



Assessment Policy

Purpose

This policy is designed to ensure that MSA Training and Professional Development (MSATPD) complies with all of its assessment obligations under ASQA's Guidelines for VET providers, AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration, and to ensure best practice assessment across all qualifications. It establishes a framework for quality assurance in the management of the assessment system, responsibilities for assessment and procedures for the effective conduct of assessment practices, ensuring that assessments are valid, reliable, flexible, fair, authentic, sufficient and current.

Scope

Assessment is the process of forming a judgment about the quality and extent of student achievement or performance, and therefore by inference a judgment about the learning itself. Assessment inevitably shapes the learning that takes place - that is, what students learn and how they learn it, and should reflect closely the purposes and aims of the course of study.

The aims of assessment include:

- Establishing competency
- Improving the quality of the curriculum (courses and programs).
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the teaching process and facilitating continuous improvement.
- Improving and promoting subsequent learning through feedback that is clear, informative, timely and relevant.
- Formally certifying achievements for external audiences.
- Accountability to accrediting bodies, employers and the wider community.

This policy applies to all nationally recognised qualifications and units of competency assessed by the Monash Student Association (Clayton) Inc. (TOID 21526).

Responsibilities

Position	Responsibilities
RTO Director	Implementation of this policy
Administrative Officer	Assessing, approving or rejecting applications for special consideration, extensions and assessment deferrals
Trainers/Assessors	Complying with this policy

Assessment Requirements

Assessment practices within MSATPD are based on the general principles of criteria-based assessment. These are that the desired learning outcomes for a course of study are clearly specified; assessment tasks are designed to indicate progress towards the desired learning outcomes; and assessment tools are a measure of the extent to which the learning outcomes have been achieved.

Principles of Assessment

For an effective assessment system in a competency-based environment, the following Principles of Assessment must be incorporated into the assessment process:

Fairness	<p>The individual student's needs are considered in the assessment process.</p> <p>Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual student's needs.</p> <p>The RTO informs the student about the assessment process, and provides the student with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.</p>
Flexibility	<p>Assessment is flexible to the individual student by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• reflecting the student's needs;• assessing competencies held by the student no matter how or where they have been acquired; and• drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements, and the individual.
Validity	<p>Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual student.</p> <p>Validity requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• assessment against the unit/s of competency and the associated assessment requirements covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance;• assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application;• assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a student could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and• judgement of competence is based on evidence of student performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Reliability	<p>Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.</p>

Rules of Evidence

In addition to the above Principles of Assessment, the RTO must ensure that evidence of assessment is appropriate and meets the following Rules of Evidence when conducting assessments:

Validity	The assessor is assured that the student has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Sufficiency	The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made of a student's competency.
Authenticity	The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the student's own work.
Currency	The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.

Assessment process and methods

Assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making a judgement on whether competency has been achieved as per the requirements of the training package. MSATPD has designated assessment materials developed for each Unit of Competency included on the Scope of Registration. All assessments are to be conducted in line with the documented assessment tasks and requirements.

In general terms assessment methods may include:

- Written tasks
- Observation of practical skills in a workplace or simulated environment
- Role plays
- Case studies
- Question and answer sessions
- Projects
- Third party reports

There may be a clustered assessment approach to some units where appropriate and all assessment arrangements and details of assessment requirements will be documented through the relevant Training and Assessment Strategy and student / assessor instructions within the assessment documentation.

Development of Assessment Instruments

MSATPD will ensure that assessment instruments are available for each and every unit included in the Scope of Registration for the RTO. The RTO Director is required to ensure that assessment instruments are developed / purchased for each unit and that these assessment instruments meet the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence as described above.

In developing assessment materials, MSATPD will ensure that:

- The standards, assessment processes and all associated information are straight forward and understandable;
- Students are fully informed of the assessment processes and the requirements to be judged as competent in each unit

In addition, MSATPD ensures the sufficiency of evidence by means of the following:

- Assessment tasks are developed in accordance with the requirements of each unit of competency and are mapped to each unit
- Assessor guides have been developed to ensure that assessors know what level of response is required of the student
- Validation and moderation of assessments is conducted in accordance with MSATPD's Validation Procedure

Approval of Assessment Instruments

The assessment requirements for a course are documented and submitted for approval to the RTO Director. In approving the course for offer, the RTO Director will have regard to the relationship between the assessment methods and the learning outcomes expected for the course.

Changes to Assessment Instruments

Proposals to alter the assessment requirements of a course should be made to the RTO Director prior to the next scheduled offering of the course by the assessor responsible for teaching the competency with the RTO Director, who will determine whether the proposed revisions are consistent with the originally approved requirements in its relationship to learning outcomes and its overall demands on the students. Such changes may be referred to the Academic Advisory Board for comment.

Assessor Requirements

The role of an assessor is to objectively assess and judge a student's evidence against a set of standards. In order to do this effectively, an assessor must have a sound knowledge of, and be skilled in, the relevant industry area, and meet the below assessor requirements.

Training and assessment may only be delivered by persons who have:

- a) vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered and assessed;
- b) current industry skills directly relevant to the training and assessment being provided; and
- c) current knowledge and skills in vocational training and learning that informs their training and assessment.

Assessors must also hold one of the following:

- TAE40110 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment
 - must also hold TAEASS502 (or TAEASS502A or TAEASS502B) and
 - TAELLN4011 (or TAELLN401A)
- TAE40116 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment
- A diploma or higher level qualification in adult education
- TAESS00001 Assessor Skill Set or its successor

Industry experts may also be involved in the assessment judgement, working alongside the trainer and/or assessor to conduct the assessment.

It is crucial that assessors always understand and practise fair, objective, unbiased and flexible assessment processes. MSATPD Assessors are encouraged to contribute to the assessment strategy development and conduct the assessment process cognisant to existing best practice and research in the relevant field.

Preparing the student for Assessment

All students must be informed of the assessment process prior to undertaking the assessment tasks. The assessor must ensure that any student undertaking assessment is provided the following:

- Explanation of the context and purpose of the assessment and the assessment process
- Explanation of the Competency Standards to be assessed and the evidence to be collected
- Outline of the assessment procedure, the preparation which the student should undertake, and answer any questions the student may have
- Assess the needs of the student and, where applicable, negotiate reasonable adjustment for assessing people with disabilities without compromising the integrity of the competencies
- Seek feedback regarding the student's understanding of the competency standards, evidence requirements and assessment process
- Determination if the student is ready for assessment and, in consultation with the student, decide on the time and place of the assessment
- Implement the assessment plan

Reasonable Adjustment

There may be times and situations in which a student may require 'reasonable adjustment' of the training and assessment methods implemented by MSATPD to meet their specific individual needs. These individual student needs may include (but not limited to):

- Disability
- Temporary or permanent injury (i.e. back injury, broken leg/arm)
- Sight or hearing impairments

Reasonable adjustments to the way in which evidence of performance is gathered (e.g. in terms of the information to be provided to the student and the type of evidence to be collected from the student) can only occur where the adjustments do not alter the expected performance standards for learning and assessment.

The reasonable adjustments to the training and assessment process may include a variety of modifications to the methods of delivery and assessment to assist the student undertake the course. The adjustments may include actions such as:

- assistance in the form of the training location to allow easier access
- accessing relevant equipment or aids to assist the student
- adjustments to the assessment methods to cater for any special needs (without effecting the integrity of the outcome)

Where a student requests or is identified as requiring reasonable adjustment to the training and assessment process, a detailed training and assessment plan including any changes to the timetable, notes regarding the required adjustments, and any related communications regarding the adjustments must be maintained in the student file using the Student Support Plan template.

The RTO Director must review and authorise any request for 'reasonable adjustment' to ensure that any adjustments and resulting outcomes are not affecting the integrity of the training and assessment process. Some examples of possible reasonable adjustment:

<i>Type of Disability</i>	<i>Reasonable Adjustments</i>
Mobility impairment	Provision of wheelchair accessibility, access to aids such as for holding documents, adjustable tables, note taking support, oral rather than written presentations or exams, use of a personal computer, lifting limits
Vision impairment or people who are blind	Use of audio tapes, enlarged text and images, enlarged computer screen images, use of voice synthesisers on computers, good lighting or reading lamps, Braille translations, provision for guide dogs, avoid moving furniture without informing the person, provision of additional writing time for assignments/tests
Hearing impairment or people who are deaf	Use of telephone typewriters, audio loops for people using hearing aids, use of Plain English documents, sign language interpreters for training and assessment, fire and alarm systems fitted with flashing lights.
Intellectual disability	Practical learning sessions, repetition of learning exercises, use of Plain English, use of mentors, assessment that is appropriate to the skill, i.e. avoiding written test for practical tasks, providing additional time
Psychiatric disability	Use of reflective listening skills, identification and avoidance of stresses, use of on-going rather than formal assessments, providing 'time-out' breaks in assessment
People with acquired brain injury	Providing time and patience during training and assessment, using reflective listening skills, providing memory aids, e.g. posters, notes, minimisation of stress
Speech impairment	Provision of time and patience, paraphrasing, getting them to put things in writing, minimising stress

Use of simulation in assessment

Where simulation of the workplace is used, such simulations must match the real workplace context as closely as possible. In particular, they should provide an assessment environment that allows for the demonstration of the broad concept of competency, notably:

- performing the task
- managing a number of different tasks
- coping with irregularities and breakdowns in routine
- dealing with the responsibilities and expectations of the workplace, including working
- with others
- transferring competency to new situations

The validity of simulations depends very much on how accurately the simulation mirrors real life situations. Simulations include fully realistic 'mock ups' and more simple recreations of the workplace environment that 'set up' an event for the purposes of learning and/or assessment. They may either expect the student to act as they would in real life, or to act and talk their way through the process.

Simulations allow the assessor to 'stage' the situation in a realistic manner but within defined and repeatable contexts. This allows the assessor to apply the same simulation, or the same 'base' simulation with variations, to different assesses and/or to the same student over time.

Simulations must be:

- allowed within the constraints of the units of competency and Training Package being assessed
- carefully planned and managed by people with specialist training in simulation and/or in consultation with the training organisation involved
- fully debriefed and used as an active learning experience for the student and all others involved in the simulation
- used in balance with evidence from other sources to show evidence of consistent performance over time

When conducting and assessing simulations, it is recommended that:

- the task is aligned with the elements and performance criteria and it is structured accordingly
- clear and explicit information is provided to the students as to what is expected of students
- the task is authentic and real-world based
- learning experience is scaffolded, breaking tasks down to manageable size

When making a judgement about competence on the basis of evidence gained mainly through simulations—as with any other assessment judgement—the assessor will need to take account of both the wording and the ‘spirit’ of the competency, its relationship with other units of competency and current workplace practices. In some instances, a Training Package may state that certain units of competency can only be assessed in an ‘actual’ workplace setting.

Recording and Reporting the Assessment Decision

The assessor must:

- Establish and oversee the evidence gathering process to ensure its validity, reliability, fairness and flexibility
- Collect appropriate evidence and assess this against the Elements, Performance Criteria, Required Skills and Knowledge and Critical Aspects of Evidence and Assessment in the relevant Units of Competency. This will be achieved by following the instructions within the assessment instruments
- Incorporate allowable adjustments to the assessment procedure without compromising the integrity of the competencies (if required)
- Evaluate the evidence in terms of validity, consistency, currency, equity, authenticity and sufficiency
- Make a judgement about competency based on the evidence and the relevant Unit[s] of Competency and record the Unit outcome.
- Students’ results will be recorded using the following codes:
 - C = Competent
 - NC = Not Competent
- Record the assessment outcome on the required MSATPD assessment documents
- Provide signed and dated assessment outcomes, and the original assessment to the Administrative Officer via email to msa-assessment@monash.edu or as otherwise arranged
- Maintain the confidentiality of the assessment outcome

Special Consideration, Extensions & Deferred Assessment

There may be situations that arise where a student is unable to complete their assessment successfully or meet the assessment conditions due to unforeseen circumstances. In such cases students may request for special consideration, extension of time, or a deferred assessment date. A request for special consideration, extension of time, or a deferred assessment date made to the Administrative Officer using a Student Extension Form prior to the assessment taking place or prior to the due date. Where the request is made on medical grounds, an appropriate medical certificate must be submitted. Any other circumstances must be described and supported with evidence where possible and appropriate.

Each application shall be reviewed by the relevant assessor and a decision made on a case by case basis.

Re-assessment and assessment appeals process

Where a student has undertaken an assessment and it has been marked as 'Not Competent' (NC), they may be allowed to re-sit the test/or have a re-assessment. A total of 3 attempts is permitted. The purpose of undertaking a re-assessment is to provide students with additional time for private study followed by the opportunity to demonstrate competency through completing the assessment tasks that were not satisfactorily completed. Assessors must provide adequately detailed feedback on each unsuccessful assessment to enable the student to improve their performance on future assessments.

If they are deemed 'NC' on their third and final attempt but still wish to attain the competency, they are to re-enrol into that unit/ subject, attend the relevant classes, and pay the required course fees.

Where a student believes that an error has been made or an injustice done in respect of the assessment outcome, the student may request a review of the assessment decision. Please refer to the complaints and appeals process for details on how to appeal an assessment decision.

Guidelines for Dealing with Lost Assessment Items

All staff who, through their involvement in the assessment process, handle student assessment items are required to exercise due diligence in handling these items to ensure that items are not lost or damaged. In spite of proper care being taken there nevertheless may be instances where a student's assessment item is unable to be located.

For this reason, students are required to keep a copy of all assessment materials before they lodge the item for assessment.

Assessments are to be submitted on the Job Ready RTO portal, to the appropriate trainer, with an email from the student to the trainer and office (msa-assessment@monash.edu) to notify the required personnel of the submission. Assessors are to upload marked assessments to the Job Ready RTO portal and notify the student and office of the outcome via email (msa-assessment@monash.edu).

Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that the assessment item was submitted correctly but the assessor is unable to locate the item and no copy is available, the assessor should take appropriate remedial action depending on the specific circumstances of the case.

In all instances, the assessor is required to immediately advise the Administrative Officer of the problem and the proposed remedial action.

Where there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the assessment item was submitted correctly, the assessor may make representation to the Administrative Officer seeking approval for the student to be given an opportunity to re-submit the work.

In each case, the assessor is required to inform the student of the problem and the remedial action that has been taken. The student may lodge an appeal against the particular action (refer to Appeals/Complaints Procedures). A possible outcome of an appeal may be that the student is required to re-submit the assessment item or undertake another examination.

Plagiarism & Cheating

MSATPD is committed to upholding standards of academic integrity and honesty. Plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and will be treated seriously. Students will be advised at the beginning of their course about this policy and given this information regarding the definitions of plagiarism, collusion and cheating:

Definitions:

- Cheating:** Seeking to obtain an unfair advantage in an examination or in other written or practical work required to be submitted or completed for assessment.
- Plagiarism:** To take and use another person's ideas and or manner of expressing them and to pass them off as one's own by failing to give appropriate acknowledgement. This includes material from any source, staff, students or the Internet – published and un-published works.

All assessors will take steps to detect plagiarism, which may include the use of electronic plagiarism detection software and other methods to compare work submitted for assessment against various databases, which may include the internet, electronic reference materials and other students' work submitted for assessment.

Where possible plagiarism or cheating is identified by an Assessor, they are required to put the matter to the student and provide the student with the opportunity to respond. Where plagiarism is suspected, the Assessor is required to clearly identify the passages or content which are alleged to be plagiarised and their source. The Assessor must decide whether or not they believe that plagiarism was likely to have been intentional or unintentional. If the student is unable to provide a satisfactory explanation of the similarity between their work and the sources identified, the Assessor may infer that plagiarism was done with intention to cheat, and the plagiarism instance is to be reported to RTO Director. If the failure to acknowledge the ideas of others was not intentional, the only offence the student has committed is the academic misdemeanour of failing to reference a source correctly.

Where cheating is suspected the matter must be reported directly to the RTO Director.

It is imperative that any Assessor who suspects that they have detected plagiarism or another form of cheating, must produce evidence (through identifying the source) to support their allegation. This evidence is to be taken to the RTO Director and a written report of the matter is to be provided. The RTO Director will give the student an opportunity to respond by scheduling a meeting to discuss the particulars of the plagiarism or cheating matter. The student is to be informed of the possible actions that may be applied if plagiarism and/or cheating is to have occurred.

If plagiarism and/ or cheating are deemed by the RTO Director to have had occurred then the following may occur:

- the student may be suspended from undertaking the course for period of time appropriate to the offence
- the student may be permanently removed from undertaking the course and their enrolment cancelled
- the student may be counselled on plagiarism / cheating

The RTO Director is to use their discretion in imposing a sanction for any confirmed cheating or plagiarism act that is appropriate to the offence. The Student is to receive written notification of the decision within 10 days of the RTO Director being made aware of the suspected plagiarism/ cheating matter.

If the student does not agree with the RTO's decision, then they are able to access the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure and follow relevant processes and steps to have the matter reviewed.

A plagiarism register will be maintained in Jobready through the use of file notes, which will record warnings and the outcomes (if any) of any accusations of plagiarism. A student's involvement in alleged plagiarism will be retained on the plagiarism register while still enrolled in any course and academic staff will have access to this information when considering any subsequent allegations of plagiarism.

Retention of Assessment Material

MSATPD retains all assignments and other assessment materials as per the regulatory requirements of the ASQA and Australian Quality Training Framework Standards, and in accordance with the Control of Records Procedure.

ASQA require retention for a period of 6 months. HESG require retention of any evidence of participation for a period of 3 years.

Review date

31/08/2022