

## Assessment Policy & Procedure

<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Document Location:</b>	QMS
<b>Document Name:</b>	Assessment Policy & Procedure

### Policy

At Open Colleges (OC) assessment is an integral part of the learning process. Assessment strategies and tools are developed and implemented to facilitate and augment student learning.

We do this by striving to ensure that our **students:**

- are informed of the relationship of assessment tasks to the aims and learning outcomes of a course and / or unit of study
- understand the criteria on which they are assessed so that they know what it is they are trying to achieve
- receive constructive and timely feedback so that they have a measure of their progress and guidance to improve
- are supported to succeed
- are aware of the assessment appeals process.

our **assessments:**

- are authentic, relevant and meaningful
- promote quality interactions with our students through questions, discussion, and reflective responses
- develop students' capacity for self-assessment to enable them to become reflective and self-managing learners
- include peer assessment and collaborative assessment
- take into account the importance of learner motivation
- are conducted in accordance with the principles of validity, reliability, fairness and flexibility.

and our **educational governance** structure:

- ensures that student performance is analysed and used to inform the development of assessment to meet the needs of students and improve learning
- ensures that students are provided with relevant, up-to-date learning that meets industry needs.



## Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all Vocational Education and Training (VET) students and courses. It covers assessments conducted in all accredited OC courses including those conducted during a student's compulsory (where applicable) work placement.

## Definitions

<b>Assessment</b>	The process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace, as expressed by the relevant endorsed industry/enterprise competency standards of a Training Package or by the learning outcomes of an accredited course.
<b>Course</b>	Specified units of competency which are assessed using one or more assessment tasks. Successful completion of a course leads to an AQF qualification and partial completion (at least one unit of competency) to a Statement of Attainment.
<b>Fairness</b>	Fairness in assessment requires consideration of the individual student's needs and characteristics, and any reasonable adjustments that need to be applied to take account of them. It requires clear communication between the assessor and the student to ensure that the student is fully informed about, understands, is able to participate in, the assessment process, and agrees that the process is appropriate. It also includes an opportunity for the person being assessed to challenge the result of the assessment and to be reassessed if necessary.
<b>Flexibility</b>	To be flexible, assessment should: reflect the student's needs; provide for recognition of competencies no matter how, where or when they have been acquired; draw on a range of methods appropriate to the context, competency and the student and support continuous competency development.
<b>Moderation</b>	The process of bringing assessment judgements and standards into alignment. It is the process that ensures the same standards are applied to all assessment results within the same unit(s) of competency. It is an active process in the sense that adjustments to assessor judgements are made to overcome differences of the difficulty in the tool and/or the severity of judgements.



<b>Reasonable Adjustment</b>	Adjustments that can be made to the way in which evidence of student performance can be collected. Whilst reasonable adjustments can be made in terms of the way in which evidence of performance is gathered, the evidence criteria for making competent/not yet competent decisions and/or awarding grades should not be altered in any way. That is, the standards expected should be the same irrespective of the group and/or individual being assessed; otherwise comparability of standards will be compromised.
<b>Reliability</b>	Reliability is an estimate of how accurate or precise the task is as a measurement instrument. Reliability is concerned with how much error is included in the evidence.
<b>Unit of Competency</b>	Specification of industry knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill to the standard of performance expected in the workplace.
<b>Validation</b>	The collaborative planning, development, conduct and review of all aspects of assessment to ensure that learning and assessment strategies are consistent with the requirements of the unit of competency.
<b>Validity</b>	<p>Assessment is valid when the process assesses what it claims to assess. Validity requires that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- assessment against the units of competency must cover the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance</li> <li>- assessment of knowledge and skills must be integrated with their practical application</li> <li>- judgement of competence must be based on sufficient evidence. Evidence should be gathered on a number of occasions and in a range of contexts, using different assessment methods. The specific evidence requirements of the units provide advice relating to sufficiency.</li> </ul>

**Responsibilities**

<b>Registrar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensures effective communication of this policy</li> <li>- Manages student assessment submissions</li> <li>- Manages assessment record keeping</li> </ul>
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Head of Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensures that assessments are validated by industry</li> <li>- Ensures that effective assessment moderation is undertaken</li> <li>- Ensure students receive timely and constructive feedback</li> <li>- Ensures courseware meets unit of competency guidelines</li> <li>- Undertakes an annual review of courses</li> </ul>
Manager, Quality & Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensures appropriate and systematic assessment validation and moderation is undertaken</li> <li>- Ensures assessments meet industry and National Training Package requirements</li> <li>- Ensures compliance with VQF</li> </ul>
Manager, Learning & Assessment / Head of Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develops assessment strategies</li> <li>- Manages the validation and moderation of assessments</li> <li>- Ensures assessments meet industry and National Training Package requirements</li> <li>- Undertakes assessment validation and moderation</li> <li>- Ensures students receive timely and constructive feedback on assessments</li> </ul>
Assessors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide constructive and timely feedback on assessments submitted by students</li> <li>- Adhere to assessment plans and strategies and their submission timeframes</li> <li>- Report on student progress and achievement in an honest, clear and objective manner and based only on relevant data</li> <li>- Report on assessment outcomes</li> <li>- Participate in moderation and validation exercises as required</li> </ul>
Manager, Course Development & Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interprets Learning and Assessment Strategies to design assessment tools</li> <li>- Implements and embeds assessments into course materials</li> <li>- Implements corrective action and continuous improvements to assessments and activities, in consultation with Manager, Learning &amp; Assessment</li> <li>- Oversees annual review of courses</li> </ul>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are aware of all requirements to achieve competency</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are familiar with the guidelines on completing and submitting assessments, including the requirement to keep a copy of the assessment submission in case of loss of the original</li> <li>- Are aware of mechanisms within OC for seeking assistance and advice, in particular in relation to problems in meeting assessment timeframes, withdrawal from a unit of competency and special consideration due to illness or other misadventure</li> <li>- Practice academic integrity and avoid plagiarism and collusion</li> <li>- Uphold obligations and arrangements for workplace assessment</li> <li>- Accept fair, constructive and timely feedback on assessment tasks including evaluation of performance and progress in a unit of competency</li> <li>- Are aware of OC policy and procedures and costs (where applicable) for re-assessment</li> <li>- Are aware of OC policy and procedures for appeal against academic outcomes</li> </ul>
Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develops and reviews criteria for the assessment of course content and assessments</li> <li>- Undertakes systematic assessment validation and moderation</li> </ul>
Industry Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides advice from industry in line with VQF requirements</li> <li>- Ensures the OC’s learning and assessment materials and methodologies meet the needs of industry</li> </ul>
Quality and Continuous Improvement Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensures continuous improvement is achieved via systematic feedback and review</li> </ul>

**Quality and Continuous Improvement**

The Assessment Policy & Procedure is subject to systematic review, evaluation and improvement. Review mechanisms include the Quality and Continuous Improvement Committee, Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee, Industry Advisory Committee, Head of Faculty and Manager, Course Development and Improvement.



## **Procedure**

### **Assessment Submission**

Completed assessment tasks must be uploaded via OpenSpace or submitted by students via post. Some assessments may be conducted via OpenSpace and are submitted on command or automatically at the end of the allocated time period for that assessment.

OC must communicate the appropriate submission procedure to the student at the commencement of their course. It is the student's responsibility to submit assessments by their due date.

It is the assessor's responsibility to ensure their students receive the appropriate feedback with regard to each assessment task submitted and within the agreed time period.

### **Assessment Return**

The assessor must grade and return an assessment task within the stipulated time period.

### **Assessment Extensions**

Students must submit all assessments associated with their course before the expiry date of the course. Assessment tasks must be listed on the Order of Studies sent to the student at the commencement of their course and the course expiry date must be clearly communicated to students at the commencement of each course.

If an extension beyond the expiry date is required to complete an assessment task, it is the student's responsibility to complete an Extension Request form. An extension will not automatically be granted to students whose courses are close to expiry.

A fee will apply to students wishing to extend their course beyond the expiry date of their course. Fees will be outlined in the Schedule of Administrative Fees. The maximum course extension period is six months.

The Manager, Learning & Assessment will have the authority to negotiate the extension period and fee with students on a case by case basis when special circumstances apply. Students who do not submit their assessments by the course expiry date or agreed extension date must pay a re-assessment fee. The re-assessment fee will be identified in the Schedule of Administrative Fees.

### **Overdue Assessments**

An assessment is 'overdue' when it is not submitted by the due date or by the agreed extension date. It is the student's responsibility to communicate reasons for an overdue assessment with his or her assessor.



An overdue assessment submitted beyond the agreed extension period will not be accepted.

### **Re-submission of Assessments**

Students who do not successfully complete an assessment task may be requested to re-submit that task.

A student will not be charged for the first re-submission of an assessment task. Subsequent re-submissions will attract a re-assessment fee. The re-assessment fee will be identified in the Schedule of Administrative Fees.

### **Assessment Appeal**

The grade given for an assessment task by the assessor is the grade that will be recorded for that assessment task.

A student may appeal a grade given for an assessment task if:

- The student can demonstrate that there are exceptional circumstances beyond their control that have directly impacted on their ability to complete or participate in the assessment task
- The student appeal is based on compassionate grounds and evidence has been provided
- The student believes that the trainer has misunderstood his/her response to a question or not read his/her work correctly or completely
- Inappropriate or insufficient comments / feedback were given by the assessor
- The assessment task is ambiguous or the instructions are unclear
- Any other reason considered appropriate by the Head of Faculty

To request an assessment appeal the student must complete and submit a Course Assessment Appeal form. The reason for the appeal must be clearly stated by the student and, where appropriate, evidence must be supplied to substantiate the appeal.

Appeals are reviewed (in consultation) by the Head of Faculty. Any decision made by the Head of Faculty will be final and must be communicated to the student. The appeal will be deemed closed once the student has been notified of the decision.

If the appeal is in relation to a fail grade and the appeal is rejected, the student may be required to resubmit the assessment task according to the Re-Submissions section of this policy.

There will be no cost to the student for an Assessment Appeal.

### **Work Placement Assessment**



Work placement allows the student to demonstrate actual skills in an environment and industry relevant to their qualification. A number of OC qualifications include a mandatory work placement.

Students' skills in the workplace are assessed by an OC assessor. OC will provide and organise an assessor to assess the student's workplace performance. If the assessment is being conducted within the workplace it is the student's obligation to be present at the agreed time and place, or to notify CE within 14 days of their inability to attend an assessment session. Students who do not fulfil this obligation may be charged a Workplace Assessment Non-Attendance Fee unless they can provide evidence that non-attendance was out of their control. The fee will be identified in the Schedule of Administrative Fees.

The following procedure is to be applied for conducting work placement assessments.

The assessor is to prepare for assessment. This includes:

- Establishing the context and purpose of the evidence to be collected
- Identifying and analysing the units of competency, Training Package and the OC assessment strategy to identify the evidence requirement
- Reviewing the assessment tools and confirming their currency and adequacy in meeting the rules of evidence.

The assessor is to prepare the student for assessment. This includes:

- Explaining the context and purpose of the assessment and the assessment process
- Explaining the units of competency to be assessed and the evidence to be collected
- Outlining the assessment procedure and the preparation the student should undertake, and answering any questions
- Assessing the needs of the student and, where applicable, negotiating reasonable adjustment for assessing people with disabilities without compromising the competency outcomes
- Seeking feedback regarding the student's understanding of the units of competency, evidence requirements and assessment process
- Determining if the student is ready for assessment and, in consultation with the student, deciding on the time and place of the assessment.

The assessor is to plan and prepare the evidence-gathering process. This includes:

- Establishing a plan for gathering sufficient evidence about the student's consistent performance in order to make the assessment decision
- Employing approved OC assessment materials in the evidence-gathering process



- Organising equipment or resources required to support the evidence-gathering process
- Coordinating and briefing other personnel involved in the evidence-gathering process.

The assessor must collect the evidence and make the assessment decision. This includes:

- Establishing and overseeing the evidence-gathering process to ensure its validity, reliability, fairness and flexibility
- Collecting appropriate evidence and matching compatibility to the elements, performance criteria, range statement and evidence guide in the relevant units of competency
- Evaluating evidence in terms of the four dimensions of competency - task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills and job/role environment skills
- Incorporating allowable adjustments to the assessment procedure without compromising the integrity of the competencies
- Evaluating the evidence in terms of validity, currency, authenticity and sufficiency
- Consulting and working with other staff or technical experts involved in the assessment process
- Recording details of evidence collected
- Making a judgement about the student's competence based on the evidence and the relevant unit(s) of competency. Students will be graded as competent when the assessor is confident that the student has demonstrated the necessary knowledge and skill to function effectively in the workplace.

The assessor must provide feedback about the outcomes of the assessment process. This includes:

- Providing clear and constructive feedback on the assessment decision
- Providing information on ways of overcoming any identified gaps in competency revealed by the assessment
- Allowing the opportunity to discuss the assessment process and outcome
- Providing information on reassessment and the appeals process if applicable.

The assessor must record and report the result. This involves:

- Recording the assessment outcome
- Maintaining records of the assessment procedure, evidence collected and the outcome
- Maintaining the confidentiality of the assessment outcome



On completion of the assessment process, the assessor must review the assessment process. This involves:

- Reporting on the positive and negative features of the assessment to those responsible for the assessment procedures
- If necessary, suggesting to the Manager, Learning and Assessment ways of improving the assessment procedures

The assessor must participate in the reassessment and appeals process. This involves:

- Providing feedback and counselling to the student, if required, regarding the assessment outcome or process, including guidance on further options
- Providing the student with information on the reassessment and appeals process
- Reporting any assessment decision that is disputed by the student to appropriate OC personnel
- Participating in the reassessment or appeal according to the policies and procedures of OC.

**Assessment Record Keeping**

Assessors are required to make assessment decisions and formally record those decisions. Decisions will be recorded in the form of an assessment grade and in the case of work placement assessment, students will be graded as competent when the assessor is confident that the student has demonstrated the necessary knowledge and skill to function effectively in the workplace.

Assessment grades will be stored electronically by OC.

Results will be issued to each student indicating the grade received for the completed assessment. Records are retained for 30 years.

Assessments submitted in hard copy will be forwarded to the assessor, returned to OC upon marking and then returned to the student.

OC will keep a sample (10%) of assessments from each course for moderation and audit purposes.

**Grading System**

Assessments will be graded according to the following Grading Scale:

Code	Grade Name	Mark Range (%)	Grade Description
HD	High Distinction	85-100	High Distinction is awarded for work of outstanding quality in achieving all assessment requirements in a unit of competency together with outstanding integration and understanding of theory and application of skills. Evidence of



			in-depth research, reading, analysis, original and creative thought is demonstrated. A consistent academic referencing system is used and sources are appropriately acknowledged.
DN	Distinction	75-84	Distinction is awarded for work of superior quality in achieving all assessment requirements in a unit of competency and a superior integration and understanding of theory and application of skills. Evidence of in-depth research, reading, analysis and evaluation is demonstrated. A consistent academic referencing system is used and sources are appropriately acknowledged.
CR	Credit	65-74	Credit is awarded for work showing a more than satisfactory achievement of all assessment requirements in a unit of competency and a more than adequate understanding of theory and application of skills. A consistent academic referencing system is used and sources are appropriately acknowledged.
PA	Pass	50-64	Pass is awarded for work showing a satisfactory achievement of all assessment requirements in a unit of competency and an adequate understanding of theory and application of skills. A consistent academic referencing system is used and sources are appropriately acknowledged.
AS	Advanced Standing	-	Advanced Standing is applied when a student has successfully met assessment requirements in a unit of competency via Recognition of Prior Learning or Credit Transfer.
WD	Grade Withheld	-	<p>A Grade Withheld is applied when the student has not yet demonstrated a satisfactory achievement of all assessment requirements in a unit of competency and an adequate understanding of theory and application of skills.</p> <p>A student can receive a Grade Withheld result a maximum of two (2) times in each unit of competency.</p>
CO	Competent	-	A Competent grade is applied when the student has satisfied the requirements of a unit of competency undertaken as part of a work placement assessment.



NC	Not Yet Competent	-	<p>A Not Yet Competent grade is applied when the student has not satisfied the requirements of a unit of competency undertaken as part of a work placement assessment.</p> <p>A student can receive a Not Yet Competent Grade result a maximum of two (2) times in each unit of competency.</p>
FA	Fail	-	<p>A Fail is applied when a student does not satisfy the assessment requirements of a unit of competency on a third attempt.</p>

### Assessment and Unit Records

Students' results will be communicated at the completion of the course, or on withdrawal from the course, via the following:

- AQF Qualification (where applicable)
- Transcript of Competencies Achieved
- Grades Letter.

### Related Documents

Assessment Validation Policy & Procedure
Assessment Moderation Policy & Procedure
Assessment Partnership Policy & Procedure
Recognition of Prior Learning Policy & Procedure
Credit Transfer Policy & Procedure
Grievance & Complaint Policy & Procedure
Student Guide
Trainer Guide

### Related Legislation/Guidelines

Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations
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### Revision & Authorisation History

Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Changes
1	Education Management Team	20110801	20111004	