22. Training and Assessment

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the commitment of SCM to providing high quality training services by using approaches to training and assessment that are of best practice standard to the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector within Australia.

SCM's aim and commitment is to provide job-ready graduates who are appropriately trained to the level expected by industry.

SCM, as well as each individual assessor, has responsibility to ensure that assessment:

- meets the requirements of the Training Package
- is consistent with the training and assessment strategy
- is valid, reliable, flexible and fair
- focuses on the application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace
- involves the collection of sufficient, valid, authentic and current evidence to enable a judgment to be made about whether competency has been attained
- confirms that workplace and regulatory requirements are met.

Further to this, 'Judgments made by assessors against the same competency standards must be consistent' across the organisation.

Scope

This policy applies to all training delivered by the organisation to students enrolled in full or part qualifications.

Policy

1. **Quality training**

   1.1 SCM will ensure that all training services provided are of the highest quality standard possible and are reflective of current industry trends and employer expectations. This is achieved by ensuring that:

       a) Training is delivered by appropriately qualified trainers who have extensive industry experience.

       b) All training products used and/or developed meet the requirements of the appropriate Training Package or Accredited Course.

       c) All training products used and/or developed are reviewed before use by the organisation's personnel for quality, accuracy and currency.

       d) All courses are developed in consultation with industry experts.

       e) Feedback is collected about all training products and services and the feedback is systematically collated, analysed and used to improve the quality of training and education services provided.

f) The individual learning and support needs of all students are identified upon entry into a course.

g) All trainers/assessors regularly participate in moderation and validation of the units and courses of which they deliver.

h) All units and courses are validated at least annually and outcomes of these exercises are used to improve training services and products.

i) All classes are delivered according to a documented session plan and supporting materials

2. Training philosophy

2.1 The training philosophy held by SCM is that students learn best by *doing* and gaining practical experience in real situations. Therefore, where possible, training practices will reflect and incorporate the real work experiences and examples from students and trainers, as well as the workplace environment that students can expect for the industry which they are learning about.

3. Qualifications of trainers and assessors

3.1 SCM ensures that all trainers and assessors hold the required qualifications and experience to deliver the qualifications, units of competency and courses with which they are involved. All trainers and assessors employed by the organisation will:

a) Have the required training and assessment competencies as determined by the National Skills Standards Council (NSSC)or its successors; and

b) Hold the relevant vocational competencies or demonstrated equivalence to the competencies at least to the level they deliver and/or assess; and

c) Maintain currency in industry skills directly related to the training and assessment they undertake; and

d) Continue to develop their Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector knowledge and skills as well as their industry and Trainer/Assessor competence.

4. Training

4.1 Training will be provided through a range of activities consistent with the principles of adult learning. These include:

- Group discussions
- Classroom Environments
- Self-paced learning
- Simulated Environment.

Assessment Tools

SCM has developed a range of comprehensive assessment tools which assessors are required to use to guide their assessment decisions as well as document the decision process and outcomes.

Each unit of competency being delivered within the qualification will have 2-3 forms of assessments. The vary in the following; written assessment, case studies, scenarios, demonstration, observation, project, portfolio

Assessors are required to record the assessment decisions made on the Assessment Record & Assessment cover sheets for each unit of competency within the qualification

5. Reassessment

5.1 Students may be re-assessed on their work up to three (3) times before a unit of competency will be deemed 'Not Yet Competent'. Trainers during this time may identify that further learning is required prior to reassessment

5.2 After the 3rd attempt, students may then re-enroll in the unit or make an appeal about the assessment decision by following the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

6. Delivery materials

6.1 Prior to the delivery of any new qualification, accredited course or unit of competency, SCM develops a comprehensive Training and Assessment Strategy in consultation with Industry and maintains its currency by updating it as required. The strategy outlines the training approaches and schedule to be used in the delivery of the qualification, course or unit of competency.

6.2 This is then provided to industry to obtain feedback on the choice of electives, assessment methods and resources required to deliver the qualification.

6.3 SCM will maintain master copies of student assessment and training resources for each unit or cluster of units for a minimum period of 6 months post completion of the related unit. Records will be maintained to ensure that information is available post completion

7. Feedback

7.1 SCM collects formal and informal feedback from students about the training processes used throughout its qualifications, courses and units of competency.

7.2 The feedback collected will be used to bring about improvements to the course delivery methods, tools, and processes used by SCM

Competency-based training and assessment

SCM provides competency based training and assessment. This means that students are assessed against industry determined competency standards that are set out in the related training package. These competency standards (known as units of competency) describe the discrete work tasks and knowledge, as well as the technical and employability skills that a person needs to perform a task effectively in the workplace.

Competency is assessed by comparing the prescribed units of competency with the student's workplace performance and their ability to apply their skills and knowledge in a range of routine and non-routine situations.

Dimensions of competency

The student's ability to perform in a range of situations forms part of assessment and these skills are referred to collectively as the dimensions of competency. The student must be able to demonstrate:

- Task skills – completing tasks to the required standard.
- Task Management skills – managing a number of different tasks at once to complete the whole job function.

- Contingency Management skills – appropriately responding to problems and unforeseen events when completing a task.

- Job/role Environment skills – appropriately dealing with the responsibility and expectations of the work environment such as working with others, interacting with clients and following procedures.

- Transfer skills – transferring the skills and knowledge to different contexts/environments.

Employability skills

Employability skills are those generic skills that are gained throughout work and life experiences that are required in most jobs by most of today's employers. A student must show they have these skills and can perform at a certain level as outlined in the competency standards. The eight (8) employability skills are:

- communication

- teamwork

- problem-solving

- initiative and enterprise

- planning and organising

- self-management

- learning

- Technology.

Trainers and Assessors will follow the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence
To ensure quality outcomes (including RPL), assessment should ensure:
Validity
There are five major types of validity: face, content, criterion (i.e. predictive and concurrent), construct and consequential.
In general, validity is concerned with the appropriateness of the inferences, use and consequences that result from the assessment. In simple terms, it is concerned with the extent to which an assessment decision about a candidate (e.g. competent/not yet competent, a grade and/or a mark), based on the evidence of performance by the candidate, is justified. It requires determining conditions that weaken the truthfulness of the decision, exploring alternative explanations for good or poor performance, and feeding them back into the assessment process to reduce errors when making inferences about competence.
Unlike reliability, validity is not simply a property of the assessment tool. As such, an assessment tool designed for a particular purpose and target group may not necessarily lead to valid interpretations of performance and assessment decisions if the tool was used for a different purpose and/or target group.
Reliability
Reliability refers to the degree to which evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and results in consistent assessment outcomes. Reliability requires the assessor to have the required competencies in assessment and relevant vocational competencies (or to assess in conjunction with someone who has the vocational competencies). It can only be achieved when assessors share a common interpretation of the assessment requirements of the unit(s) being assessed.
There are five types of reliability: internal consistency; parallel forms; split-half; inter-rater; and, intra rater. In general, 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.
Flexibility

To be flexible, assessment should reflect the candidate'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 candidate; and support continuous competency development.

Fairness

Fairness in assessment requires consideration of the individual candidate'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 candidate to ensure that the candidate is fully informed about, understands and 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.

Rules of Evidence
Authenticity

To accept evidence as authentic, an assessor must be assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the candidate's own work.

Currency

In assessment, currency relates to the age of the evidence presented by a candidate to demonstrate that they are still competent. Competency requires demonstration of current performance, so the evidence collected must be from either the present or the very recent past.

Sufficiency

This relates to the quality and quantity of evidence assessed. It requires collection of enough appropriate evidence to ensure that all aspects of competency have been satisfied and that competency can be demonstrated repeatedly. Supplementary sources of evidence may be necessary. The specific evidence requirements of each unit of competency provide advice on sufficiency.

Provision for Language, Literacy and Numeracy Support

If Language, Literacy or Numeracy needs are identified before commencement or throughout the course, students will be referred to the Student Support Officer or a suitably qualified staff member for assistance. In addition, it is the responsibility of all teaching and assessing staff to ensure that they are conscious of individual learning needs in class, and will adapt their delivery and assessment methods to suit the needs of their students. Additional assistance will be provided by the teacher where necessary to assist students in successfully completing their course.

COURSE SPECIFIC

A successful curriculum emphasises a wide range of teaching and learning strategies through;
• broadening the scope of the course to include international content and/or contact,
• approaches to teaching and learning which assist in the development of cross-cultural communication skills.

Good teaching practice	Suggested teaching and learning strategies for internationalisation
Communicate their own enthusiasm for the courses they teach and arouse students' curiosity, interest and creative endeavours in the course, including making adequate time available to advise individual students	Develop contacts in the professional area Be informed on international issues, standards and practices in the discipline/professional field. Refer to international examples and perspectives from the discipline or professional area
Actively engage students in order for them to learn and develop knowledge and skills relevant to the development of qualities	Set tasks, assignments and assessment activities which require students to move across languages and cultures and consider issues and problems from a variety of cultural perspectives. Involve students in:

	setting personal objectives compiling learning portfolios, negotiating contracts and deadlines, choosing learning partners, independent learning, reflecting on their own and others' experience, evaluating their progress towards achieving program objectives
make use of other expertise, where appropriate, to provide breadth of course content;	Establish and use international contacts and networks in the discipline/professional area (including making appropriate use of technology). Invite guest lecturers/presenters with international experience to address specific topics in the course
provide clear statements of their goals for teaching and learning and their expectations of students' engagement with teaching and learning and further, pay explicit attention to ways of ensuring that these expectations are transparent to students from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds;	Actively involve students in the assessment of their progress towards achieving outcomes
develop information literacy skills and a repertoire of learning strategies to equip students as life-long learners;	Include a range of group and individual projects in the assessment profile of the course so that students are required to work with others, consider the perspectives of others and compare them with their own perspectives. Set small group tasks which require the development of skills in group dynamics and the establishment of working relationships with fellow students from diverse backgrounds and cultures – e.g. tasks requiring analysis of media reports from international newspapers and/or professionals who have worked internationally. Conduct assessment tasks in simulated international professional environments
integrate activities such as fieldwork undertaken locally or internationally, industrial work, and workplace inquiry, where appropriate, into the curriculum and organise these activities to enhance student learning;	Model and discuss with students effective research and learning strategies and practices in the international arena in the professional area/discipline. Set tasks, assignments, activities which require students to analyse the cultural construction of knowledge and cross cultural-practices.
	Arrange fieldwork with local organisations working on international projects or national projects with an intercultural focus. Set problem-solving exercises and/or research assignments with an international or intercultural component. Arrange internships/placements in international or intercultural agencies.
model their commitment to ethical action and social responsibility as professionals and citizens and provide opportunities for students to develop these qualities;	Set assessment tasks requiring students to consider and discuss ethical issues and the value positions influencing alternative actions. Identify examples of the various value positions in

	multicultural Australia and their implications for the field or profession.
enrich student learning of an area of knowledge by drawing upon international, state-of-the-art developments in ideas and knowledge and their application; valuing international ideas and practices; adopting an intercultural view of learning which embraces the content and pedagogies of others.	Use a recently published, international textbook. Use and analyse international case studies. Refer students to international sources such as journals, conference proceedings and professional associations
encourage and enable students to evaluate their own and each others' work critically	Make assessment criteria related to cross-cultural communication skills explicit to students. Explain the relationship of assessment criteria to international standards where appropriate.
develop students' analytical and critical thinking skills by demonstrating these skills, and providing students with appropriate tasks to develop these skills;	Discuss the 'cultural foundations' of the thinking underlying arguments and answers to questions
assist in the development of students' communication skills by providing opportunities to practise and derive feedback on presentations in a range of oral, graphic and written formats;	Present information in ways which are inclusive of international students in the group – organise and present lectures using advance structuring, start with a brief reference to the previous one and end with a summary and a few comments on how the ideas presented will be developed in the next lecture (coherence); and provide reading lists to supplement lectures and prepare students for the next topic (extension). Use outlines and simple overheads (as visual backup, to support aural comprehension) and issue concise notes as visual aids
provide a range of assessment tasks which are challenging, relevant to course aims, meet equity criteria and facilitate student learning; provide clear outlines of criteria students must meet in order to successfully complete assessment tasks, before students engage in the task; provide clear outlines of assessment requirements such as weightings and timelines	Set tasks requiring students to compare local and international standards in the professional area/discipline. Relate assessment tasks and criteria to international standards as well as to program objectives
keep in mind principles of inclusivity and equity when designing and responding to assessment tasks, recognising that all assessment models have their limitations and capacity to disadvantage certain students and make every effort to minimise such disadvantage	Provide a range of assessment opportunities and allow students some choice in relation to the type of assessment tasks and activities they must complete

Reasonable Adjustment

Reasonable adjustment refers to measures or actions taken to provide a student with a disability [or a language or literacy disadvantage] the same educational opportunities as everyone else. To be reasonable, adjustments must be appropriate for that person, must not create undue hardship for a registered training organisation and must be allowable within rules defined by the Training Package or Course Curriculum.

Where necessary appropriate, adjustments will be made to methods of delivery and assessment (with approval of Compliance Manager) to suit the needs of the individual so that the student has a reasonable chance of success in their program.

Under the Disability Standards for Education 2005, education providers must make reasonable adjustments for people with disability to the maximum extent that those adjustments do not cause that provider unjustifiable hardship. While 'reasonable adjustment' and 'unjustifiable hardship' are different concepts and involve different considerations, they both seek to strike a balance between the interests of education providers and the interests of
students with and without disability.

An adjustment is any measure or action that a student requires because of their disability, and which has the effect of assisting the student to access and participate in education and training on the same basis as students without a disability. An adjustment is reasonable if it achieves this purpose while taking into account factors such as the nature of the student's disability, the views of the student, the potential effect of the adjustment on the student and others who might be affected, and the costs and benefits of making the adjustment.

	Action	Details
1.1	Making a Reasonable Adjustment	Reasonable adjustment refers to measures or actions taken to provide a student with a disability the same educational opportunities as everyone else. To be reasonable, adjustments must be appropriate for that person, must not create undue hardship for a registered training organisation and must be allowable within rules defined by the Training Package.
		Engaging in reasonable adjustment activities, such as assisting students to identify their learning needs or offering a wide variety of course options and delivery modes, exemplifies good teaching practice.
1.2	Why is reasonable adjustment so important?	A person with a disability has the same right to study at any educational institution as any other student. The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* makes it unlawful for an education service provider to discriminate against someone because the person has a disability. The *Disability Standards for Education 2005* provide greater clarity on areas where reasonable adjustment can be applied.
		If a person with a disability meets the necessary course entry requirements of a registered training organisation, he or she should have just as much chance to study there as anyone else.
		Under the Australian Quality Training Framework *Essential Standards for Registration*, a registered training organisation is required to identify and comply with relevant Australian Government, state or territory laws on issues such as discrimination.
		People with a disability who believe an education service provider has not made reasonable adjustment to respond to their needs can complain formally to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission or their state or territory anti-discrimination commission.
1.3	Determining reasonable	Participants in vocational education and training could have a range of disabilities such as:

	Action	Details
	adjustment.	• learning disabilities • sensory impairments (including vision, hearing or speech impairment) • physical or mobility impairments • psychological or psychiatric impairments (or mental illness) • disabilities, such as cerebral palsy or head injury, which may result in multiple impairments • medical conditions such as HIV or AIDS, cancer, or chronic fatigue syndrome (which may result in multiple disabilities) • intellectual disabilities. In most situations the person with the disability will be able to tell educators what adjustments he or she needs to be able to study. If necessary, educators should also seek advice from government agencies or support organisations to determine what needs to be done to accommodate an individual's needs. Reasonable adjustment activities could involve: • modifying or providing equipment • changing assessment procedures • changing course delivery • modifying premises. The determination of 'reasonableness' requires judgement that must take into account the impact on the organisation 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.
1.4	What if changes are too difficult for educators?	The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* does not require changes to be made if they will cause major difficulties or unreasonable costs to a person or organisation. This is called 'unjustifiable hardship'. Before claiming that adjustments are unjustified, educators need to consider thoroughly how an adjustment might be made, discuss this directly with the person involved and consult relevant sources for advice.
1.5	Planning to provide for all.	Registered training organisations need to plan how they can cater for students with disabilities and support and develop the training skills of staff to cater for a broader range of students. Registered training organisations have the option of lodging an action plan outlining how they will ensure that their services do not unfairly discriminate with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. Preparing and lodging an action plan not only helps businesses to identify any discriminatory practices but also demonstrates forethought and consideration.

Assessment records

SCM will retain student records of attainment of units of competency and qualifications for a period of no less than thirty (30) years. The following mechanisms are in place to ensure the security and integrity of all assessment records for up to 6 months after the student ceases enrolment.

a) An overall assessment record sheet is kept for each unit of competency or cluster of units, for each student, to show achievement against each assessment task. This record is signed by both assessor and student as it is updated.

b) Each student's academic file has a compliance checklist which is continuously updated by the trainer/assessor with details of the students' outcome.

c) Students will be advised of all assessment outcomes in a written format as they are achieved. Students can request a printed statement of attainment at any time and at no cost