

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 of the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*). The RTO is also 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

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.

The amount of training is one of the considerations the RTO makes as it develops a cohesive and appropriate training and assessment strategy for a client group. 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.

The Training Accreditation Council considers assessment is part of training when assessment and learning is integrated e.g. assignments, projects, and these structured activities are considered part of the assessment process. In this case, assessment is included in the amount of training,

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

The Standards for RTOs (Clause 1.2) specifies that the RTO will determine amount of training they provide to learners with regard to:

1. The existing knowledge, skills and experience of the learner;
2. The mode of delivery; and
3. Where a full qualification is not being delivered, the number of units and/or modules being delivered as a proportion of the full qualification.

The following table illustrates how amount of training may be influenced by each of these factors.

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 RTOs. In Western Australia nominal hours are used as a mechanism for funding allocation and refer to the number of hours in which an average student could reasonably be expected to complete the unit. Nominal hours do 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**.

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.

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.

There are no mathematical formulas that can be used to set the amount of training. 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

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

Course Duration	The number of days, months or years to undertake the course from enrolment to completion.
Nominal Hours	Funding mechanism Not a requirement under the AQF or Standards for RTOs

Suggestions for Compliance

Determining the amount of training before delivery

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

As good practice, the RTO should determine an appropriate amount of training during the planning and design phase for each unit of competency or each cluster of units of competency the RTO is delivering.

The RTO should also consider the expectations of industry observed through industry engagement as this may impact on the RTO delivery mode and required resources, and on the amount of training that will be delivered.

For each unit (or cluster), the RTO should consider the characteristics of its learners and the resources available. The RTO should select the mode of delivery of training and assessment and identify all the resources needed for that delivery mode.

Based on this information, the RTO should 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.

The RTO should also estimate the period of time over which it 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.

The RTO should also consider the possibility that there may be some learners that require a lesser amount of training while some learners may require 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. The RTO 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 the RTO demonstrate compliance with Clauses 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.7 of the Standards for RTOs. As the RTO 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

The RTO will then need to show how it has adjusted the amount of training during delivery. The plans created in the previous step indicate the estimated amount of training the RTO believes would be required. However once delivery has commenced, RTOs will need to make adjustments to show what really occurred. This is not a weakness, it is a great strength. The RTO needs to have strategies to monitor learner progress (Clause 2.2), and to modify its plans, services and the amount of training to support each learner.

This will not result in the RTO changing its training and assessment strategy document mid delivery, but the RTO should have notes about how it has adjusted and adapted the course. These will contribute to the RTO post course evaluation and the Training and Assessment Strategy document would be updated as part of that course evaluation.

Revising the amount of training after delivery

Finally, the RTO will show how it has used course evaluation and quality assurance processes to continually improve 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)

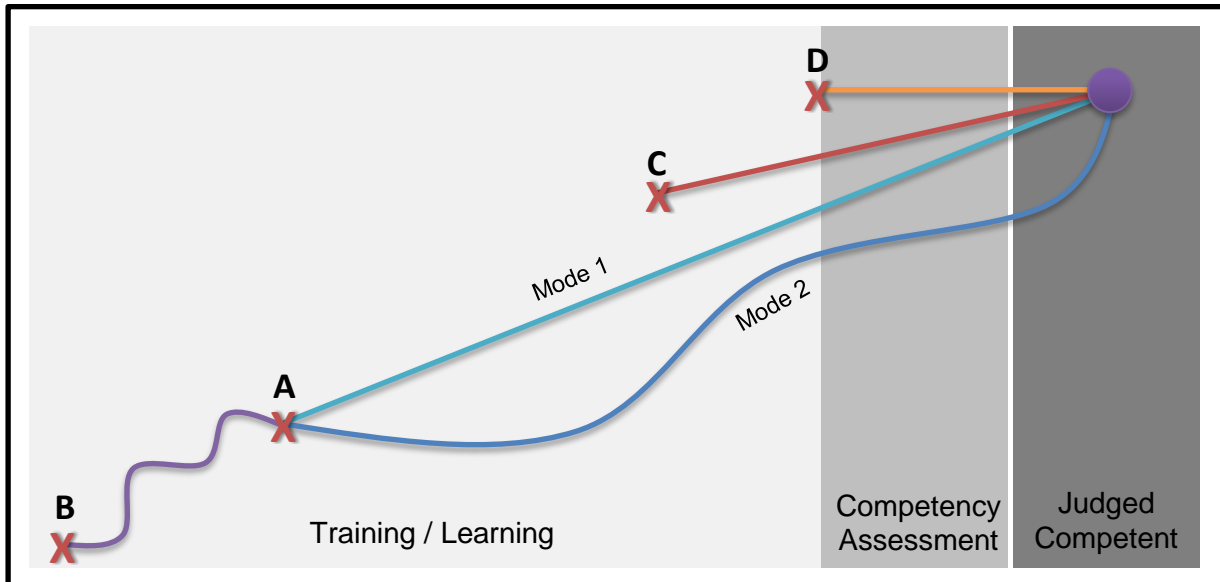
CASE STUDY:

LEARNER PATHWAY

Represented in the diagram below, a unit of competency can be seen as a target, set in position by its elements (and their performance criteria), knowledge and performance evidence 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.

CASE STUDY:

CLUSTERED DELIVERY

Awesome RTO are providing training and assessment for *RII30815 Certificate III in Civil Construction Plant Operations*. The qualification has several units of competency where there is substantial overlap in the knowledge evidence requirements. An example is provided below using 2 units of competency *RIIMPO318F Conduct civil construction skid steer loader operations (Release 1)* and *RIIMPO321F Conduct civil construction wheeled front end loader operations (Release 2)*.

The candidate must demonstrate knowledge of the following when conducting civil construction skid steer loader operations:	The candidate must demonstrate knowledge of the following when conducting civil construction wheeled front end loader operations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ground conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ground conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • isolation procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • isolation procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • equipment processes, technical capability and limitations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • equipment processes, technical capability and limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparation for fire/accident/emergency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparation for fire/accident/emergency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • signs of operator fatigue and how it should be managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • signs of operator fatigue and how it should be managed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpretation of drawings and sketches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drawings and sketches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • site isolation and traffic control responsibilities and authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • site isolation and traffic control responsibilities and authorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil construction terminology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil construction terminology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • project quality requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • project quality requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic principles of soil technology and soil compaction for civil works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic principles of soil technology and soil compaction for civil works
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic earthworks calculations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic earthworks calculations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil construction activity sequences of road construction, earthworks and drainage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil construction activity sequences of road construction, earthworks and drainage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • methods for calculating safe working loads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • methods for calculating safe working loads
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • operational, maintenance and basic diagnostics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • operational, maintenance and basic diagnostics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • housekeeping activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • housekeeping activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vehicle refuelling requirements and procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vehicle refuelling requirements and procedures

Awesome RTO have undertaken analysis to determine which of these requirements is truly identical and which needs to be taught and assessed individually. The analysis showed that there are in fact three situations the RTO must address.

1. The knowledge is identical across the units

In this situation the knowledge can be clustered for delivery and assessment. An example from the table above would be 'Civil construction terminology' or 'basic earthworks calculations'. Because these can be clustered together, the amount of training is reduced as the content not delivered multiple times for every unit and the assessment evidence collected is used in multiple units.

2. The knowledge is similar identical across the units but must be demonstrated in a different context for each machine

In this situation the knowledge has a significant overlap but there are aspects of it that are different for each machine. An example from the table might be housekeeping activities. There are common activities such as disposing of waste, parking the machines, but there are also differences in terms of the way the machine must be parked, the position of attachments, cleaning routines for the machines. In this example the amount of training required will be reduced slightly, as the truly common aspects are not delivered multiple times for every unit and the assessment evidence collected is used in multiple units. However, those aspects of the statements that are different for each machine must be delivered and assessed for each unit of competency and as a result, the amount of training for those aspects would not change.

3. The knowledge is different for each piece of equipment

In this situation while the text used in the table is identical, the reality is that there is significant difference in the knowledge requirement, it is unique to each piece of equipment and will be delivered and assessed for each unit. The amount of training would not change in this situation. An example of this would be operational maintenance and basic diagnostics or equipment processes. Technical capability and limitations.

How to meet compliance?

An auditor will expect to be able to see how the RTO has 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 the RTO worked it out, and to be able to follow the thought given to meeting the needs of the client group, industry needs, modes of delivery and other requirements that might impact on the amount of training.

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