

Assessment Validation Policy & Procedures

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline Darwin Institute of Technology (DIT)'s approach to ensuring assessment is systematically validated in line with the requirements of Clauses 1.9 – 1.11 and Clause 1.25 of the Standards for RTOs.

Definitions

ASQA means Australian Skills Quality Authority which is the national VET regulator and the RTO's registering body

AQF Qualification¹ means an AQF qualification type endorsed in a training package or accredited in a VET accredited course

Explicit Unit/s of Competency means a unit of competency that is being delivered 'stand-alone' or not part of a qualification or course

Independent Validation means that the '*Validation is carried out by a validator or validators who:*

- *Are not employed or subcontracted by the RTO to provide training and assessment*

Regulator means either National VET Regulator, or a body of a non-referring State that is responsible for the kinds of matters dealt with under the VET legislation for that State (e.g. ASQA or WA TAC, whichever is listed as DIT's Registration Manager on training.gov.au)

SRTOs means the Standards for RTOs 2015 – refer definition of 'Standards'

Standards means the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 of the VET Quality Framework which can be accessed from www.asqa.gov.au

Training Product² means AQF qualification, skill set, unit of competency, accredited short course and module

¹Taken from: *User's Guide to the Standards for RTOs 2015: Appendix 1*. Accessed 7th February, 2020, *User's Guide to the Standards for RTOs 2015: Appendix 1*.

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Validation is the quality review of the assessment process. Validation involves checking that the assessment tool/s produce/s valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence to enable reasonable judgements to be made as to whether the requirements of the training package or VET accredited courses are met. It includes reviewing a statistically valid sample of the assessments and making recommendations for future improvements to the assessment tool, process and/or outcomes and acting upon such recommendations.³

³ Quoted from: Australian Skills Quality Authority. *User's Guide to the Standards for RTOs 2015*. Accessed on December 8, 2014

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Policy

1. Planning Validation

- DIT maintains a plan for, and implements, systematic Validation of assessment practices and judgments.
- The *Validation Schedule* ensures that each Training Product on the RTO's scope of registration is validated at least once every five years, with at least 50% of those Training Products validated within the first three years of each five-year cycle. The schedule includes:
 - When assessment Validation will occur
 - Which training products will be the focus of the Validation
 - Who will lead and participate in the Validation activities.
- Where the Training Product being sampled is an AQF qualification, a minimum of two units of competency are included in each Validation session to ensure these units are representative of the qualification as a whole.
- DIT will determine the frequency and rate at which each Training Product will be validated in relation to various risk factors which may include:
 - The use of new assessment processes
 - Delivery of Training Products (or units of competency contained within a course) where safety is a concern
 - The level and experience of assessor/s
 - Changes in technology, workplace processes, legislation, and licensing requirements
 - Outcomes of previous Validation sessions
 - Other documented risks identified by DIT, industry or regulatory bodies
- Similarly, units which have been identified as either 'high risk' or 'high volume' by either DIT (which may be via feedback from stakeholders) or by the regulator, will be validated before and/or more frequently than other units.
- The *Validation Schedule* will be kept up to date when changes are made to DITs scope of registration.

2. Conducting Validation

- Validation is conducted on a regular basis for each Training Product in line with the requirements of the Standards (Clause 1.10 & 1.11).
- For each Validation session, a leader will be assigned to lead the Validation process and finalise the outcomes and recommendations of the team. The Validation leader must not have been involved in making the assessment decisions that are being validated.
- Validation may be conducted by one person, or by a team of people, and may involve industry experts. All assessors engaged by the RTO to conduct assessment are required to regularly participate in Validation. Collectively, those involved in Validation must have:
 - vocational competencies and current industry skills
 - current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning
 - the training and assessment qualification or assessor skill set.

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- Validation is conducted using the *Validation Tool* which guides the Validation team through the process and records outcomes.
- DIT will validate a statistically valid sample size of assessment decisions and will randomly select the students' assessments to be validated – in line with the guidance provided by ASQA's Fact Sheet on *Conducting Validation*⁴.

3. Record keeping and improvements

- The lead validator will finalise the outcomes, decide if there are any critical issues undermining the validity of completed assessments, and suggest where additional Validation is needed to further investigate.
- Validation outcomes are documented on the *Validation Register* and acted upon to bring about improvements to DIT's training and assessment systems and practices. Refer to *CG3 Quality Assurance Policy & Procedures*.

⁴ Australian Skills Quality Authority Fact Sheet: Conducting Validation. Accessed on 7th February, 2020

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Procedures

1. Schedule and plan Validation

Refer Standard 1, Clause 1.9, 1.10 and 1.11

Procedure	Responsibility
<p>A. Outline the validation requirements of the Training Product in the Validation Schedule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least annually and every time DIT's scope is changed, follow all parts of this procedure to update the <i>Validation Schedule</i>. List each Training Product to be validated in the Validation Schedule (within <i>Validation Schedule and Register</i>) ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Training Products are listed. All Explicit Units of Competency are listed. Set the frequency and rate (i.e. number of units to be validated each time) at which each Training Product should be validated ensuring that the minimum frequency is no less than once every five years. Increase the frequency rate considering a range of other risk factors such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of new assessment processes. Delivery of training products (or units of competency contained within a course) where safety is a concern. The level and experience of assessor/s. Changes in technology, workplace processes, legislation, and licensing requirements. Outcomes of previous Validation sessions. Other documented risks identified by DIT, industry or regulatory bodies. For each Training Product, include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The start and end dates of DIT's scope of registration. Whether or not independent Validation is required (e.g. for TAE training package). Whether or not the Training Product is considered high-risk. Whether or not DIT is currently delivering the course. Any applicable risk factors per the previous point above. 	Director of Studies
<p>B. Schedule Validation for each Training Product</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For each Training Product listed on the schedule, include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the Validation will occur with regards to the listed frequency and rate of Validation (ensuring at least 50% of all training products are validated within the first three years of each five year cycle). Whether or not units are high-risk or high volume. The sample period and sample pool to be used. 	Director of Studies

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Procedure	Responsibility
<p>C. Determine the Validation team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For each Training Product, determine a suitable Validation team that collectively, meet the requirements of (in Clause 1.11). They must have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vocational competencies and current industry skills. current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning; and the training and assessment qualification or assessor skill set. If Training Products are from the TAE Training Package, ensure Independent Validation, meaning that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>'Validation is carried out by a validator or validators who:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Are not employed or subcontracted by the RTO to provide training and assessment</i> <i>Have no other involvement or interest in the operations of the RTO.'</i>⁵ Ensure that Validation session/activity include at least one person who <u>is not</u> involved in the particular instance of delivery and assessment of the unit/module being validated. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, this might mean that a trainer/assessor delivering a qualification to a group of class-based students might be involved in the Validation of assessments for an online or workplace based group of students. If the trainer/assessor is going to participate In Validation, they must <u>not</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be the lead validator in the assessment team. Determine the Validation outcome for any assessment judgements they made. Industry experts <u>may</u> be involved in Validation to ensure there is a combination of expertise and to ensure the assessment system and process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produces valid assessment judgments. Ensures graduates have the skills and knowledge expected by industry. Ensure each activity/session on the <i>Validation Schedule</i> details <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which units/modules will be validated Who will participate in, and lead the Validation Who will be the independent validator (if required) 	Director of Studies

⁵ Taken from: Australian Skills Quality Authority. *User's Guide to the Standards for RTOs 2015*. Accessed on January 5, 2020

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2. Determine statistically valid sample size & random selection

Refer SRTOs: Standard 1, Clause 1.9, 1.10 and 1.11

Procedure	Responsibility
A. Work out sample numbers and evidence to be used in Validation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work out the sample size and the assessments to be validated at least 2 weeks prior to the Validation session. Refer to the next two sections to do this. 	Director of Studies
B. Work out sample size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To determine a statistically valid sample size use the online tool available at http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html When using the tool: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work out the number of assessment judgments made for the unit in the last six months, based on a report from the student management system. This should be based on all assessment decisions regardless of who made them, what delivery model, which assessment approach (include RPL). It should include both decisions of Not Yet Competent and Competent. Enter the error level of 15%. Enter the confidence level of 95%. Read the ASQA fact sheet as referenced in the policy for what these error and confidence levels mean. 	Director of Studies
C. Random selection of students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the sample size is known, a random selection is to be made from all the students for whom assessment decisions have been made during the previous 6 months. Source the evidence for the selected students prior to the Validation session 	Director of Studies

3. Conduct Validation

Refer SRTOs: Standard 1, Clause 1.9, 1.10 and 1.11

Procedure	Responsibility
A. Conduct Validation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct Validation with relevant people according to the plan using the Validation Tool, recording all outcomes and decisions on the tool. Refer to ASQA's Fact Sheet on Conducting Validation: https://www.asqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/FACT_SHEET_Conducting_validation.pdf?v=1532658700 The purpose of Validation should be to review the assessment judgments made by the RTO and should be conducted after assessment has been 	Assessors

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<p>conducted.</p> <p>The following section of the Fact sheet is helpful for assessors to have in mind. This is a direct quote from ASQA's Fact Sheet.</p> <p>“Effective” Validation</p> <p>Validation must consider only the assessment evidence retained within the sample. While validators may discuss the assessment process with the assessor who conducted the assessment, only the evidence collected, retained and recorded will support a Validation decision.</p> <p>Reviewing assessment practice</p> <p>Validation determines if assessment tools have produced the intended evidence. Validators must look at the evidence in the sample, and determine if it is valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic.</p> <p>In reviewing assessment practice, validators should consider whether the assessment tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comply with the assessment requirements of the relevant training product • ensure the principles of fairness, flexibility, validity and reliability are adhered to • have been designed to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and current evidence • are appropriate to the contexts and conditions of assessment (this may include considering whether the assessment reflects real work-based contexts and meets industry requirements) • are appropriate in terms of the level of difficulty of the tasks to be performed in relation to the skills and knowledge requirements of the unit • provide sufficient instruction to clearly explain the tasks to be administered to the learner (if the assessment samples demonstrate the evidence provided by each learner is markedly different, this may indicate that instructions are not clear) • give sufficient guidance as to the evidence to be gathered from the learner • outline appropriate reasonable adjustments that could be made to the gathering of assessment evidence • provide sufficient instructions for the assessor on collecting evidence, making a judgement, and recording the outcomes of the assessment (assessment samples should validate recording and reporting processes) • are supported with evidence criteria to judge the quality of performance (if the assessment samples demonstrate the judgements made about each learner are markedly different, this may indicate that decision-making rules do not ensure consistency of judgement), and • adhere to the requirements of the RTO's assessment system. <p>Reviewing assessment judgements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In reviewing the assessment judgements, validators should consider whether the learners' assessment evidence: • complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training product • demonstrates that the assessment was conducted with fairness, flexibility, validity and reliability, and • is valid, sufficient, authentic and current. 	

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4. Record and act upon Validation outcomes

Refer Standard 1, Clause 1.9, 1.10 and 1.11

Procedure	Responsibility
A. Validation outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upon completion of each scheduled session, summarise outcomes on the <i>Validation Tool</i>. Use the tool to decide if further Validation is required to investigate any critical issues found. Consider whether Validation sample needs to be larger or different (e.g. focused on a different student cohort, particular type of tool or task), or if the Validation frequency for a particular unit needs to be adjusted until issues are resolved. Notify the CEO and/or Director of Studies immediately if the outcomes of Validation may pose an immediate risk to students, staff or the general public. This may be the case for high risk units or units with a licensed outcome. 	Lead Validator (as per the Validation Schedule)
B. Validation Register <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record Validation outcomes on the <i>Validation Schedule & Register</i>. Summarise findings and recommendations arising from the Validation on the register in the <i>Validation Schedule & Register</i>. 	Director of Studies
C. Actions and improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss recent Validation outcomes at each management meeting and decide actions to be taken. Where improvements are to be made to the assessment system, tools or practices based on the outcomes of Validation, these improvements are to be recorded on the <i>Continuous Improvement Register</i>. 	Director of Studies

Document Control

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