

ASSESSMENT POLICY

1 Purpose

At the WesTrac Institute, we recognise that assessment is a core service offered to our students and is at the center of our operation as a Registered Training Organisation.

2 Scope

Quality assessment ensures that the skills and knowledge of students are assessed using four principal determinants:

1. That assessment decisions are based on the assessment of skills and knowledge compared with units of competency drawn from nationally endorsed Training Packages or accredited courses.
2. That the target industry or enterprise requirements are contextualised and integrated within the assessment.
3. That evidence that is gathered meets the rules of evidence.
4. That assessment is conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment.

3 Policy Statements

Assessing the Unit of Competency

The WesTrac Institute uses units of competency drawn from nationally endorsed Training Packages as the primary benchmark for assessment. Supporting these sometimes are industry standards or codes of practice. These and other industry specific publications inform the context and standard of performance during assessment.

In order to identify the precise assessment criteria, we apply a methodology of unpacking a unit of competency in order to assess the full scope of the unit including elements of competence, performance evidence, knowledge evidence and the requirements of the evidence conditions. This process ensures that our assessment strategies accurately reflect the requirements of the relevant training package and are valid. To ensure alignment with all components of a unit of competency, unit mapping must be undertaken during the design and development of assessment. Unit mapping must also be undertaken when carrying out assessment validation.

Unit mapping will show the relationship between the planned assessment activities and each component of the unit. This must be conducted at a micro level of detail to allow the mapping to be useful later on as a reference to demonstrate the validity of the assessment. An assessment mapping document is available for this purpose

3.1 Assessment Context

The WesTrac Institute recognises the importance of establishing the right context for students during their assessment. Assessment context refers to the physical and non-physical environment in which skills and knowledge are assessed. This may be a workplace such as an office setting or a manufacturing workshop. The non-physical environment refers to things such as workplace policy and procedure, workplace tempo and culture. Many units of competency may be applied in any workplace such as skills and knowledge relating to workplace safety or leadership.

It is our responsibility to ensure that students are provided with the right context to undertake their assessment activities.

To achieve this, we will apply the following strategies:

- Incorporation of the student’s own workplace policies and procedures into the assessment scenario or activity, where possible.
- Assessment will be conducted in our simulated workplace performing real workplace tasks where possible.
- Integration of relevant industry codes of practice and other industry information into the assessment activity.
- Incorporation of industry job descriptions for students to align with during realistic simulated workplace scenarios and case studies.
- Incorporation of regulatory information relating to licensing which applies to the unit of competency.
- Tailoring the program outcomes to meet the organisational training needs of the enterprise without compromising the Training Package requirements.
- Creating assessment activities which require the student to conduct specific research relating to industry situations and occurrences where applicable.
- Provide a realistic simulated workplace within WesTrac Institute facilities.

While applying these strategies it is important to ensure that in establishing the context for assessment, we do not affect the transferability of the unit of competency. When the student is assessed as competent, this also means that the student can transfer the applicable skills and knowledge between different workplaces and context. This means that the competency is transferable and is a fundamental element of competency-based training and assessment.

3.1.1 Principles of Assessment

In the delivery of assessment services, WesTrac Institute applies the principles of assessment. Assessment strategies have been designed to ensure:

- **Validity.** WesTrac Institute conducts’ assessment against the broad range of skills and knowledge identified within each unit of competency and which is integrated with the performance of workplace tasks. We ensure that the assessment is transferable to different context and situations and all components of the unit of competency are being assessed.
- **Reliability.** WesTrac Institute seeks’ to gather and interpret evidence in a consistent manner that provides for reliable assessment both for the student and for assessors. We achieve this by using assessors who have the required competencies in assessment and the relevant vocational competencies. Our assessment resources also provide for standardised outcomes supported by model answers to guide assessors in their judgements. Reliability is also supported by the moderation of assessment judgements across our assessors.
- **Flexibility.** WesTrac Institute strives’ to provide assessment opportunities that reflect a student’s needs. Our chosen assessment strategies provide for recognition of a student’s current competency, employing a range of methods appropriate to the context of the industry, the unit of competency and the student themselves.
- **Fairness.** WesTrac Institute’s assessment approach encourages fairness in assessment through consideration of the student’s needs and characteristics and through making reasonable adjustments when it is required. Assessors achieve this through clear communication with a student to ensure that the student is fully informed about, understands and is able to participate in, the assessment process, and agrees that the process is appropriate.

3.1.2 Collecting Evidence that counts – the rules of evidence

In collecting evidence, the WesTrac Institute applies the rules of evidence to inform the assessment strategy. Assessment strategies have been designed to ensure:

- **Sufficiency.** WesTrac Institute 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.
- **Validity.** WesTrac Institute collects' evidence that directly aligns with the components documented within each unit of competency. The collected assessment evidence must replicate the outputs of the task as though it were being performed within an actual workplace. This may include the observation of the student performing the tasks relevant to the unit of competency or the collection of a completed workplace products. Assessment evidence that is purely academic in nature should be given a lesser priority to the collection of evidence that relates directly to the student performing the tasks indicative to the unit of competency.
- **Authenticity.** WesTrac Institute seeks' evidence that is authentic. To support this, assessors must be assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the student's own work. Where documentary evidence is relied on it must be certified or supported by two other forms of evidence which demonstrate the same skill or knowledge. In all instances, where work is submitted external to the WesTrac Institute (i.e.; electronically, distance assignments, online) this is to include a signed authenticity statement by the student that they certify the work as their own.
- **Currency.** WesTrac Institute must be satisfied that the student currently holds the skills and knowledge relating to a particular unit of competency. Assessment evidence is to be based on the student's performance either at the time of the assessment decision or in the very recent past. Questions of evidence currency will mostly relate to recognition of prior learning applications where a student 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 student's knowledge and skills.

3.1.3 Employers and other parties contributing to assessment evidence

Where industry representatives are engaged to contribute toward assessment evidence, the WesTrac Institute will use a standard approach to collect this evidence. We place a high value on the assessment evidence that is gathered by supervisors or employers in the workplace. This evidence will be current and valid and contributes to the assessment decisions made by a qualified assessor. We do not however advocate the use of industry evidence (also referred to as third party evidence) as a substitute for the gathering of direct evidence by an assessor. In all areas of our operation, industry evidence is only to be used to complement and support the evidence being gathered by an assessor and is **not** to be used as primary evidence.

During the development of assessment tools, assessors are to ensure that the observation criteria used in industry evidence reports is wholly task orientated. These observation criteria should reflect the tasks that the supervisor would expect to issue to an employee and monitor during normal workplace duties.

It is also not desirable to collect industry evidence simply by providing a document to be completed. This leads to the collection of insufficient evidence and is an annoyance to industry. Where possible assessors are to engage with

industry representatives directly and collect evidence about a student's performance through discussion with supervisors. This discussion will be based on observable workplace tasks and evidence is to be recorded by the assessor. These discussions may be undertaken face-to-face or over the phone. The assessor must record the industry representative's details, contact information and the date/time of the engagement.

3.1.4 Engagement with Industry

WesTrac Institute is well placed to leverage off current industry associations to incorporate industry requirements into the assessment process. Consultation with enterprises or industry will provide information about assessment requirements relevant to workplaces. Regulatory requirements that relate to specific units of competency will be incorporated to ensure our students are well prepared for their workplace duties. Further information on industry engagement can be found in the Industry Engagement Policy.

3.1.5 Recognition of Prior Learning

WesTrac Institute will provide all students the opportunity to seek recognition of their prior learning. Recognition is viewed simply as another method of assessment and therefore is conducted in accordance with this policy. Further information can be found in the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.

3.1.6 Credit Transfer

WesTrac Institute will recognise and award credit transfer for students presenting with current competence. Where a student is seeking credit transfer for a unit of competency that is on our scope of registration and the student can provide documentary evidence that the unit has been previously awarded to the student, credit transfer will be awarded. It is important to note that credit transfer is not an assessment.

It is an administrative function that determines the equivalence of a unit of competency the student has been previously awarded units of competency incorporated into courses being delivered by WesTrac Institute. If the unit is the same or is equivalent, then the unit may be issued as a credit transfer. This is not to be confused with the recognition of prior learning which is a method of assessment. Please refer to the Credit transfer policy for further guidance.

3.1.7 Competence of Assessors

In accordance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations, assessors are required to hold the minimum competencies for training assessment and the vocational competencies at least to the level being assessed. WesTrac Institute has appropriate systems in place to ensure that all staff members are appropriately qualified to meet our requirement under the Standards for Registered Training Organisations. Further information can be found in the Trainer Competency Requirements policy.

3.1.8 Assessment Validation

Assessment validation is the process where assessors compare and evaluate their assessment methods, assessment procedures and assessment decisions. The WesTrac Institute have a Validation Schedule and the RTO compliance and quality supervisor will facilitate regular assessment validation opportunities to maintain a quality assessment and to continuously improve assessment strategies. Further information can be found in the Assessment Validation Policy.

3.1.9 Assessment Tools

Assessment tools are the media (electronic or hard copy) used to gather evidence about a student's competence. We have developed assessment tools which support the assessment of applicable units of competency in accordance with the requirements of industry Training Packages. It is important for WesTrac Institute employees to acknowledge that these are generic tools which, provide us with a starting point for the development of other supporting tools which will reflect the needs of our clients or target industry group. WesTrac Institute employees must be satisfied that tools developed for assessment fit with the requirements of the target industry and enterprise requirements. Some units of competency are associated with licensing requirements and whilst this is not always stipulated in the unit of competency, we will need to be informed of the additional requirements this imposes during assessment.

The following are examples of assessment tools which may be incorporated into an assessment strategy to meet the Training Package and industry requirements, the rules of evidence and the principles of assessment:

- Direct observation checklist.
- Simulation exercises or role-plays.
- Project outlines and explanation sheets.
- Workplace templates.
- Written questionnaires.
- Verbal questionnaires.
- Workplace Training Journal.
- Portfolios, for example collections of work samples by the student.
- Product with supporting documentation or logbook.
- Workplace samples/products.
- Industry/workplace evidence reports.

This list of assessment tools identifies only a small number of assessment tools which are in use. These are however the more common tools and support holistic assessment methods favored by WesTrac Institute.

Completed assessment tools are to be retained within the student record in accordance with the Records Retention and Management policy.

3.2.0 Assessment Information

Assessment information is the information provided to both students and assessors to guide their conduct of the assessment and the completion of assessment activities. This information is used to draw out a response from a student.

Examples of assessment information include:

- Instructions to set the framework for the activity such as who, what, where when, and how. The expected outcomes of the assessment should be included in these instructions, and it is critical that they are straight forward and in line with the student's preparation during learning 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 which requires analysis and interpretation. It is important to note that the higher the AQF qualification level, the greater the requirement to analyse and apply cognitive skills to produce workplace outcomes. Scenario information used to support assessment at a Diploma level, for example, should be relatively deep and complex to allow the student to exercise their analytical skills and produce viable workplace products and outcomes.
- Industry information includes items such as codes of practice, policies and procedures, legislation, and regulations. Whilst this may not be provided in hard copy to every student, they should be provided contacts, web sites or hyperlinks to access this information. Electronic copies of industry information are also acceptable.

At WesTrac Institute our assessment activities are to be supported by clear assessment information that will ensure a reliable assessment across our operation. Ultimately, the quality of assessment outcomes produced by a student will be directly affected by the quality of the information provided at the commencement of the activity. WesTrac Institute employees are to prepare suitable assessment information for all assessment activities.

3.2.1 Re- Assessment

Students who are assessed as not satisfactory or not yet competent are to be provided with detailed verbal and written feedback to assist them to identify the gaps in their knowledge and skills to be addressed through further training. These students are to be provided with additional training and learning support to target their specific gaps in knowledge and/or skills and prepare them for additional assessment.

It is the policy of the WesTrac Institute to provide **two** opportunities for additional training and re-assessment at no additional cost to the student or employer. Students who require additional training and re-assessment after they have exhausted their three opportunities will be required to pay a fee for additional training and re-assessment. Please refer to the current fee schedule to identify the re-assessment fee.

Student's requiring additional learning support are to be brought to the attention of the WesTrac Institute leadership team so the progress of the student can be monitored closely, and additional support services can be applied well before it becomes necessary to impose an additional fee for re-assessment. Where students repeatedly do not demonstrate competence following significant learning and assessment support, a student's enrolment can be terminated through mutual agreement.

4 Responsibilities

All the WesTrac Institute Employees have responsibilities towards the Assessment Policy.

POLICY

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5 Reporting

Opportunities for continuous improvements are to be recorded in the WesTrac Institutes Continuous Improvement system. These opportunities to be recorded are those as identified during the assessment validation process or Industry Engagement activities.

6 Further Information

All employees and contractors who require further information or require clarification of items contained in this Policy should contact the RTO Compliance and Quality Supervisor or relevant State WesTrac Institute Training Managers.

Compliance to Policy	All WesTrac Institute Employees & Students
Implementation	Relevant State WesTrac Institute Training Managers
Approval of Policy	Relevant State WesTrac Institute Training Managers
Monitoring & Review	RTO Compliance and Quality Supervisor

7 Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following legislative or compliance guidelines (if required):

Title	Description
Standards for RTO's 2015	ASQA has developed this Standards Guide to assist RTOs to understand their obligations under the revised <i>Standards for RTOs 2015</i> .
Smart and Skilled Contract Terms and Conditions	Funding contract terms and conditions for Training Services NSW
Smart and Skilled Operating Guidelines	Funding Operating Guidelines for Training Services NSW
Jobs and Skills Business rules	Department of Training and Workforce Development, VET (WA) ministerial corporation purchase of training services business rules
VET Fees and charges policy	Department of Training and workforce Development guidelines for fees and charges

Document Number	Title
PCD-NAT-HSEQ-0013	Assessment Procedure
FTT-NAT-INS-0042	TAS - Qualification Template
FTT-NAT-INS-0035	UOC - Training and Assessment Strategy
POL-NAT-INS-0023	Complaints and Grievance Handling Policy
PCD-NAT-INS-0013	Complaints and Grievance Procedure
POL-NAT-INS-0022	Assessment and Appeals Handling Policy
PCD-NAT-INS-0012	Assessment and Appeals Handling Procedure
POL-NAT-INS-0019	Assessment Validation Policy
POL-NAT-INS-0021	Industry Engagement Policy
POL-NAT-INS-0029	Recognition (RPL) Policy
POL-NAT-INS-0013	National Recognition (Credit Transfer) Policy
POL-NAT-INS-0034	Trainer Competency Requirements policy
POL-NAT-INS-0014	Records Retention and Management Policy
PCD-NAT-HSEQ-0013	Quality Corrective and Preventive Action Procedure

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RTO Compliance**8 Definitions and Abbreviations**

The following definitions and abbreviations are used throughout this Policy:

Term	Definition
ASQA	Australian Skills Quality Authority
RTO	Registered Training Organisations
AQF	Australian Qualification Framework AQF

9 Document Amendment History

Revision	Date	Description	Prepared By	Reviewed By	Approved By
1.0	06/07/2017	Created, ready for review	RW	PW & JF	PW & JF
1.1	22/03/2023	Reviewed and updated	RW	LB & JF	LB & JF