Assessment Policy

Purpose

This policy establishes how assessment, re-assessment, re-conduct of assessment and re-enrolment are planned and conducted.

Scope

This policy applies to all students and academic staff.

Objective

To ensure the assessments are conducted in a fair, valid, reliable and flexible manner. Students who are assessed as not yet competent (NYC), given enough opportunities to identify the reasons being assessed as NYC and provide a systematic process that ensures competence is assessed through a fair due process and is treated as part of the learning process.

Policy Details

The institute's approach to assessment is seen as a holistic process encompassing a number of policies and associated procedures related to different assessment types and assessment tools, conduct of assessment and the students' completed work.

The system also includes re-assessment, reasonable adjustment and the students' rights to appeal the assessment determination made.

All assessments are to be developed and conducted to ensure that assessments follow the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence.

Assessment types

The assessment approach for a particular qualification on scope and the Units of Competency that form part of it are defined in the overall Training and Assessment Strategy for each qualification on scope of registration.

Assessments are of two basic types:

- **Formative assessment** activities that happen during the training program, to reinforce learning and to identify how well students are learning and retaining information and skills providing information that is used to modify their training if necessary.

- **Summative assessment** activities happen during and at the end of the training program, to assess the student's competence against the requirements of the units of competency.

  Based on these assessment tasks, the assessor will judge whether the student is 'competent' or 'not yet competent'.

Methods of Assessment

Based on the requirements of the individual Unit of Competency, each training instrument is devised to test a part or all of the requirements of that unit. Thus to be assessed as Competent, a student

may have to show satisfactory knowledge and or skills in more than one assessment instrument. Only when all assessment is satisfactorily completed can a student be judged as competent.

There are a number of different methods of assessment based on the Unit of Competency. Typical among them are:

- Written test – closed book (to test knowledge retention)
- Written test – open book (to test ability to locate and interpret information - .e.g. regulations)
- Group Based activity – again of various forms
- Assignment – Individually or collectively
- Project work – individually or collectively
- Practical work in a practical area – e.g. kitchen or workshop
- On the Job assessment – observation in a real workplace usually as an employee
- Work Based Training (also encompasses the assessment process) to assess a student in a workplace

Each method of assessment needs an assessor to judge a student's competency in a professionally consistent manner.

Assessment tools

The assessment tools comprise:

- Student assessment tools
    - Instructions to students including how the assessment will be assessed
    - Task or activities to be undertaken
- Assessors tools
    - Advice and guidance on how to conduct the assessment
    - Copy of instructions for students
    - Copy of assessment tools with model answers
    - Mapping document showing how the collection of assessment instruments cover the requirements of assessment from the Unit of Competency in the Training Package

Assessment Environment

A part of the assessor's role is to enable a student to demonstrate their skills and knowledge as required in the Unit of Competency. The assessor is to explain to the students the requirements of a particular assessment and ensure that students understand what is required of them, what they have to do and by when.

Where a student has specific needs or requirements that may affect them completing an assessment following the standard requirements, the assessors may, at their professional discretion, make reasonable adjustment to facilitate the student to enable them to demonstrate competency. This is

known as Reasonable Adjustment. However this is not to be at the expense of requirements of the Unit. (See "Reasonable adjustment/ Special needs" section).

Each student must be assessed in an environment suitable for the assessment.

- For **practical activities** this may be a workshop or office setup that is either a real working environment (on the job assessment) or in a simulated environment. For project work and "office" workplace environment then typical interruption and issues should be allowed to prevail.
- Where **simulation** is used in place of a live working situation then that simulation must closely resemble a real live environment. This is to include both physical equipment, and facilities but also normal ratios of staff and activities. The rules of the Unit of Competency assessment must be followed and documented how that simulation is sufficient.
- **Classroom based tests** - For **written tests, projects, group activities** - the appropriate space and rules must be explicitly given to the student. For example "open" or "closed book" rules, use of calculators, collaboration etc. These will vary by activity and should be clearly documented in the student instructions and given verbally prior to the start of the assessment.
- **On the job assessment** – based in the workplace – this is usually undertaken where on the job training is undertaken and the student is employed as assessed in that environment.

Student's Work

Normally, unless explicitly documented otherwise, the student is expected to work on their own and submit their original work for assessment. This work is to be undertaken and submitted according to the instructions of the Assessment Tool. Where there is to be collaborative activity (e.g. project work) then students must ensure that they all contribute to the project and the assessor will observe that all students participate and have the opportunity to demonstrate their competence.

Where appropriate the assessor may vary the form in which they collect evidence (e.g. an inability to write answers) by using alternative means as a part of "reasonable adjustment". For example ask the student to speak the answers and the assessor will record the responses. This record should also document the details and the reasons that the particular approach was taken. Students should also be reminded that the institute takes cases of plagiarism and cheating seriously and that on discovery they will become part of the student disciplinary process and lose their rights to re-assessment (see "Plagiarism and Cheating" section).

Under the institute's Assessment Policy, the student may be re-assessed (in the event of not meeting the required level to confirm competency) this can include provision of missing or incomplete information or through not meeting the required standard. Any option contained in the policy in relation to re-assessment is forfeited if a student is demonstrated to have plagiarised or cheated.

Assessment Marking

It is a prime responsibility of an Assessor to objectively and accurately assess a student's competency (or otherwise) in relation the requirements of the Unit of Competency.

To achieve this the institute provides:

- Assessors Instructions
- A Marking guide
- Observation checklists (as appropriate)
- Unit Cover Sheets for sign off

Assessors are expected to mark and assess students work in a reasonable timescale so that the feedback a student receives is still relevant to them and the assessment still fresh in their minds. Assessors are also to complete any Observer Checklists at the time of any observation.

Final determinations for a unit must be entered on a "Unit Cover Sheet" and provided to the student for counter-signature.

Completed assessment work and coversheets are passed to administration for recording on the SMS and filing in line with the Records Management Policy.

If the assessor is unsure how to mark an item then they need to seek clarification from the coordinator or training manger (this should be noted for future validation as it suggests that the assessment tools may be inadequate).

The assessor will ensure that:

1. Assessment judgements are based on the material assessed as meeting the Rules of Evidence (for full definition see User Guide for Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015)

   - Validity

   - Sufficiency

   - Authenticity

   - Currency

2. In addition, the assessment tool must be seen as Implementing the Principles of Assessment

   - Fairness

   - Flexibility

   - Validity

   - Reliability

Process and Procedure

The institute assesses students across a broad range of activities and tasks to ensure the consistency of the assessment. Before commencement of the course, every student will be provided with semester wise course loading with the information on pre-requisite units, which are to be completed compulsorily to be deemed "Competent" in the dependant Units. The institute evaluates the outcome of the student for each unit of competency as "Competent (C)" or "Not Yet Competent (NYC)" and provides feedback to the student.

Prior to Assessment

The assessor must ensure that all the conditions are requirements for assessment including specialist material, equipment and conditions are ready for the assessment activity.

The assessor will provide clear and accurate information to students so that they are fully informed of assessment, due dates support services, and their rights and obligations.

Where there is a simulated work requirement in the unit, all the required components must be in place prior to assessment.

The assessor will take the students through the student instructions on the content and method of assessment and give them suitable advice and guidance to ensure that the student is able to undertake the task. This does NOT include providing information to help them complete the task that otherwise they would not be able to do because they do not have sufficient skills, knowledge or understanding (not yet competent).

During Assessment

Based on the type of assessment, the assessor will ensure the environment and conditions enable the student to complete the assessment activity.

This will vary by assessment type, be it open book, closed book, practical observation etc. They must be taken where advice is sought not to lead or provide answers.

Following Assessment

Assessors will work to assess work immediately the assessment is complete (or as soon after as practical). This should not normally be more than 5 working days following the assessment activity.

Marking and assessing work is an important activity and feedback to the student is an essential part of the learning and re-enforcement.

Time should be allowed, especially when a student is "not yet competent", to ensure the student understands why they have been given the assessment result and if negative what they need to do to correct it.

Competent

For students that are assessed as satisfactory in an assessment the assessor will notify the student of that fact and confirm and sign the Assessment Cover Sheet and ask the student to confirm the decision.

When all assessment tasks are complete for a Unit of Competency or Cluster, then the assessor will complete the Unit/Cluster cover sheet and record the student as competent before return all the assessment tools and cover sheets to administration for recording on the Student Management System.

Not Yet Competent

Where a student's task is unsatisfactory, then the assessor should give the student a chance to correct an issue if it is deemed small and, for example, verbal questioning could clearly demonstrate to an assessor that student does understand or have the knowledge. In these cases, they should annotate the assessment explaining how they achieved their determination and the supplementary evidence they obtained.

Where the student has failed to demonstrate skills and knowledge to any significant degree then the student will be marked Not Satisfactory for that task. If one or more tasks are still unsatisfactory at the end of the Unit of Competency or Cluster, then the Unit Cover Sheet must be marked "Not Yet Competent".

The assessor should then discuss with the student and agree a time, and place for the re-assessment to occur.

Non-Attendance at an Assessment

Should the student be assessed as Not Yet Competent as a result of non-attendance at the scheduled time without a valid reason then right to a free re-assessment is forfeited and the students is required to book for re-conducting of assessments at an additional cost. If this assessment is NYC then they will have to re-enrol for that particular Unit.

If the absence is due to issues beyond their control then the institute, at its complete discretion may consider these compassionate/compelling circumstances (supported by valid evidence) and waive this condition and additional classes and or assessments will be arranged without any additional costs subject to availability.

Re-Assessment

Following agreement with the student and assessor then the new assessment activity should be conducted following the same process above. If the student now demonstrates competency then their new cover sheet will be marked accordingly. He will be given another chance of reassessment.

If the student once again fails to demonstrate competency then the student will again me marked NYC and at this point they will have to re-enrol and re-take the whole Unit or Cluster. At this point student will be advice to take a lower level of the unit first before re-enrolling this unit.

Assessment activity whilst the student has deferred or been suspended

Where the student has deferred or been suspended due to behaviour issues and misses the assessment time, the assessment will take place when this unit is once again available.

Should the institute be unable to offer the units the students did not complete, it is the responsibility of the student to seek alternative arrangements to enable them to complete those required units.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The assessment of prior learning will follow the RPL and Credit Transfer Policy and will be conducted ensuring that the evidence provided follows the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence. See RPL and Credit Transfer Policy for details.

Plagiarism or Cheating

Any student found cheating or guilty of plagiarism by staff would be issued a written warning and the work shall be marked as NYC. However, the student will be given the opportunity to re-submit or be re-assessed at the applicable costs. A second breach of policy will incur a second counselling and warning and the student will receive NYC in the unit of competency. The student will need to re-enrol for the unit and pay the appropriate fee. A third breach of policy will result in cancellation of student's enrolment at the institute.

Assessors are instructed to reasonable steps to ensure that work is not being plagiarised this can include using "Plagiarism Tools" to check potential source of information that has not been correctly accredited.

It is the responsibility of the student to book for the above reassessments or re-conduct of assessments or re-enrol. No separate communication will be made individually.

Appeal an academic decision

Where a student does not agree with the Assessors decision they should first discuss the issue with the assessor and try to reach an understanding of the decision and a way forward to get the issue resolved.

If this informal approach does not lead to a result the student believes if fair, then they may lodge an appeal following the institute's Complaints and Appeals process. This should be done within five (5) working days.

Reasonable adjustment or special needs

Where a student has special needs or requires an adjustment to the assessment process to allow them to demonstrate competency then this should be facilitated by the Assessor. This may require liaison with the Training Manager and adjustments, or timetabling changed to accommodate. For example some people may need to dictate their answers rather than writing them.

Where a change is made the change to the normal assessment process should be noted on the Unit Cover Sheet and it should be made clear what has changed. In the example above the words should clear indicated that the answers were dictated by the student, or an audio recording of the assessment may be provided with the assessment tool kit.

Nothing in reasonable adjustment allows for compromising the requirements of assessment defined in the training package. Where the adjustment would result in a condition or requirement of assessment to not be met, then this must NOT be allowed.

Roles and Responsibilities
Course coordination/Training Manager is responsible.

Related Documents
- Student Handbook

- Student Code of Conduct

- RPL and Credit Transfer policy

Revision History

Version No.	Creation/ Revision Date	Comment	Created/ Revised by
1.0	01/10/2017	Policy and procedure created	CEO
1.1	09/03/2019	Yearly review and minor updates	CEO