are at the appropriate AQF level
- There is an appropriate mix of learning materials to support Adult Learning Principles
- Externally produced or purchased learning and assessment materials are validated before use
- A range of subject matter experts are consulted in the development of learning and assessment materials
- Learning and assessment materials are contextualised where appropriate

To support a quality student experience learning and assessment methods and strategies will ensure:
- Students are provided with opportunities to transfer knowledge into practice where appropriate
- There is a range of delivery options for students to engage with their learning, wherever possible
- Students are supported throughout their learning journey by Support Services, Course Coordinators, Facilitators and other appropriate personnel
- Students are provided multiple opportunities to provide feedback on their learning experience
- Assessment methods follow the rules of evidence and principles of assessment
- Appropriate recognition processes are provided for students with prior learning or equivalent qualifications
- Facilitators have current industry skills and knowledge or are supported by industry experts when delivering and assessing (co-delivery/co-assessment)

Procedure

Training & Assessment Strategies (TAS) and Delivery and Assessment Plans (DAP)

The National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO is responsible for developing the TAS and DAP documents with the support of subject matter experts, and other key stakeholders including but not limited to:
- Trainers and Assessors
- National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO Support Services team
- Students
- Industry representatives
- Clients
- CEO

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Before commencing the development of a TAS and DAP the National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO will, for new qualifications:

- Seek formal feedback from industry partners and subject matter experts
- Liaise with any specific clients or student cohorts to complete a training needs analysis if appropriate
- Check for any training package updates that have been, or are due to be endorsed

In addition, for the redevelopment of TAS and DAP documents for existing qualifications:

- Review any existing TAS and DAP documents
- Gather information from the Continuous Improvement and/or Feedback registers
- Review feedback provided in the Industry Engagement register
- Review student feedback from evaluation data
- Review information from any validations that have been completed since the last TAS

During the development process of the TAS and DAP, National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO will:

- Ensure that the packing rules are followed and meet the needs of industry and students (including any pre-requisite requirements)
- Confirm that the amount of training and volume of learning is consistent with Standards for RTOs considering:
  - o   The training product
  - o   The intended student cohort(s)
  - o   The mode(s) of delivery
- Integrate all the information and feedback gained from the pre-development activities listed above
- Review and confirm any entry requirements
- Develop and document any transition arrangements where qualifications/units have been superseded
- Confirm that ACF has the appropriate resources to effectively deliver the training and assessment
- Confirm the competency, qualifications and currency of training and assessment staff under standards for RTOs
- Consult with the Operations Manager, ESS to ensure that the proposed delivery and assessment schedule aligns with other operational priorities and resource availability
- Consult with trainers and assessors responsible for the delivery and assessment to gather their feedback
- Consult Support Services to confirm the student support systems and processes
- Document the TAS and DAP using the approved templates

After the development of the TAS, the National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO will:

- Endorse the document and send it to the CEO for approval.
- After approval, send the signed TAS to the Program Manager, Quality for version control and publishing
- Advise the appropriate training and assessment staff, Support Services, the Manager Operations ESS and Executive Manager ESS of the changes.

After the development of the DAP, National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO will:
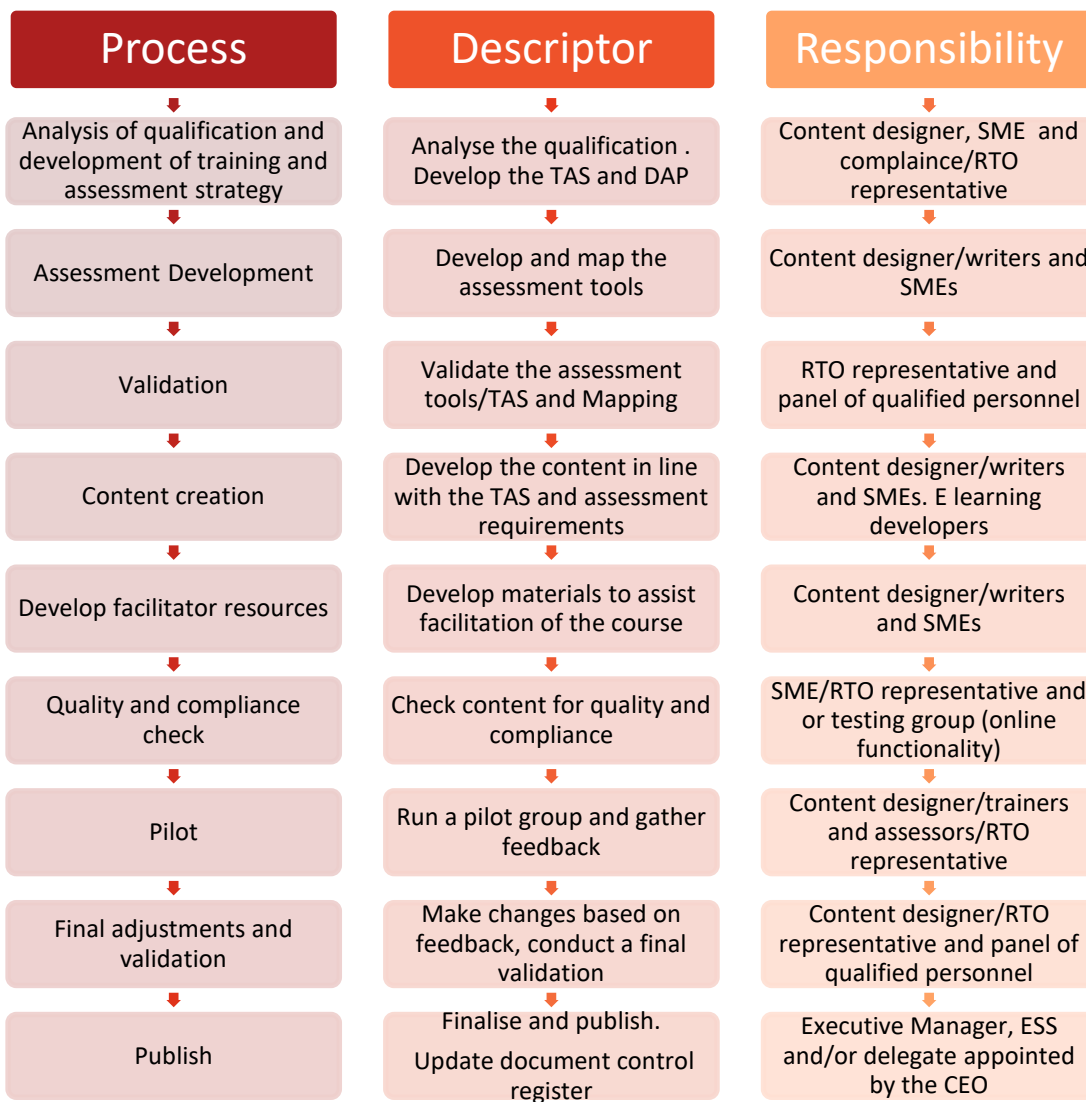
- Endorse and approve the document
- Advise the appropriate training and assessment staff and Support Services of the changes.

Learning and Assessment Resources

Learning and assessment resources will be developed using a range of methods including:

- In-house development by ACF staff
- In-house development by contractors
- Outsourced development through external providers
- Purchased resources

All development will be completed under the guidance of the National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO and will follow the process outlined below.

Process	Descriptor	Responsibility
Analysis of qualification and development of training and assessment strategy	Analyse the qualification . Develop the TAS and DAP	Content designer, SME and compliance/RTO representative
Assessment Development	Develop and map the assessment tools	Content designer/writers and SMEs
Validation	Validate the assessment tools/TAS and Mapping	RTO representative and panel of qualified personnel
Content creation	Develop the content in line with the TAS and assessment requirements	Content designer/writers and SMEs. E learning developers
Develop facilitator resources	Develop materials to assist facilitation of the course	Content designer/writers and SMEs
Quality and compliance check	Check content for quality and compliance	SME/RTO representative and or testing group (online functionality)
Pilot	Run a pilot group and gather feedback	Content designer/trainers and assessors/RTO representative
Final adjustments and validation	Make changes based on feedback, conduct a final validation	Content designer/RTO representative and panel of qualified personnel
Publish	Finalise and publish. Update document control register	Executive Manager, ESS and/or delegate appointed by the CEO

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The National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO, supported by SMEs and other appropriately qualified personnel, under the Standards for RTOs will validate any externally developed or purchased resources before use.

Assessment

The ACF Assessment System is designed to ensure that all assessment activities are undertaken following the principles of assessment, and rules of evidence and are conducted following the Standards for RTOs.

Assessment Documentation

All assessment documentation is available to facilitators, assessors and other approved ACF personnel through the student management system (aXcelerate).

ACF uses a range of terms to refer to assessments which include:

- Assessments
- Assignments
- Workbooks
- Tasks
- Activities

These terms are used to assist students where the language "assessment" may be confused with other activities such as conducting an assessment of a child, or where the client requests certain terminology in the documents.

The National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO maintains a document control register that includes all assessment documentation, with the following details:

- Date of the document addition or update
- Name of the document
- Document type
- Course to which the document relates
- The current version of the document
- Document owner
- Next revision date
- Where the source document is stored (location)
- Notes of any changes made from the previous version

NOTE: Policy and procedure documents are maintained separately through the organisational quality management system.

Each qualification or accredited course has a suite of assessment documents that include:

- A full assessment pack - The source document that is not for publication but includes all the relevant assessment information. This document is used to review and validate assessment tools and processes.
- Student Assessment Workbook - The student version of an assessment tool, that includes all information that a student needs to complete their assessment task(s)
- Assessor Marking Guide - The assessor reference version of the assessment tool that includes all the assessment instructions, answer keys and benchmarks.

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- Assessor Marking Instrument – The document used to collect and verify evidence and record the assessor's competency decision
- Mapping documents

All source documents are maintained by the National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO and may only be released for alteration or updates by request.

Assessors also have access to an Assessor Feedback Comments guide to assist them to provide quality feedback to students on their performance.

Assessment Methods and Processes

ACF conducts assessments through a range of methods following the rules of evidence and principles of assessments. The assessment tasks developed are adapted and contextualised to meet the needs of individual client groups where appropriate.

1. Assessment Completion

Students are provided with the Student Assessment Workbooks following the schedule outlined in the relevant delivery and assessment plan.

Students access their assessments through the Student Management System (aXcelerate), using a unique log-on to validate their ID.

Course coordinators and facilitators are available to students to help them with any assessment support required.

All assessments are completed through a combination of:

- Knowledge questions
- Essays or long written responses
- Formal written documents e.g. reports, plans, strategy or case notes
- Scenarios and case studies
- Roleplays
- Presentations
- Resource development
- Reflective practice
- Workplace documents (including workplace visits and observations)
- Third-party reports (supervisor or other nominated parties)
- Framework, map or checklist development
- Interviews (including workplace visits)

Where outlined within the delivery and assessment plan, some assessments may be conducted within scheduled course dates. All other assessments are completed either self-paced or in the workplace.

2. Assessment Submission

Assessments are submitted by students through aXcelerate, using their individual log-on details. Students must sign and upload a declaration with each assessment that they complete as part of their submission.

All assessments must be uploaded on or before the due date.

Students who cannot complete their assessment by the due date may be supported by their Course Coordinator under the RTO PP008 Progression and Intervention Policy

3. Assessment Marking and Feedback

Assessors will be allocated to mark assessments in conjunction with the Course Coordinator, having regard to:

- The current workload of available assessors
- Their subject matter expertise areas of available assessors
- The outcome of any appeals involving a specific assessor

An assessor allocated to mark assessments will complete them within a reasonable time, considering:

- The current workload of the pool of available assessors
- The peak and flow times for the RTO
- Other environmental factors beyond the control of the RTO

All submitted assessments must be marked within a maximum of one calendar month from the date of submission unless other arrangements have been made with the student.

Where an assessor considers that they are unable to meet the marking deadlines they must advise the Course Coordinator to assign them to an alternative assessor.

Where possible, assessors should be allocated from the pool of internal assessors, only using the pool of casual assessors where the demand is greater than the availability of internal ACF assessors.

Co-Assessment

In the case that an ACF assessor (internal or contract) does not have industry currency, a co-assessment model will be implemented with an industry expert.

In a co-assessment model, the Cert IV TAE qualified assessor and the industry expert will review the student evidence and make an assessment decision together. These arrangements must be approved by the National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO and documented using the approved Co-Assessment Agreement and Sign Off document. This document is to be completed in addition to the documents used to collect and review the student's evidence.

Where the Cert IV TAE Assessor is unable to personally collect the required evidence, and approved evidence collector may collect the evidence. These arrangements must be approved by the National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO and documented using the approved Co-Assessment Agreement and Sign Off document. This document is to be completed in addition to the documents used to collect and review the student's evidence.

In some cases, an evidence collector, Cert IV TAE qualified assessor and industry expert may all be involved in the assessment process. All parties must sign the approved Co-Assessment Agreement and Sign Off document, but the evidence collector may not be involved in the assessment decision.

Assessment Judgements

Assessors will make judgements about the competency of a student based on the evidence provided and ensure that they follow the rules of evidence and principles of assessment including:

- Confirming that the student has submitted evidence that is their own
- Ensuring that the evidence provided meets the current industry standards and benchmarks
- Gathering multiple pieces of evidence from each student
- Using current assessment tools, by comparing them against the versions on aXcelerate
- Allowing flexibility/adjustment for students where required without compromising the outcomes of the unit of competency
- Treating each student as an equal when administering assessments and reviewing evidence
- Using the Assessor Marking Guides and Instruments provided

Assessment Attempts

Students will have a maximum of three (3) attempts at each assessment.

After a student has had two (2) unsatisfactory attempts, the assessor must confer with another assessor to moderate the assessment decision.

Where a student is offered a third attempt, the assessor must advise them that it is their final opportunity to demonstrate competency before undertaking re-training or other remedial action.

After the third unsuccessful attempt, the facilitator or course coordinator must refer the student to the National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO for further advice. The National Executive Manager, Education and Safeguarding Services and/or delegate appointed by the CEO may recommend various actions depending on the student's situation, which may include:

- Re-enrolment in the relevant unit of competency
- Additional training for that individual assessment task with one final additional attempt
- Withdrawal from the course
- Deferment of study
- Transfer to a more appropriate course (if available)

These options may be subject to further payment of fees following PP019 Fees Policy

Feedback

All assessors will provide specific and comprehensive feedback so that students can:

- Understand any gaps in their performance and how to address them
- Where their performance has been noteworthy (feedback from good performance, not just gaps)

Feedback may be provided either verbally or in writing to the student by the assessor, but in all cases must be documented in the appropriate assessment instrument and/or student notes.

4. Assessment Appeals

Students can appeal against an assessment decision by following RTO PP020 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

All students can apply to have their competency recognised following RTO PP012 Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure

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Record Keeping

All student records are maintained according to RTO PP023 Student Records Management within the Student Management System (aXcelerate), including:

- Enrolment forms and supporting documents
- Contact details and information
- LLN checklists and testing tools
- Progress and contact notes
- Participation records
- Assessment documentation and results

Forms and Records

The following forms should be used in conjunction with this procedure:

- RTO PP003/01 Training & Assessment Strategy Template
- RTO PP003/02 Delivery and Assessment Plan Template
- RTO PP003/04 Facility, Equipment & Physical Resources Checklist
- RTO PP003/05 Addition to Scope Checklist
- RTO PP003/06 Special Consideration for Assessment Task Extension Form
- RTO PP003/08 Assessment Tasks and Timeline Template
- RTO PP003/09 Course Outline Sample
- RTO PP003/10 7 Block Course Outline
- RTO PP003/11 11 Block Course Outline Template
- RTO PP016/02 Feedback Form

The following references should be read in conjunction with this procedure:

- RTO PP004 Commitment to Quality
- RTO PP014 Recruiting & Supporting Quality Staff
- RTO PP011 Application & Enrolment
- RTO PP010 Validation of Assessments
- RTO PP021 Student Responsibilities
- RTO PP006 Student Support
- RTO PP016 Feedback
- RTO PP023 Student Records Management
- RTO PP012 Recognition of Prior Learning
- RTO PP020 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.
- RTO PP007 Industry Engagement

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