ASSESSMENT & VALIDATION POLICY

This policy addresses the design, review and validation of assessment tools and assessment processes as well as recording of outcomes.

Designing Assessments

When designing assessment tools, we ensure assessment processes address the standard, meet current industry and/or workplace requirements as well as any regulatory requirements, such as: WHS; privacy and confidentiality of information; reporting requirements; access to records for students; Standards for RTOs relating to assessment, assessor requirements, validation processes.

Assessment tool development includes discussions with relevant industry stakeholders to seek their feedback and comments on the suitability of the assessment tool, including the assessment plan and associated assessment tasks. Based on this feedback and collaboration, comments and suggested changes are recorded on the Learning and Assessment Strategy file and/or the relevant validation report, and then, if required, the assessment tool may be moderated and/or contextualised to ensure it is suitable for specific workplace requirements/environments and to meet current industry standards and the principles of assessment (valid, fair, flexible and reliable).

When designing our assessment tools we ensure the assessment plan and relevant assessment instruments (assessment tasks, such as: questionnaires, case studies, portfolios, demonstrations, RPL pathways, etc) are mapped against the unit and will provide valid, fair, reliable and sufficient evidence to demonstrate competency for candidates' against the unit of competency.

If assessment is required over time, this is documented in the learning and assessment strategy and detailed in the assessment tool. When designing assessment tools we also ensure flexibility is built in to address any specific learner's needs or/and their workplace or practice environment. We review and record validation of assessment tools using our Assessment Validation Report.

Reasonable / Allowable Adjustment

Adjustments can be made to the assessment tool based on the workplace context, available equipment or specific support requirements of candidates. Allowable adjustments will be documented on the relevant assessment tool to ensure any changes do not impact on the required outcomes for that standard.

Reasonable adjustment activities could involve:

- Modifying or providing a selection of equipment or software packages
  Arranging simulated environments and scenarios if a work environment is not available
- Providing different delivery modes or course materials in alternative formats
- Provision of interpreters, readers, etc to meet specific learners needs, etc.
- Providing more time for the completion of tasks
- A choice of documentation to be provided for any portfolio of documentation tasks

The determination of 'reasonableness' requires a judgement that must take into account the impact on the organisation/workplace/context and the need to maintain the integrity of the unit of competency. Where the qualification outcome is specifically related to an: 'occupational' outcome, any reasonable adjustment may only be accommodated in the assessment process if the workplace can be similarly 'adjusted' to accommodate the needs of the applicant/employee.

Review and Validate

To ensure thorough and rigorous assessment practices and results, we have implemented a comprehensive schedule plan of systematic review and validation of assessment tools and processes.

This is based on an approach, which considers and reviews any risk indicators, such as: the potential safety concerns to clients from an assessment outcome that is not valid, safety and ergonomic considerations of health and safety and any relevant legislative requirements, and also takes into consideration flexible modes of delivery, changes to training packages and/or licensing requirements as well as assessor guidelines and requirements to address RTO Standards 2015 (Standard 1).

Assessment tools are validated using external validators/stakeholders to address RTO Standards 2015 (standard 1.9 - 1.11).   Suggestions, feedback and comments are reviewed to ensure the assessment tool meets the principles of assessment (valid, fair, flexible and reliable) and current industry practices.

Review and validation also occurs when a Training Package is re-released to ensure any changes do not impact on the assessment tool process, after the assessment tool has been used for a period of time, or after feedback from candidates and/or assessors indicating a review is required.

Moderation

When required, an assessor may need to moderate an assessment decision with another qualified trainer/assessor. All parties will review the evidence and make a decision on their findings individually and then formally together. The findings will then be recording on the assessment instrument record as well as in the student's file, if this relates to a student's appeal.

After a period of time, assessments are moderated to ensure they are meeting the requirements of the training package, learning outcomes, industry requirements as well as the level they are based as per the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). This process is also based on reviewing completed assessment tasks, as well as feedback received from students, clients and assessors using the assessment tool.

Version Control

Any changes to Assessment Tools are captured using version control. This is detailed on the footer of the Assessment tool (and/or any other relevant documentation) to identify the current version number and the date the change took place (e.g. Version 1.4: 01 May 2016).). All superseded Assessment Tool documentation is retained for a period of 2 years.
Any changes to assessment tools must be related to relevant stakeholders who are currently working from that Assessment Tool to ensure currency, consistency and reliability.

Student Results and Records

Students' results from assessment are detailed on their student file and, if applicable, within the online learning management platform. These results indicate if competency has been achieved in each specific unit of competency. Completed assessment tasks are kept for a period of 12 months, which also complies with any appeal process, if applicable. The actual final result achieved and for which unit of competency and/or qualification issued, must be kept on the students' file for a period of 30 years. Recording of AVETMISS data must also be recorded and submitted as per current National VET data policy which addresses USI process as well as any specific Government or State funding requirements.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is available for all students (as per RTO Standards 2015 standard 1.12), to support students in recognising previous training and experiences, either formally or informally.

What is Recognition of Prior Learning?
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an assessment process that recognises competencies you currently have, regardless of how, when or where the learning occurred. This includes competencies attained through any combination of formal or informal training and education, work experience or general life experience.

In order to apply for recognition of prior, students must provide evidence that addresses and meets the requirements for this unit.

RPL evidence may take a variety of forms and could include:
- Certified copies of relevant certificates and/or qualifications achieved
- References from past and/or current employers
- Testimonials from clients and previous work samples
- Substantiated *Curriculum Vitae*
- Phone interview
- Questions and scenarios that need to be responded to
- Observation of current skill

To be able to grant RPL the assessor must be confident that the applicant is currently competent against all components of the unit and must ensure that submitted evidence is authentic, valid, reliable, current and sufficient.

All evidence provided through the recognition process is mapped against the applicable unit/s to ensure sufficient evidence is collated, and this mapping record is maintained on the students file.

Who Can Apply

Any student who feels their prior learning or experience meets the requirements of a unit or units of competency or individual tasks that make up a course, lesson or unit of competency. If partial RPL is awarded for elements or tasks within a unit of competency then the applicant must complete the other remaining elements or tasks to achieve the full unit.

How does the RPL process work?

Evidence that is presented by the applicant is matched to the required competency standard as stated in the unit(s) applied for. The evidence is assessed using the following criteria:
- Is the prior learning relevant to the course and address the performance criteria specifically?
- Is the knowledge and skill current?
- Is it authentic and can be verified?
- Is the knowledge and skill appropriate to the level of the unit?

How to apply

Students are advised of different assessment pathways available and based on their experiences can make an application for recognition. This is discussed between the student and the course trainer/assessor to discuss experiences and evidence requirements.

How long will it take to be informed?

We will be in constant contact with you during this RPL process to assist in the collation of required and relevant RPL evidence, and following up with any review or questions relating to your experiences. We will also advise you after we have followed up with any of the referees provided to support your work place experiences.

Fees and Charges

Students already enrolled in the relevant course will not pay any additional fees relating to RPL.

For students not yet enrolled and wishing to initially review RPL evidence and commence an application for consideration, there will be a non-refundable application fee payable before we can start the RPL process. This cost will be advised to you at time of enquiry. This application fee will be deducted from the course fee if enrolment then goes ahead.

Authorised Signatories

Certificates, Diplomas, and Statements of attainment / transcripts, that are being sent to Connect Training Group as evidence, need to be copied and then sighted as a copy of the original documented and signed and dated by one of the following authorities with this statement on the front of the document/s:

I certify that this is a true copy of the original document sighted by me:

Name: _____Position/Title: _____

Signature: _____   Date: _____

Authorised Signatories include:

Justice of the Peace	Commissionaire of Declarations
Policeman	Doctor
School Principal	

Credit Transfer

As part of Standards for RTO 2015 (standard 3.5) we accept and provide credit transfer for students for any units of competency as long as these meet authenticated AQF and VET certification and transcript requirements (unless licensing or regulatory requirements prevent this).

Certified copies of original certification/transcripts must be provided. These must match the units you are requesting credit transfer for. If the units are from a similar / earlier qualification, these will need to be mapped against the current standard to ensure they are equal. To support a direct credit transfer, consideration must be made for the date the previous training/certificate took place as well as your currency in the skill and knowledge relevant to the certification. If credit transfer is granted, you may receive a discount in your course costs.