

Amount of Training

It is the responsibility of an RTO to ensure that it provides access to sufficient trainers and assessors, educational support services, learning and assessment resources, and facilities and equipment to assist each enrolled individual learner to achieve the requirements for each unit of competency or module in which they are enrolled (Clause 1.3). To provide these resources and meet this requirement, the RTO is required to have training and assessment strategies that provide an adequate amount of training for learners, taking into consideration their existing skills, knowledge and experience and the mode of delivery to be utilised by the RTO (Clauses 1.1 and 1.2).

This Fact Sheet explores the concept of amount of training and discusses how it works to support the provision of quality training and assessment services by RTOs.

Amount of Training Explained

The amount of training is the notional time that an RTO expects a learner to formally engage with learning resources provided by the RTO and managed by the RTO to meet the requirements of a unit of competency or a cluster of units of competency.

This would include all supervised and/or prescribed activities specified in the RTO's strategy such as:

- lectures or tutorials, online tasks and forums;
- may include assessments;
- structured workplace experience (if it contributes to the learner meeting the requirements of the units);
- workshop activities;
- projects, assignments;
- structured prescribed reading; and
- prescribed follow-up activities.

These activities would all be pre-arranged and managed by the RTO, and learners would be informed of these requirements through course materials. These would also be specified in qualification delivery and assessment strategy documents, and unit delivery and assessment plans.

The amount of training required by a learner to achieve a qualification/unit depends on:

- the starting point of the learner;
- their learning skills;
- the mode of delivery by the RTO; and
- the breadth and complexity of the skills and knowledge to be acquired.

If the learner has a significant amount of relevant prior experience, it may be that the learner can proceed directly to the assessment process (RPL) for some or all units, so the amount of training will be reduced.

Similarly, if the learner has already achieved some of the units of competency required for the qualification at an RTO, only a proportion of the qualification will need to be delivered and the amount of training will be reduced.

Alternatively, if the learner is facing challenges, such as the need for substantial preparation, learning support, reasonable adjustments and/or personal coaching the amount of training will need to be increased to meet their needs.

FACT SHEET

Assessment is considered part of training when assessment and learning is integrated e.g. assignments, projects, where these structured activities are considered part of the assessment process.

Structured time solely for the purpose of assessment should not be considered when determining the amount of training.

Example Influences on Longer / Shorter Amount of Training

Shorter	← Standard Learner →	Longer
Learners existing skills, knowledge and experience		
Existing skills and knowledge		No knowledge or skills
Currently working in industry		Has not worked in industry
Relevant qualifications		No relevant qualifications
		Language, Literacy and Numeracy Requirements
Mode of delivery / RTO Resources		
Face to face intensive		Online / correspondence/ distance
Full Time		Trainee / Apprentice
RPL		Part Time
Low number of students per trainer		High number of students per trainer
Resources available for each student simultaneously		Resources need to be shared
Classes run every day		Classes only run once a week
Number of units being delivered as a proportion of the full qualification		
Low number of units		High number of units

Common Misunderstandings, Challenges, Risks and Compliance Issues

There are four similar terms used to describe training duration:

- volume of learning;
- amount of training;
- nominal duration; and
- course duration.

Volume of learning is defined in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) as identifying the notional duration of all activities required for the achievement of the learning outcomes specified for a particular AQF qualification type. It is expressed in equivalent full-time years.

Nominal hours is a term not used in the AQF or the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*, but usually relates to the funded components of the training product. Nominal Hours does not usually include time spent by a learner undertaking unsupervised individual activities like assignments, projects and work experience.

Course duration is simply the number of days, months or years that need to be set aside to undertake the course from enrolment to completion. This is mentioned in Clause 5.2b(i).

For the purposes of the *Standards for RTOs* you will only be audited on the **amount of training**.

There are no mathematical formulas that can be used to set the amount of training. What is required of an RTO is a reasoned, evidence based and informed account of what extent of engagement is expected of a learner, taking into consideration the existing skills, knowledge and experience of the learner and the mode of delivery (and resources) of the RTO.

The most common issue is that under the pressure of competition RTOs tend to condense and reduce the amount of training to a level that does not allow learners to learn to the level required. Some reduction may be achievable by changing the mode of delivery or clustering units, but it is paramount that the RTO can justify and provide evidence to explain the amount of training it plans to deliver, and evaluates the adequacy of the amount of training during and after delivery.

Amount of Training, Volume of Learning, Course Duration and Nominal Hours Explained

	<p>Amount of Training</p> <p>Taking into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Learners existing skills, knowledge and experience -Mode of delivery/RTO resources -Number of units 	<p>Structured Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lectures or tutorials, on-line tasks and forums; • may include assessments; • structured workplace experience; • workshop activities; • projects, assignments; • structured prescribed reading; and • prescribed follow-up activities.
	<p>Volume of Learning</p>	<p>Structured Learning</p> <p>PLUS</p> <p>Un-Structured Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private study, preparation & follow-up • Self-initiated learning • Research
	<p>Course Duration</p>	<p>The number of days, months or years to undertake the course from enrolment to completion.</p>
	<p>Nominal Hours</p>	<p>Funding mechanism Not a requirement under the AQF or Standards for RTOs</p>

Suggestions for Good Practice



Determining the amount of training before delivery

At audit it will be expected that RTOs have applied a logical and systematic approach to inform the amount of training that is justifiable.

As good practice, the RTO needs to determine an appropriate amount of training during the planning and design phase. You need to go through this process for each unit of competency or each cluster of units of competency you are delivering.

Of course, you will also be considering the expectations of industry that you observed through industry engagement. This may impact on your delivery mode and resources, and on the amount of training that will need to be delivered.

For each unit (or cluster), consider the characteristics of your learners and the resources you have to hand, select the mode of delivery of training and assessment and identify all the resources you will need to obtain or create for that delivery mode.

From this you should be able to estimate the amount of time each learner will need to commit (to class attendance at lectures or tutorials, on-line tasks and forums, assessments, structured workplace experience, workshop activities, projects, assignments, prescribed pre-reading and prescribed follow-up activities). This is the amount of training for that unit or cluster.

You should also be able to estimate the period of time over which you could reasonably expect the student to meet that commitment. This is the duration of the course.

This information can be reported in the training delivery and assessment strategies for each unit or cluster and aggregated across all units and/or clusters for the

qualification's delivery and assessment strategy document.

You now need to consider the possibility that you will have some learners that will require a lesser amount of training, and some that might need a greater amount of training. The former might include RPL candidates, fast-tracked learners or learners with credit. The latter might include novice learners, students with LLN challenges, special needs or other learning disadvantages. Your course documentation should speculate on what these variations might involve in the amount of training and in the provision of learning resources, support and other services.

These plans will help you demonstrate compliance with Clauses 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.7 of the Standards. As you will be providing much of this information to learners, it will also contribute to meeting the requirements of Clauses 5.1b(i) and (iii).



Adjusting the amount of training during delivery

You then need to show how you have adjusted the amount of training during delivery. Your plans are your best estimates ahead of the experience of delivering the course to an unknown cohort of learners, but once you commence delivery you are likely to need to make adjustments. This is not a weakness, it is a great strength. You need to have strategies to monitor learner progress (Clause 2.2), and to modify your plans, services and the amount of training to support each learner.



Revising the amount of training after delivery

Finally, you need to show how you have used course evaluation and quality assurance processes to continually improve your delivery plans and learner services and to adjust the amount of training (and course duration) to reflect effective practices. (Clauses 2.2b, 2.3 and 2.4).

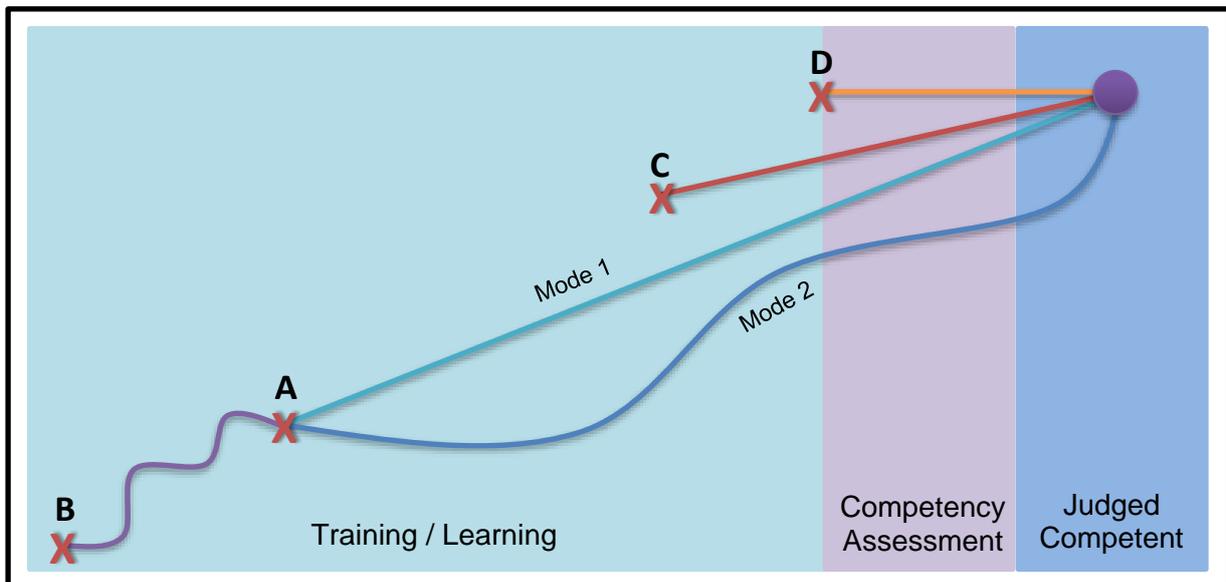


CASE STUDY: LEARNER PATHWAY

A unit of competency can be seen as a target, set in position by its elements (and their performance criteria), knowledge and performance requirements. Competency is achieved when the learner has demonstrated all the requirements of that target. A learner starting at **A** might be instructed through a mode that takes a direct path to the target or may follow a less direct path if using another mode. Their amounts of training will differ because one has a longer path to traverse than another.

Another learner at **B** may have some ground to make up before reaching **A** (such as LLN challenges) so will have a greater amount of training to address those needs. In contrast, some learners may have a much shorter path because of prior learning. One starting at **C** will only need a small amount of training (fast-tracked training), and one at **D** will only need the amount of training associated with assessment (RPL).

The skill of a trainer is to identify the best path for each learner or group of learners to get them to their target competency to ensure that there is an adequate amount of training for them to meet their goals.





CASE STUDY: CARING TRAINING

Caring Training is an enterprise RTO which delivers *CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support*.

Its client cohort comprises employees currently working in individual support roles within the parent residential and home care organisation. Caring Training has developed its training and assessment strategy for *CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support* specifically for this client cohort, who have substantial existing skills and knowledge acquired from their current employment.

The strategy sets out that training and assessment will be provided through:

- a series of workshops for theory assessment, and
- practical delivery, which will be conducted at the learners' workplace. Supervisor/third-party reports will be utilised in the practical assessment.

When developing the training and assessment strategy for *CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support* Caring Training's HR Manager considered the AQF volume of learning guidelines for a Certificate III qualification. The guidelines recommend that it should take one to two years (or 1200 – 2400 hours) for a learner, who does not hold any of the competencies identified in the relevant units of competency, to develop all the required skills and knowledge for a Certificate III.

As Caring Training's client cohort have existing skills and knowledge, the HR Manager identified that it is appropriate to provide the training and assessment in a shorter timeframe than that recommended by the AQF volume of learning guidelines.

The HR manager developed a rationale for the shorter timeframe, which explains that it is expected that:

- learners will be able to obtain RPL for some of the units within the qualification, and
- gap training will be provided for the remainder of the units.

This rationale is included in Caring Training's training and assessment strategy for *CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support* and is supported by two key processes.

Firstly, Caring Training has undertaken a mapping exercise to align its operating procedures and internal training to the content of the units of competency. In this way they have been able to determine the knowledge and skill that their staff should already have as a result of their employment.

Secondly, Caring Training holds interviews with learners prior to the commencement of study to:

- confirm the learners' previous knowledge, skill and experience;
- obtain copies of the learner's resume and any qualifications or previous study associated with operations; and
- develop an individual training plan for each employee.

The outcomes of these two processes influence the RTO's training and assessment strategy for this qualification.

If required, Caring Training can provide additional teaching and learning activities to ensure that learners:

- gain all relevant skills and knowledge, and
- are able to successfully complete *CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support*.

All documented evidence acquired from the mapping, learners' interviews and individual training plans is securely retained and is readily available to be produced in the event of an audit.

What would be expected to be seen at audit?

An auditor will expect to be able to see how you have arrived at the amount of training for a qualification, skill set or unit. The auditor will not be interested in the final figure but will want to see how you worked it out, and to be able to follow the thought you have given to meeting the needs of your client group, industry needs, modes of delivery and other requirements that might impact on the amount of training.

Once you have delivered the units, clusters, skill sets or qualification the auditor will also want to see how you have reviewed and adjusted your amount of training to assist each learner meet the requirements.