

The logo for the Australian Quality Training Framework, featuring a white circle with a horizontal line through it and a small circle at the top right.

Australian
Quality
Training
Framework

part

learning and assessment strategies

the how to kit

This **How to Kit** steps RTOs through the process of developing, documenting and reviewing learning and assessment strategies, a requirement of the *AQTF Standards for Registered Training Organisations*. Each step includes links to **Part 2: Resource Guide** and other relevant sources of information.

engaging enterprises/industry in
developing and validating learning
and assessment strategies



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This *How to Kit* is an optional resource that provides practitioners in the VET sector with resources to support aspects of Standard 9 of the Australian Quality Training Framework *Standards for Registered Training Organisations*. It does not carry the authority of the Standard and should not be read as definitive or prescriptive. Its intention is to be useful and to encourage consistent practice in response to the Standard. However, its status as advice only should be clearly understood.

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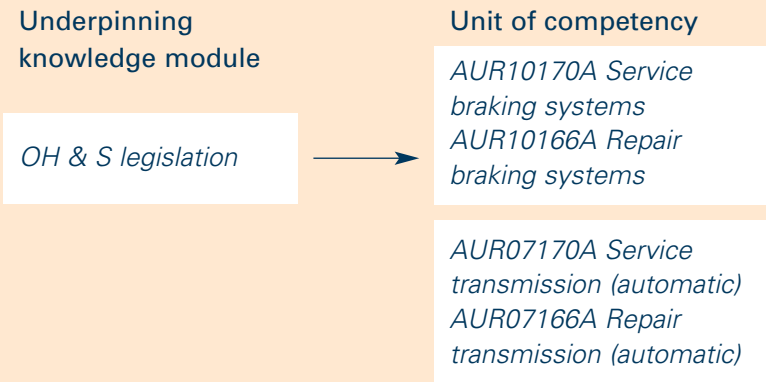
1. learning and assessment strategies

Structuring a training program

- Many RTOs choose to cluster units of competency for delivery and assessment purposes. As shown in Figure 1, they may be clustered around key work activities or key areas of underpinning knowledge and related work activities.
- Figure 1 shows a range of possible approaches and draws a clear distinction between the unit of competency as outcomes and the strategies that can be used to achieve these outcomes.

Figure 1: Alternative ways of structuring a training program

Training program structure	Example								
<p>Independent unit</p> <p>Suitable for: <i>assessment only pathways to recognise skills of existing workers.</i></p>	<p>Each unit of competency is delivered and assessed independently.</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="592 920 1358 1055"> <tr> <td data-bbox="592 920 887 958">Units of competency</td> <td data-bbox="1066 920 1358 958">Training program</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="592 965 887 1055"> <div data-bbox="592 965 887 1055" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>AUM8011A Provide customer service</i> </div> </td> <td data-bbox="1066 965 1358 1055"> <div data-bbox="1066 965 1358 1055" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>AUM8011A Provide customer service</i> </div> </td> </tr> </table>		Units of competency	Training program	<div data-bbox="592 965 887 1055" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>AUM8011A Provide customer service</i> </div>	<div data-bbox="1066 965 1358 1055" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>AUM8011A Provide customer service</i> </div>			
Units of competency	Training program								
<div data-bbox="592 965 887 1055" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>AUM8011A Provide customer service</i> </div>	<div data-bbox="1066 965 1358 1055" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>AUM8011A Provide customer service</i> </div>								
<p>Work activity cluster</p> <p>Suitable for: <i>work-based training.</i></p>	<p>Units of competency are clustered to correspond with specific work activities.</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="592 1189 1358 1697"> <tr> <td data-bbox="592 1189 887 1227">Units of competency</td> <td data-bbox="1066 1189 1358 1227">Training program cluster</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="592 1234 887 1323"> <div data-bbox="592 1234 887 1323" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>TDTA1297A Pick and process order</i> </div> </td> <td data-bbox="1066 1391 1358 1480" rowspan="4" style="vertical-align: middle;"> <div data-bbox="1066 1391 1358 1480" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>Processing customer orders</i> </div> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="592 1330 887 1420"> <div data-bbox="592 1330 887 1420" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>TDTA1197A Package goods</i> </div> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="592 1426 887 1561"> <div data-bbox="592 1426 887 1561" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>TDTE597A Carry out workplace calculations</i> </div> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="592 1568 887 1697"> <div data-bbox="592 1568 887 1697" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>TDT1297B Apply customer service skills</i> </div> </td> </tr> </table>		Units of competency	Training program cluster	<div data-bbox="592 1234 887 1323" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>TDTA1297A Pick and process order</i> </div>	<div data-bbox="1066 1391 1358 1480" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>Processing customer orders</i> </div>	<div data-bbox="592 1330 887 1420" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>TDTA1197A Package goods</i> </div>	<div data-bbox="592 1426 887 1561" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>TDTE597A Carry out workplace calculations</i> </div>	<div data-bbox="592 1568 887 1697" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>TDT1297B Apply customer service skills</i> </div>
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<div data-bbox="592 1568 887 1697" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <i>TDT1297B Apply customer service skills</i> </div>									

Training program structure	Example
<p>Project cluster</p> <p>Suitable for: <i>a diverse range of skill development, i.e., Indigenous community projects, regional community projects, complex project, i.e., putting on a fete.</i></p>	<p>Units of competency are selected and clustered to reflect the learning and work activities that take place within a specific project. For example, a community provider may establish a project to build or restore a local facility such as developing a wetlands area. A training program may be established for the people associated with various aspects of the project, covering administration, construction and community relations. It could also include general work related and literacy/numeracy training, depending on the needs of the client group.</p> 
<p>Common knowledge cluster</p> <p>Suitable for: <i>using underpinning knowledge, i.e., solving a maths problem, fluid flow.</i></p>	<p>Key areas of underpinning knowledge are identified as being common to a number of units of competency, for example OH&S legislation and regulations. This material is delivered and assessed as separate study. The application of this knowledge is assessed in other components of the program which focus on specific work activities. In this case, participants must successfully complete both components of the program to be deemed to be competent in OH&S.</p> 

Documenting delivery and assessment strategies

An RTO may prepare a written statement setting out its delivery and assessment strategies. Figures 2 and 3 are just two examples of different approaches to documenting the strategy. Figure 3 is an example of a strategy for a qualification, including units of competency selected, clients, duration, organisation, linking program to outcomes, delivery modes, evidence gathering techniques, schedule, staffing and infrastructure. Refer to Appendix 5 of the Resource Guide for a blank template provided in Figure 3.

Figure 2: Sample delivery and assessment strategy – Option 1

Units or groups of units of competency	Target group of learners	Staff to be involved	Delivery modes	Training resources	Assessment methods/ evidence gathering
Notes:					
Units represent outcomes. Where the strategy for achieving the outcomes requires grouping units, indicate this and treat them together.	Indicate any special requirements of the group or particular individuals, such as reasonable adjustment.	If staff are not fully qualified for the qualification, indicate the staff person supervising.	On/off the job, projects, distance, online etc.	Learner guides, notes, log books, videos, project guides, assessment resources etc.	Evidence plan, observation, oral questions, written tests, projects, demonstration, portfolio, RPL.

Duration of program	Schedule of sessions	Locations of sessions	Validation approaches	Infrastructure requirements
Notes:				
Actual planned duration of formal activities (not nominal hours).	Plan of face-to-face contact, schedule of online contact etc.	In the case of online, indicate method of accessing site.	Select from benchmarking, networks, field testing, lead assessor, independent validator. See Fig. 10.	Facilities and equipment suitable to delivery method and evidence-gathering approaches.

Figure 3: Sample delivery and assessment strategy — Option 2

Name of RTO	ABC Training		Page 1 of 4
Delivery period	1.1.2002 — 31.12.2005		
Code and title of qualification	TDT20197 — Certificate II in Transport and Distribution (Warehousing)		
Units of competency	Code	Title	Core/Elective
	TDTD197A	Shift materials safely	
	TDTD297A	Use manual handling equipment	
	TDTE397A	Participate in workplace communication	
	TDTE597A	Carry out workplace calculations	
	TDTF197A	Follow OH & S procedures	
	TDTF297A	Conduct housekeeping activities	
	TDTG197A	Work effectively with others	
	TDTA11GA	Package goods	
	TDTA1297A	Pick and process order	
	TDTA1397A	Receive goods	
	TDTA1497A	Use product knowledge to complete work operations	
	TDTA2097A	Replenish stock	
	TDTA2197A	Dispatch stock	
	TDTA2297A	Participate in stocktakes	
	TDTI297A	Apply customer service skills	
TDTD10A97	Operate a forklift		
Client(s)	<p>The key clients for this qualification are potential new entrants to the industry who require a broad orientation to the industry. This group may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ school leavers ■ unemployed workers ■ recent migrants ■ those wishing to enter a different industry sector 		
Delivery and assessment arrangements	<p>Duration</p> <p>The program is delivered over a period of twenty weeks.</p>		
	<p>Organisation</p> <p>The 16 units of competency in the qualification have been organised into an off-the-job training program comprising three ‘general work skills’ modules and four ‘industry specific skills’ modules.</p> <p>The program is organised to provide candidates with background information on general skills such as OH&S in the ‘general work skills’ modules and the opportunity to apply these skills in the ‘applied industry skills’ modules.</p> <p>For example, TDTF197A Follow OH&S Procedures appears in both the ‘general work skills’ module — occupational health and safety, and the ‘applied industry skills’ module — forklift operations.</p> <p>Only when the candidate successfully completes both modules is he or she deemed competent in the unit of competency TDTF197A Follow OH&S procedures.</p> <p>The alignment between the units of competency and the training program appears on the following page.</p>		

Name of RTO	ABC Training		Page 2 of 4					
Delivery and assessment arrangements (continued)	Alignment with units of competency							
		Program Area	Unit(s) of Competency					
	General work skills	Occupational health and safety	TDTF197A					
		Workplace communications and calculations	TDTE397A TDTE597A TDTI297A TDTG197A					
		Materials handling	TDTD297A TDTD197A					
	Applied industry skills	Processing orders	TDTA11GA TDTA1497A TDTA1397 TDTA1297A TDTI297A					
		Handling stock	TDTA2097A TDTA2197A					
		Stocktaking	TDTF297A TDTA2297A TDTE397A TDTG197A TDTE597A					
Forklift operations		TDTD10A97 TDTF197A						
Delivery modes								
<p>This program is delivered entirely off-the-job at the organisation's training centre. It combines face-to-face trainer led theory classes and practical sessions involving small group and individual activities.</p> <p>For each module, candidates are provided with training manuals, which include all materials used in the training sessions, assessment materials (other than tests) and reference materials.</p> <p>Evidence-gathering techniques — the numbers on this chart refer to the documented evidence gathering techniques used in each module.</p>								
Program area	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Occupational health and safety					1		2	
Workplace communications and calculations			3	4				
Materials handling	5							
Processing orders	6	7						
Stocktaking	8							9
Handling stock	10					11		
Forklift operations	12						13	
KEY	A Demonstration	C Interview	E Role play	G Written test				
	B Questioning	D Scenario — problem solving	F Case study — fault finding	H Critical incident report				

Schedule**Delivery and assessment arrangements (continued)**

The training program is conducted over a twenty-week period. The shaded areas show the weeks when particular modules are delivered.

The numbers refer to scheduled evidence gathering techniques. These numbers indicate:

- when the evidence gathering technique will take place, i.e., evidence gathering technique 3 occurs in week 3
- the module which is being assessed, e.g., evidence gathering technique 3 is focused on workplace communications and calculations and
- the type of evidence gathering technique, e.g., the table of evidence gathering techniques shows technique 3 is an interview.

Week	Program structure		
1	Workplace communications and calculations		OH&S 1
2		Materials handling	2
3	3		
4		5	Handling stock
6			
7			10
8		Processing orders	11
9	4		
10			
11		6	
12	Stocktaking		
13			
14		7	Forklift operations
15	8		
16			
17	9		
18			12
19			
20			13

Name of RTO	ABC Training				Page 4 of 4	
Delivery and assessment staff	Program area	Staff	Delivery/ Assessment	Competencies of staff		
				Technical	Assess	
	Occupational health and safety	Julie Smith Tom Jones	D&A D&A	X X	X X	
	Workplace communications and calculations	Julie Smith Toni Moon	D&A D&A	X X	X X	
	Materials handling	Tom Jones	D&A	X	X	
	Processing orders	Murray Rogers	D&A	X	X	
	Stocktaking	Gordon Blake	D&A	X	X	
	Handling stock	George Seen	D&A	X	X	
	Forklift operations	George Seen	D&A	X	X	
Assessment validation process	<p>The processes used to validate assessment in this program are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program manager meets with representatives from enterprise clients on an annual basis to check the performance standards required in the program are consistent with industry practice. Program manager convenes annual meeting of assessment panel comprising subject specialists in OH&S, communications and warehousing and one enterprise representative, to review evidence-gathering tools. External facilitator conducts two moderation meetings attended by all assessors. The first meeting, held in week two of the program, confirms the evidence gathering techniques and the required standards of performance. The second meeting, held one week after the program, focuses on reviewing assessment tools and decisions. 					
Infrastructure requirements (A tick indicates the RTO has the required infrastructure.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All staff (including full time, part time and casual staff) involved in the delivery and assessment of this qualification, have direct access to the current version of the relevant Training Package, including the appropriate units of competency, assessment guidelines and qualification structure. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All staff (including full time, part time and casual staff) involved in delivering the program have access to trainer, assessor and candidate support materials relevant to their areas of delivery and assessment. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All assessors have access to print and electronic copies of the assessment tools used in this program. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The RTO has access to staff and training/assessment resources to meet the requirements of candidates with special needs and has an assessment process that incorporates reasonable adjustment procedures. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The RTO has reviewed the equipment and facility requirements for each unit of competency in the qualification and guarantees it has access to the plant and equipment needed to implement the program. 					
Pathways	All candidates who undertake the Certificate II in Transport and Distribution (Warehousing) are provided with advice on employment and training options. As the program includes two additional units of competency at Certificate II, these may be counted towards the Certificate III in Transport and Distribution under the qualification packaging rules in the current version of the Transport and Distribution Training Package.					
Program manager's endorsement:						
Date:						

2. consulting with enterprises/industry

Alternative approaches to consultation

There is a range of approaches an RTO can use when consulting with enterprises/industry, as illustrated in Figure 4. The approaches selected reflect both the RTO's and the enterprise's commitment to engagement and their level of involvement in decision making. A 'joint decision making' approach will involve a higher level of enterprise involvement in decision making and participation in the consultation process. Figure 4 provides six different (but equally valid) ways of approaching consultation with enterprises.

Figure 4: Alternative approaches to consultation with enterprises

<i>High level of involvement of enterprises in decision making</i>		<i>High level of enterprise participation, ownership</i>
	Joint decision making	Decisions are made by the RTO but reflect the views and solutions negotiated and agreed with enterprises.
	Partnership in shaping decisions	The RTO seeks to build a genuine sense of shared responsibility with enterprises. It creates opportunities for sharing and exchanging diverse views and incorporates them into the development of assessment strategies.
	Participation	The RTO creates opportunities for enterprises to formulate group views and takes these into account when developing assessment strategies.
	Proactive consultation	The RTO segments its enterprise clients and builds contacts with networks of interested people. It actively seeks the views of these groups in response to specific questions and promotes discussion with these groups about their concerns and those of their constituencies.
	Passive consultation	The RTO collects group and individual input in response to surveys, notices and invitations. It records the responses and uses them to inform the development of assessment strategies.
	Information sharing	The RTO ensures clear, accurate and comprehensive information about its assessment strategies is made publicly available and attempts to collect information on the needs, interests and concerns of enterprise and industry parties. No significant discussion is involved.
<i>RTO makes the decisions with low or minimal enterprise/industry input</i>	<i>Adapted from a model devised by the Australian and New Zealand Food Authority</i>	<i>Low level of enterprise participation, ownership</i>

Ideas for engaging enterprises

An RTO seeking to engage enterprises recognises the barriers to engagement and looks for ways to lessen their impact. Some of these strategies are highlighted in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Ideas for engaging enterprises

Barriers to engagement	Possible RTO responses
Human, financial and time constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ use short, concise consultation strategies ■ conduct purposeful consultation focusing on critical enterprise issues ■ provide support services
Enterprise capacity to value add	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide evidence of the value of enterprise input on your delivery and assessment ■ identify areas in which the enterprise has capacity to add value
Lack of confidence in formal delivery and assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ use credible intermediaries ■ provide evidence of the value formal training can offer to enterprise performance
Mistrust of external providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ use informal and/or formal networks for referral ■ provide honest, realistic estimates of time required for consultation
Lack of focus on business concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ structure consultations around key enterprise issues ■ distinguish between macro issues, such as a broad approach to delivery/assessment, and micro issues of program level
Inflexible consultation strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ conduct consultations at times to suit enterprises ■ use direct and indirect consultation strategies ■ use face-to-face consultations conducted on site
Limited business networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ use intermediaries to target enterprises and individuals ■ target key influences such as friends, suppliers and customers
Technical and jargon laden materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ use plain English documentation ■ provide relevant summaries of key documents ■ provide information on key aspects of the training system

Key industry stakeholders

There are many different industry stakeholders an RTO may wish to engage when developing delivery and assessment strategies. Some of these key industry groups and how they can be engaged are identified in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Key industry stakeholders

Stakeholder	Reasons for engagement
Industry training advisory bodies	The national industry training advisory bodies (ITABs) are the best sources of advice on interpreting Training Package assessment guidelines. The ANTA website lists the national ITABs and their contact details. Another source of information may be the State and Territory industry training advisory bodies. They also tend to have links with local enterprises. Their contact details can be found on State and Territory training authorities websites.
Broad industry associations	Employers are represented by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) — a good source of advice and information on broad employer requirements. There are State, Territory and local chambers representing employers, including many small employers ■ Australian Industry Group (AIG) — another broadly based employer organisation with a strong membership in trade areas and ■ Business Council of Australia (BCA) — mostly represents very large employers. BCA has regular input into national discussions on delivery and assessment, but detailed advice on RTO assessment and delivery strategies would be better sourced directly through member enterprises. <p>In general, these groups should be contacted for advice on broad and/or cross industry qualifications falling into any specific industry category, including many business services qualifications.</p>
Specific industry associations	Virtually all industry sectors have specialist associations such as the Master Builders Association, representing the interests of employers. <p>RTOs developing delivery and assessment strategies in specific industry sectors should seek input from the relevant group. However many industry associations are also RTOs and may represent competition or perceive some conflict of interest in offering advice on RTO delivery and assessment strategies. This should not deter RTOs from approaching these organisations, as they have a clear role to represent the interests and views of their members.</p>
Trade unions	Trade unions have a direct interest in RTO delivery and assessment strategies as they may impact on the standing and progression of their members and industrial agreements. RTOs should seek input from the relevant trade union, at site or State level, regarding the development of delivery and assessment strategies.

Stakeholder	Reasons for engagement
Professional associations	Professional associations represent the interests of practitioners and often have an interest in controlling entry into their membership. Thus they are often consulted by RTOs on delivery and assessment strategies.
Regulatory agencies	<p>Where qualifications are subject to government regulation, consultation with the relevant regulatory body is essential. This may include the Australian Securities and Investments Commission and the Australian Communications Authority.</p> <p>Regulatory bodies may have legislative powers and be administered by government agencies or they may be industry self-regulators. Many regulators now express their requirements in terms of competencies. No RTO operating in a regulated area should plan assessments without close consultation with the appropriate body. The preferred situation is to ensure that competency assessment is aligned with the regulatory requirements in the industry.</p>
Government departments and agencies	<p>Apart from their regulatory function, many Commonwealth, State and local government agencies are industries and employers in their own right.</p> <p>The Commonwealth Public Service for example is a significant employer. However many other departments contract out services while maintaining a close interest in the standards of the services delivered to the public. Other government departments have responsibility for promoting industries and run numerous relevant programs. The easiest way to review the activities of these organisations is to browse their websites.</p>
Research and other sources of information on enterprises/industry	<p>While particular enterprises are the primary source of information about their own immediate needs, RTOs developing assessment strategies may need to consider the outcomes of research into industry development and trends.</p> <p>A leading source of information on research in VET is the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER).</p> <p>There are many industry specific research organisations which often service new and emerging industries. Good sources of information on these sectors include the National Office on the Information Economy and Biotechnology Australia.</p>
Community based organisations	<p>Community organisations (local organisations and representative peak bodies) have a direct and legitimate interest in their fields.</p> <p>If the qualification to be assessed deals with services to people with intellectual disabilities, it would be highly appropriate to consult the National Council for Intellectual Disability about appropriate assessment strategies. Community organisations of course, are also employers in their own right.</p>

3. recording evidence

Evidence of consultation

Figure 7 is a template to assist RTOs to effectively record and organise evidence gathered from many different sources during consultations with enterprises/industries. It may also act as a prompt on the range of activities that may constitute evidence of consultation. Note: Use only those components that are applicable.

Figure 7: Evidence of consultation template

Department		Qualification/s		
Sources of industry information used: <i>[delete those not applicable]</i>				
Staff or contracted personnel currently employed in industry			Yes	No
Engaged in design of assessment approaches?	Yes	No	Experience of staff currently employed in the industry used in the following ways: For details see the following sources: (eg address on server of minutes of a planning session held with casual staff)	
Numbers of staff involved				
Engaged in design of learning programs?	Yes	No		
Numbers of staff involved				
Allied industry experts available for particular purposes [projects]			Yes	No
Industry advice or expertise sought	Yes	No	Experience of allied industry experts used in the following ways: For details see the following sources: (eg location of report that acknowledges the input of particular industry experts)	
Engaged in design of learning programs	Yes	No		
Engaged in design of assessment approaches	Yes	No		
Numbers of staff involved				
Staff visits to industry sites			Yes	No
Industry advice/expertise sought	Yes	No	Input from enterprise personnel sought by visiting staff and used: For details see the following sources: (eg diaries of staff members conducting industry visits)	
Engaged in design of learning programs	Yes	No		
Engaged in design of assessment approaches	Yes	No		
Numbers of staff involved				

Partnerships with enterprises/industry associations for particular purposes [eg projects]			Yes	No
Industry advice/expertise sought	Yes	No	Names of projects involving partnerships with particular enterprises and/or industry associations: For details see the following sources: (eg project files server location)	
Engaged in design of learning programs	Yes	No		
Engaged in design of assessment approaches	Yes	No		
Numbers of staff involved				

Response[s] to enterprise requested for advice/service			Yes	No
Request received	Yes	No	The following enterprises had requests for advice or service: For details see the following sources: (eg log of phone inquiries)	
Need/problem identified	Yes	No		
Solution developed in consultation with enterprise[s]	Yes	No		
Numbers of staff involved				

Industry representatives on governing bodies			Yes	No
Approval of governing body sought	Yes	No	The following enterprises/industry associations represented: For details see the following sources: (eg file location of minutes and board papers, including membership record)	
Engaged in design of learning programs	Yes	No		
Engaged in design of assessment approaches	Yes	No		
Numbers of meetings where relevant issues discussed				

Industry representatives on course consultative committees			Yes	No
Approval of consultative committee sought	Yes	No	The following enterprises/industry associations represented: For details see the following sources: (eg file location of minutes and papers including attendance record)	
Engaged in design of learning programs	Yes	No		
Engaged in design of assessment approaches	Yes	No		
Numbers of meetings where relevant issues discussed				

Participation in other formal industry networks			Yes	No
Feedback sought relevant to assessment strategies	Yes	No	Participation in the following forums: For details see the following sources: (eg email folder containing invitations to forums and their programs)	
Feedback received relevant to assessment strategies	Yes	No		
Adjustments to delivery/ assessment activities	Yes	No		
Numbers of forums participating				

Participation in informal industry networks			Yes	No
Feedback sought relevant to assessment strategies	Yes	No	Participation in the following informal network activities: For details see the following sources: (eg folder of letters of thanks from industry people)	
Feedback received relevant to assessment strategies	Yes	No		
Adjustments to delivery/ assessment activities	Yes	No		
Numbers of informal networks operating				

Industry views canvassed in surveys			Yes	No
Questions on delivery/ assessment strategies included	Yes	No	The following surveys conducted: For details see the following sources: (eg published survey results in annual report)	
Useful information generated from this source	Yes	No		
Adjustments to delivery/ assessment activities	Yes	No		
Numbers of enterprises responding				

Complaints/appeals recorded and acted upon			Yes	No
Issues in complaints/appeals identified	Yes	No	Complaints or appeals on the following issues: For details see the following sources: (eg log of complaints kept by assigned person)	
Useful feedback gained	Yes	No		
Incorporated into delivery/ assessment approaches	Yes	No		
Numbers of incidents recorded				

Industry informed about delivery and/or assessment strategies			Yes	No
Information distributed through various media	Yes	No	Types of media used to distribute information on delivery/assessment strategies to enterprises/industry: For details see the following sources: (eg available locations of current course directories)	
Included opportunity for feedback	Yes	No		
Useful feedback received and used	Yes	No		
Numbers of responses from industry sources				

Other sources of enterprises/industry input and advice			Yes	No
Other sources of enterprise/industry information	Yes	No	Outline of other sources used: For details see the following sources:	
Feedback gained on delivery/assessment strategies	Yes	No		
Information used to amend approaches	Yes	No		
Numbers of such sources utilised				

4. validation approaches

Validation approaches and validation activities template

Figure 8 is a template to assist RTOs to plan and record their approach to validating assessment strategies.

Figure 8: Planning proforma for validation approaches

Validation approach	Description of activities	Timing	Responsibility	Resources required	Record keeping requirements
1.					
2.					
3.					

Detail the validation activities you will be using.	Describe how you will evaluate each of the validation activities.	Indicate the dates the review will occur.	Name the people responsible for evaluating the validation activities.	Describe the resources these activities will need. For example, people, time, physical resources.	Identify the records to be kept from the review and what form these will take. For example, recording sheets, feedback sheets, etc.
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Adapted from: *Guide 7: Assessment using partnership arrangements* (pp. 56, 58 and 60) and *Guide 10: Quality assurance guide for assessment* (Appendix A [1], page 64)

Suggested approaches to validating components of the assessment strategy

Figure 9 provides an alphabetic list of the validation approaches described in the Training Package Assessment Guides and identifies which approaches are most suited to validating the different components of RTO assessment strategies.

Figure 9: Suggested approaches to validating components of the assessment strategy

Approaches to validation	Components of the assessment strategy to be validated			
	Assessment process	Assessment tools	Evidence	Assessment judgement
	A	B	C	D
Assessor networks	X	X	X	X
Assessment panel	X	X	X	X
Assessment tool bank		X		
Bank of assessment exemplars and benchmarks		X	X	
Benchmarking	X	X		X
Client satisfaction surveys	X			X
Field testing, trialing and piloting		X		
Independent validator	X	X	X	X
Information for assessors	X		X	X
Internal audits	X	X	X	X
Lead assessor	X	X	X	X
Mechanisms to support professional judgement			X	X
Mentoring	X		X	X
Moderation meetings	X	X	X	X
Peer review	X	X	X	X
Professional development	X	X	X	X
RTO self-assessment	X	X	X	X
Sampling		X	X	X
Specialist assessor		X	X	X
Team assessment	X		X	X

Adapted from: *Guide 7: Assessment using partnership arrangements* (page 31) and *Guide 10: Quality assurance guide for assessment* (page 10)

Description of validation approaches

Figure 10 briefly describes each of the suggested validation approaches. It draws on and makes links to other Training Package Assessment Guides, especially Guides 8, 9, 10.

Figure 10: Description of validation approaches and sources of evidence

Approach	Description	Links
Assessment panel	<p>Assessment panels have a variety of functions, depending on the needs of the organisation/s and the assessment process, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ reviewing assessment processes ■ interpreting and promoting a common understanding of units of competency and Training Package requirements ■ determining reasonable adjustment ■ critiquing and signing off assessment tools ■ developing benchmarks or assessment exemplars ■ overseeing professional development for assessors and ■ providing a network of mentors and coaches for assessors. <p>The focus of the assessment panel may be on higher level strategic and policy matters or more practical and operational issues. Wherever possible, panels should include relevant industry representatives such as employers, unions, industry organisations and industry regulators.</p>	<p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assessment panel p.20
Assessment tool bank	<p>An assessment tool bank is a collection of evidence-gathering tools and techniques developed and shared among a group of assessors and/or RTOs. The establishment of an assessment tool bank:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ supports development of a shared understanding of the Training Package and in particular the specific units of competency being assessed ■ encourages collective development of assessment tools which will tend to produce higher quality assessment products ■ facilitates the critiquing and validation of assessment tools ■ ensures that a quality control procedure is applied to the selection of tools for inclusion in the bank and ■ reduces cost, minimises waste and avoids duplication of effort in the development of tools. 	<p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assessment tool bank p.54 <p><i>Guide 10: Quality assurance guide for assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Appendix F contains a peer review checklist for assessment tools.

Approach	Description	Links
Assessor networks	<p>Assessor networks are groups of individuals involved in VET assessment who come together to develop and extend their professional practice. They vary in focus, size, structure and level of organisation. Assessor networks contribute to consistency by providing a forum in which assessors can build a shared understanding of Training Packages, as well as the assessment requirements of the AQTF.</p> <p>When assessor networks are focused on a specific industry sector, Training Package or qualification, they offer an environment where assessors can validate assessment practices. This may be achieved through assessors exchanging ideas about the meaning of specific competency standards, the evidence requirements, the ways of gathering evidence and the basis on which assessment decisions are made.</p>	<p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assessor networks p.44 ■ Mentoring for assessors p.86 <p><i>Guide 9: Networking for assessors</i></p>
Bank of assessment exemplars and benchmarks	<p>The development of a bank of assessment exemplars enables assessors to access samples of candidates work considered to be exemplary.</p> <p>The bank may be developed with the input of industry groups, professional associations or industry regulators. The assessment exemplar bank may be collaborative and informal in nature, or highly structured and commercial.</p>	<p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bank of assessment exemplars and tools p.57
Benchmarking	<p>Benchmarking involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ making comparisons with other organisations to identify or create areas for improvement and ■ identifying superior performance and/or practices and adopting them within a specific RTO. <p>The two major forms of benchmarking include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ performance benchmarking — comparing performance between a number of organisations against a number of agreed measures and ■ process benchmarking — comparing procedures and processes, as well as performance. 	<p><i>Guide 10: Quality assurance guide for assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Benchmarking p.26

Approach	Description	Links
Client satisfaction survey	<p>A client satisfaction survey involves gathering information from candidates, employers and other end users of the assessment process. Information may relate to any aspect of the assessment process, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ assessment planning ■ provision of information to candidates ■ reasonable adjustment ■ evidence collection ■ feedback to candidates ■ assessment decision making ■ reassessment and appeal processes ■ provision of information on pathways following the assessment process and ■ participation in assessment review processes. 	<p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Candidate satisfaction study p.76
Field testing, trialing and piloting	<p>Field testing, trialing or piloting of evidence gathering tools and related materials should be a part of the validation process. Assessors determine if the tools are appropriate for the context, gather quality evidence and meet the needs of the enterprise/industry and the candidates. Feedback should be used to refine and enhance the tools. Trialing may also be useful for other components of the assessment strategy.</p>	<p><i>Guide 10: Quality assurance guide for assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Appendix F contains a peer review checklist for assessment tools.
Lead assessor	<p>The lead assessor has responsibility for developing, managing and monitoring strategies to ensure consistency in assessment. The lead assessor may be the direct line manager of the assessors or may occupy a position with professional responsibility for fostering consistency in the assessment process and outcomes, but without direct supervisory responsibility for the assessors.</p> <p>The appointment of a lead assessor provides a clear organisational focus on the importance of achieving consistency in assessment. The lead assessor has responsibility for all validation processes, ensuring the development of a shared understanding and the maintenance of consistent practice by the assessors.</p>	<p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lead assessor p.26

Approach	Description	Links
Independent validator	<p>An independent validator reviews and validates assessments performed within or across RTOs. Validating assessment tools may also be part of the role.</p> <p>The appointment of an independent validator ensures the impartiality and fairness of the assessment process. The validator must be independent from the organisation or unit delivering the training and/or assessment service.</p> <p>Ideally, the validator should have high level assessment and technical skills, industry knowledge and experience in conducting assessments within the relevant industry.</p>	<p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Independent validator p.31 includes a sample task description.
Information for assessors	<p>Information for assessors is material produced by RTOs to support quality assessment practice. It commonly covers the assessment policy and assessment procedures and guidelines for various components of assessment. Part of the information may take the form of a code of practice for assessors and may be governed by the State or Territory registering body requirements. Information to assessors can be in print or electronic form.</p> <p>Providing specific information to assessors is a major quality assurance mechanism and an effective communication strategy between the organisation and the assessor. In particular, assessor information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ develops mutual understanding of RTO policy and procedures and ■ enhances consistency and assessment practice. 	<p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Guidelines to interpret units of competency p.60 ■ Guidelines on the collection and judgement of evidence p.63 ■ Guidelines for conducting assessments p.80 <p><i>Guide 10: Quality assurance guide for assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Guidelines for gathering third party evidence p.32 ■ Simulated assessment guidelines p.54

Approach	Description	Links
<p>Internal audits (see also <i>RTO self-assessment</i>)</p>	<p>Audit means a systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining evidence to determine whether the activities and related outcomes of a training organisation comply with the AQTF <i>Standards for Registered Training Organisations</i>.</p> <p>Under Standard 1.4, RTOs are required to conduct an internal audit of their compliance with the Standards and policies and procedures mentioned in Standard 1.1a. This must take place at least once a year and can be done using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ internal audit or ■ self-assessment of equal rigour. 	<p><i>Guide 10: Quality assurance guide for assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Internal audits p.38 ■ Appendix K contains a model plan — internal audit planning process. ■ Appendix L contains an internal audit checklist template.
<p>Moderation meetings</p>	<p>Moderation involves assessors discussing and reaching agreement about assessment processes and outcomes in a particular industry or industry sector. In so doing, assessors develop a shared understanding of the requirements of specific Training Packages, including the relevant competency standards and assessment guidelines, the nature of evidence, how evidence is collected and the basis on which assessment decisions are made.</p> <p>Moderation meetings may be conducted within an RTO (internal moderation) or across a range of different RTOs offering delivery and assessment services in the same industry or industry sector (external moderation). External moderation meetings may be convened by a number of different organisations. Moderation meetings may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ moderation of assessment processes and procedures and/or ■ moderation for verification of assessment outcomes. 	<p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Moderation meetings p.36 <p><i>Guide 10: Quality assurance guide for assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Appendix F contains a peer review checklist for assessment tools.

Approach	Description	Links
<p>Mechanisms to support professional judgement</p>	<p>Professional judgement involves an assessor making a decision about competency based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ evidence gathered ■ interpretation and understanding of the unit of competency ■ the breadth and depth of experience working with the Standards and ■ a thorough understanding of current industry practice. <p>In the assessment decision, an assessor is required to infer competence. This may be assisted by establishing a set of guidelines or strategies to support assessors' professional judgement. RTOs and assessors should also establish and implement strategies to ensure the assessment decision/process is transparent and credible, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ written information about common pitfalls or errors that affect judgement ■ open and ongoing communication between assessors ■ self-assessment ■ networking ■ professional development workshops for assessors ■ ongoing contact with industry ■ using assessment panels or teams and ■ mentoring and coaching. 	<p><i>Guide 10: Quality assurance guide for assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mechanisms to support professional judgement p.40 ■ Simulated assessment guidelines <p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assessor networks p.44 ■ Guidelines to interpret units of competency p.60 ■ Guidelines on the collection and judgement of evidence p.63 ■ Guidelines for conducting assessments p.80 ■ Mentoring for assessors p.86
<p>Mentoring for assessors</p>	<p>Mentoring involves the pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a lesser skilled or experienced one, with the agreed goal of having the lesser skilled person develop specific competencies.</p> <p>Mentoring strategies may be either formal or informal. They may involve pairing an inexperienced assessor with an experienced assessor who is a member of an assessor network, in the workforce or recently retired or from within the same or another RTO.</p>	<p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assessor networks p.44 ■ Mentoring for assessors p.86 ■ Specialist assessors p.89 ■ Lead assessors p.26

Approach	Description	Links
<p>Peer review</p>	<p>Peer review involves assessors observing each other at work, then providing structured and specific feedback. This approach can be either formal or informal and may involve pairing a more experienced assessor with a less experienced assessor. Peer review can involve an evaluation of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ assessment planning interview with the candidate ■ evidence gathering tools ■ conduct of the assessment ■ evidence collected ■ assessment judgement and ■ feedback provided to the candidate. 	<p><i>Guide 10: Quality assurance guide for assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Appendix F contains a Peer review checklist for tools. <p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mentoring for assessors p.86 ■ Lead assessors p.26
<p>Professional development for assessors</p>	<p>Professional development helps assessors acquire, develop and maintain the competencies to carry out quality assessment within the VET sector. It also ensures assessors are aware of changes in policy, practice and research that may impact on their assessment process.</p> <p>Assessors' skills and understanding of competence and competency based assessment are crucial to the overall assessment process. Professional development will ensure assessors continue to conduct valid, reliable, fair, flexible and cost-effective assessments.</p> <p>There are many activities to assist assessors in developing their skills, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ assessor networks ■ job rotation ■ mentoring and coaching ■ internal validation activities ■ peer review ■ project teams, working parties and committees ■ workplace visits and 'return to industry' programs ■ RTO-structured professional development activities and ■ formal or informal programs of further study and professional reading. 	<p><i>Guide 10: Quality assurance guide for assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ongoing professional development p.44 <p><i>Guide 9: Networking for assessors</i></p>

Approach	Description	Links
<p>RTO self-assessment</p> <p><i>(see also internal audit)</i></p>	<p>Self-assessment is a disciplined process that identifies strengths and opportunities for improvement in the assessment system.</p> <p>Under Standard 1.4 of the <i>AQTF Standards for Registered Training Organisations</i>, RTOs are required to conduct an internal audit of their compliance with the Standards and policies and procedures mentioned in Standard 1.1a. This must take place at least once a year and can be done using internal audit or self-assessment of equal rigour.</p>	<p><i>Guide 10: Quality assurance guide for assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ RTO self-assessment p.50
<p>Sampling</p>	<p>Sampling involves reviewing a random selection of assessments conducted in an organisation to ensure planning and preparation, conduct, record keeping and reporting, and review and evaluation of the assessments were undertaken in line with the policy of the organisation, the requirements of the relevant Training Package and the needs of the candidate.</p> <p>Sampling may be conducted both within and across RTOs.</p>	<p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sampling p.71 includes a checklist for reviewing a sampling exercise.
<p>Specialist assessor</p>	<p>Specialist assessors are individuals with high level skills and experience in both assessment and a specific technical area. In addition to meeting the assessor requirements of the <i>AQTF Standards for Registered Training Organisations</i> they typically have formal qualifications and experience in their particular industry area.</p> <p>Specialist assessors can enhance assessment consistency by ensuring assessment decisions are made by a relatively limited number of people who have an indepth knowledge of the industry and the assessment process.</p>	<p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assessor networks p.44 ■ Mentoring for assessors p.86 ■ Specialist assessors p.89 ■ Lead assessors p.26

Approach	Description	Links
<p>Team assessment</p>	<p>Team assessment involves two or more people coming together to undertake an assessment and to make an assessment decision. It is an effective strategy for checking assessments. Information in the form of a code of practice for assessors or clear guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the members is necessary to quality assure the outcomes of team assessments.</p> <p>Standards 7.3 [a] and [b] of the AQTF <i>Standards for Registered Training Organisations</i> must be met in team assessments, regardless of the number of members in the team.</p>	<p><i>Guide 10: Quality assurance guide for assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Team assessment p.56 <p><i>Guide 8: Strategies for ensuring consistency in assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Specialist assessor p.89 ■ Lead assessor p.26

