

Australian Quality Training Framework

NTQC policy on languages for delivering and assessing vocational education and training

•• Why the need for a policy?

This policy was developed to address a range of questions about the language used for delivering and assessing vocational education and training (VET), both in Australia and overseas. It applies to registered training organisations (RTOs) issuing nationally recognised qualifications under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

•• What does it mean?

Depending on the Training Package, the industry, the location and the needs of the individual, the RTO will need to decide the language used for delivery and assessment. This decision will be made on a case-by-case basis and may result in delivery and assessment in a combination of languages or just one.

All qualifications or statements of attainment must be produced in English. Where all the training and assessment has been conducted in a language other than English, that language must be noted on the qualification or statement of attainment.

•• Date of effect

The policy was agreed by the National Training Quality Council (NTQC) on 4 May 2004 and became effective from that date.

Through the review of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) standards, the requirements for language, literacy and numeracy have been strengthened. These changes to the standards will be effective from 1 July 2005.

•• The policy

AQF qualifications and statements of attainment covered by the AQTF must be delivered and assessed at a level of English language proficiency appropriate to the context of delivery. This does not preclude the use of languages other than English (LOTE) to support training delivery and assessment. Where units of competency and/or qualifications have been delivered and assessed entirely in a LOTE, then the language of delivery and assessment should be noted on the testamur*. Testamurs are to be in English. Official translations may (optionally) be included on the reverse of the document.

* A 'testamur' is a qualification or statement or attainment

•• Accommodating language, literacy and numeracy needs

There is a clear policy articulated in the *Training Package Development Handbook* that signals the need for language, literacy and numeracy to be 'built-in' to industry competency standards. The chapter on the incorporation of language, literacy and numeracy into industry standards allows for use of non-standard forms of English and the use of LOTE where appropriate.

(Part 2 Endorsed Components, Chapter 6 — http://www.anta.gov.au/tp_endorsed_components/)

The result of this policy advice is that in Training Packages, language, literacy and numeracy competencies are integrated into the technical competencies or, if central to a workplace task, are written as individual units of competency.

In accredited courses however, the exact emphasis on the development or application of workplace communication and language skills may not be clear. The RTO may need to examine the degree to which course outcomes specify workplace communication and language skills. Where English is not a requirement for the achievement of the relevant industry competency then language should not be a barrier to skills development or recognition.

The AQTF *Standards for Registered Training Organisations* signals in standards 6 and 9 that language and literacy need to be taken into account in delivery and assessment of both Training Package competencies and accredited courses.

A quality training program should provide for development of the language and literacy skills required within competencies or as learning outcomes of courses, at the same time as taking into account the learning requirements of the learner. To maximise the opportunities for transferability of skills it is important for assessment to be in English where the competency is clearly about the skill of communicating in English. Where the competency is clearly not about an English language skill, then the use of LOTE in delivery and assessment are appropriate.

•• Customising training

Advice on customising Training Packages is available at training.com.au.

With the correct tools and processes in place, delivery and assessment of courses and Training Package competencies could be carried out in combinations of LOTE, non-standard forms of English and English, provided it fits within the packaging rules of Training Packages or the accredited course.

If the intention of doing an Australian qualification is to operate in an Australian work context then the qualification should be delivered and assessed in English so that the candidates graduate with the necessary English literacy skills for the Australian workplace.

Some competencies and courses require the use of LOTE. Where the course or competencies have been delivered and assessed entirely in a LOTE, then the language of delivery and assessment should be noted on the qualification or statement of attainment issued to the individual. These qualifications or statements of attainment are to be in English. Official translations may (optionally) be included on the reverse of the document.