GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Training Accreditation Council

FACT SHEET

Developing Training and Assessment Strategies

The training and assessment strategy comprises critical information, as it describes how an RTO will deliver and assess the training product for their learner cohort (Clauses 1.1 and 1.2 of the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*). The purpose of the strategy is to ensure:

- the RTO has a structured and consistent approach to planning and delivering training and assessment for the specific program and specific learner cohort;
- that the training and assessment is relevant to the requirements of specific workplaces and addresses the identified organisational needs to the satisfaction of the learner;
- documentation is available to training and assessment staff so that they are clear about how the program is to be conducted for the specific learner cohort;
- the required materials and resources are sourced and available; and
- consistent high-quality delivery and assessment is made available to the learner and other stakeholders.

The primary audience of the training and assessment strategy are trainers and assessors. Whilst this Fact Sheet may imply the strategy to be one single document, equally, the strategy may take the form of various documentation, which together form the complete strategy.

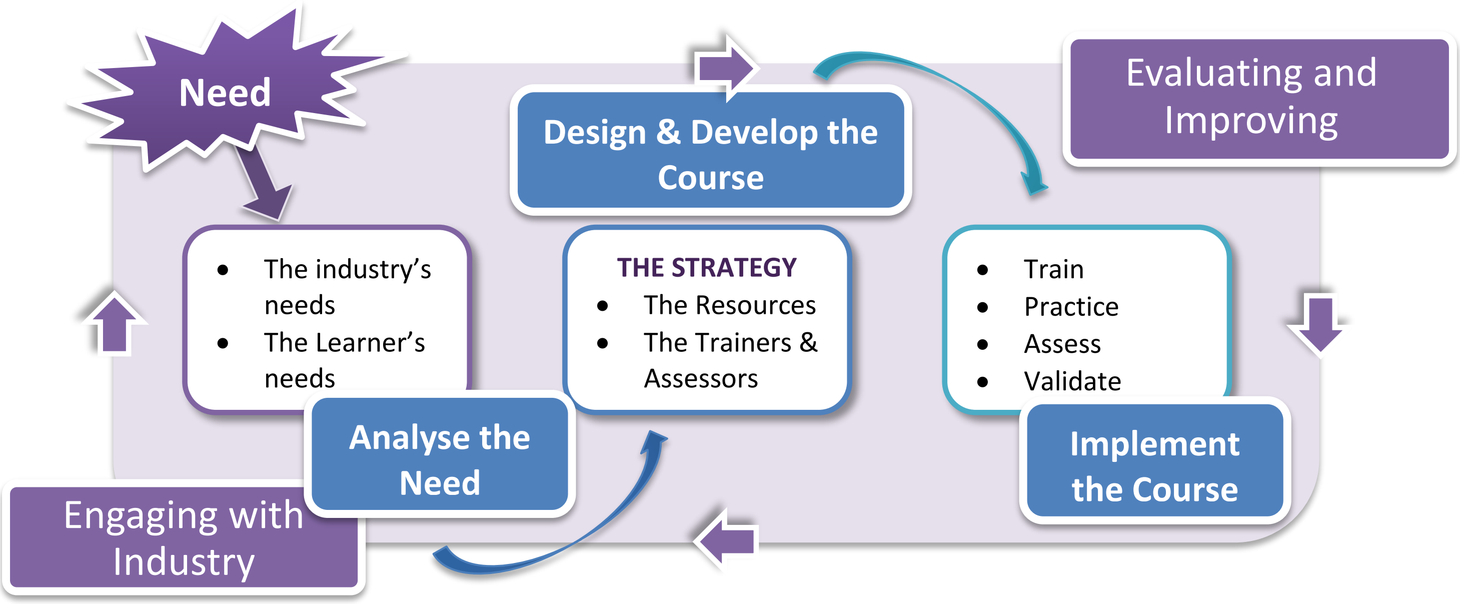
This Fact Sheet provides information on the processes for designing training and assessment strategies and includes the following topics:

- Guiding principles for developing the strategy;
- What informs the development of the strategy;
- When to develop a strategy; and
- Incorporating industry engagement, learner needs and amount of training into the strategy.

An example training and assessment strategy has also been provided. Please note that this is an example only which will need to be adapted to suit each RTO. Using this example does not guarantee compliance.

The Lifecycle of a Training Product

The delivery and assessment of a training product is driven by a clear need of industry and the delivery and assessment has a life cycle.



Over the life of a training product the RTO will step through this cycle many times in response to feedback and change. Each of the three purple activities on the above diagram change with time and will impact how the three blue activities on the diagram are undertaken.

'Evaluating and improving' and 'Engaging with industry' are activities that underpin the full lifecycle of a training product. They are core quality assurance mechanisms within the VET sector and are addressed in more detail in separate TAC Fact Sheets:

- Fact Sheet - Assuring the Quality of RTO Processes, Practices and Products
- Fact Sheet - Industry Engagement

Not surprisingly, the training and assessment strategy will also be revisited many times over. The lifecycle of a training product is a living guidance document for the RTO and for the trainers and assessors in the organisation.

Guiding principles for developing the strategy

1. The strategy should be considered holistically

When RTOs develop strategy documents, a holistic approach is required. The development process should consider the impact of all decisions made by the RTO on each aspect of the approach and the result should be a well-reasoned strategy to manage the delivery and assessment through the training product lifecycle.

2. The strategy should be a useful guidance document for trainers and assessors

The strategy document should be the starting point for all trainers and assessors and clearly and accurately describe how the specific training product will be delivered for the specified learner cohort. It should tell the trainer/assessor what to do and how to do it. If the 'how' is not in the strategy document, the strategy should point the trainer/assessor to the documents where the information can be found. If delivery modes change, then a new strategy document will be needed. The RTO **should not include unnecessary information** or generic overarching statements in the strategy documents. These add no value for the user of the document.

3. The strategy and its implementation should be relevant to industry and reflect current industry practice

The RTO's delivery of training products should meet industry need. Engagement with industry throughout the design and development process ensures that the approach used by the RTO is likely to meet the need that has been identified.

4. The strategy should meet the needs of the learner cohort

To be an effective training and assessment approach, the RTO must consider the needs of the learner cohort. When RTOs do this, participation and success rates in the course rise as does the quality of the training delivered. RTOs may need to develop different strategies for different learner cohorts. If the learner cohort changes, then a new strategy document is needed.

5. The strategy should drive quality practice

When RTOs follow each of the above guidelines, they produce a quality outcome, for the learner, for the trainer/ assessor, for industry, and the community.

What informs the development of the Training and Assessment Strategy?

The training product is the cornerstone resource to inform the development of the strategy. It expresses the nationally agreed workplace outcome that is to be achieved by a program.

Endorsed Components

The endorsed components of the Training Package are:

- Unit of Competency and the Assessment Requirements;
- Foundation Skills;
- The Qualification Framework; and
- Credit Arrangements

<u>The Unit of Competency and Assessment Requirements</u>

The Unit of Competency specifies the standards of performance required in the workplace as defined in a training package or accredited course. This includes the elements and performance criteria for the unit as well as the foundations skills.

The Assessment Requirements detail the knowledge evidence and performance evidence that must be observed to make a judgement about an individual's competence. It also details any requirements that must be in place for the assessment process. This might include access to specific facilities or equipment, requirements for assessors, and information about the context and frequency of performance required to support an assessment decision. The documents must be read and be considered together to inform the development of the training and assessment strategy and materials in RTOs[1].

Foundations Skills

Foundation skills encompass the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) five core skills, plus the Core Skills for Work Framework.

All job tasks and all units of competency include foundation skills – almost everything we do in the workplace has something to do with learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy. It could be having a conversation with a client or a colleague, completing an observation record, working to a schedule or reading workplace health and safety information. The RTO must adopt an approach to define foundation skills in their training.

The RTO will need to review the Training Package to see what information is available to assist in appropriately targeting the learner cohort's learning and assessment requirements.

The Qualification Framework

The Qualification Framework tells RTOs the rules around how to structure the training product (qualification, skill set, unit of competency) to be delivered. Components of the qualification framework include:

- Entry requirements – which may identify units and/or qualifications that must be achieved before someone enrols in the qualification. Entry requirements are often specified in qualifications where it is vitally important that the participants have a body of knowledge and skill that is built over time and will underpin what they do in the qualification that is being offered.
- Packaging rules – Identify the core units that must be achieved to attain the qualification, and elective units that can be chosen and includes information on the number of units needed in order to achieve the qualification. The Qualification Framework also specifies how to combine core and elective units to achieve streams or specialisations.
- Links to mapping documents and companion volumes. These documents provide contextual information to assist the RTO to implement the Training Product.

Credit Arrangements

Credit arrangements specify details of existing **credit arrangements** between vocational and higher education qualifications in accordance with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

[1] There are a small number of Training Packages that are still to be transitioned to the *Standards for National Training Packages 2012*. These Training Packages include **Assessment Guidelines** rather than Assessment Requirements. Assessment Guidelines cover the qualifications required by assessors, the design of assessment processes and guidelines for assessment management. Assessment guidelines explain the industry's preferred approach to assessment.

Non-endorsed Components
Training Packages include non-endorsed components, known as companion volumes. Some Training Packages call their companion volumes "Implementation Guides". These are documents that have been developed to assist the RTO to understand and implement the endorsed components of the Training Package.

When do RTOs develop a Training and Assessment Strategy?

RTOs are required to develop a training and assessment strategy when:

A Training Product is offered by the RTO. This can be: • a qualification; • a recognised skill set; • a standalone unit of competency; and • an accredited course.	or	Where the needs of the learner cohort are different and the RTO needs to take a different approach to deliver the Training Product.

A Focus on Industry Engagement

Industry is a key consumer of the outputs of the VET system. They employ the people who complete nationally recognised qualifications and are major users of the training products and services offered by RTOs.

It's vital to engage with industry throughout the lifecycle of a training product to ensure quality training and assessment is in line with industry requirements and that it is appropriate for their needs. This builds confidence in the decisions made by RTOs and enhances the standing of qualifications delivered through the national training system. Industry 'owns' the qualifications, skill sets and specific units of competency that RTOs deliver. These are set through the industry developed Training Packages or accredited courses. When an RTO issues a certificate, it should reassure industry that the training and assessment provided is relevant and meets its expectations. Industry engagement is a strategy to provide a direct relationship between the RTO and the industry it serves for the mutual benefit and confidence of each party.

If you consider industry engagement in the lifecycle diagram, it is clear that it underpins all the RTO does and therefore, to be effective an RTO needs a strategic approach to determining who they engage with, how they engage and when they engage.

A strategic approach forges strong relationships between the RTO and their stakeholders and is one in which RTOs directly engage those enterprises/industry stakeholders that can add most value to the RTO's training and assessment strategies. Consultations with other stakeholders are then conducted to confirm the outcomes of initial consultations, test ideas, gather additional information, and confirm that the training and assessment approach that they are planning is supported by industry. Further information on this topic can be accessed via the TAC Fact Sheet on Industry Engagement.

CASE STUDY:

NEWTON BAGA BUILDING TRAINING – ENGAGING WITH INDUSTRY

Newton Baga Building Training offer *CPC40110 Certificate IV in Building and Construction (Building)*. They have traditionally offered the qualification through a classroom-based program with work placements for new entrants into the industry. New entrants are often beginning tradespeople who are aiming to set up their own business. Newton Baga have been approached by 'BIG Building Company' to provide training to their building supervisors, who are very experienced tradespeople and supervisors but do not hold formal qualifications.

Newton Baga has developed **two** training and assessment strategies for the qualification, a part-time classroom-based program for new entrants as well as an RPL and gap workplace training program for Big Building supervisors. The initial consultation with BIG Building also led to the two cohorts having different choices for the three elective units allowed by the qualification.

The new entrants complete:	The BIG Building supervisors complete:
1. BSBLDR403 Promote team effectiveness 2. BSBITU202 Create and use spreadsheets 3. BSBSMB402 Plan small business finances	1. CPCCBC4018A Apply site surveys and set-out procedures to building and construction projects 2. CPCCBC4026A Arrange building applications and approvals 3. BSBPMG411 Apply project quality management techniques

A Focus on Identifying Learner Needs

Each individual learner and each learner cohort will have specific needs that may impact the design and development for the delivery and assessment of a Training Product. The Standards for RTOs include several clauses that ensure that the learner needs are identified and responded to. These needs may be related to:

- age/gender
- remote location
- cultural or ethnic background
- disability
- sexuality
- language skills
- literacy or numeracy level

The RTO will use the information about the learners to ensure the approach that is planned will maximise participation and increase the likelihood of successful outcomes for the learners. Generally, the RTO will build a profile for the learner cohort. Enrolment processes such as collecting AVETMISS data provide a very high-level indication of the characteristics of the cohort. Further processes such as LLN testing and entry interviews or discussions add detail to the picture that is being created. Once training has commenced, evidence of individual needs can be gleaned from indicators of progress, feedback, complaints and appeals.

There are many resources available to RTOs to assist in determining approaches that will be effective for different learners. NCVER for example has a range of research information and case studies that can be accessed and used by RTOs to inform practice.

A learner's needs can change, or may not be revealed, until tested by the rigours of training, so it is important RTOs monitor each individual's progress and keep support services open and accessible throughout the term of the learner's enrolment. The approach that was originally planned in the training and assessment strategy will therefore also evolve as the program is implemented. Further information on this topic can be accessed via the TAC Fact Sheet on Learner Needs.

CASE STUDY:

NEWTON BAGA BUILDING TRAINING – MEETING THE LEARNERS NEEDS

Newton Baga Building Training have two programs for the *CPC40110 Certificate IV in Building and Construction (Building)* qualification to meet the needs of two specific learner cohorts.

- **New Entrants to the Industry**
  New entrants to the industry are typically learners who have just completed their trade qualification and want to become a registered builder. This cohort are employed full time or under contract agreements with larger builders and therefore have no capacity to attend a full-time program. The face to face program offered by the RTO has been structured to be conducted part time in the evenings and does not use clustered units as they become too demanding for the cohort to complete. The group also do not have strong computer literacy skills and experience with spreadsheets and project tools used by builders. The structure of the qualification has included units that will develop these skills and the learning program is based upon a simulated building company so that the learners can apply the knowledge and skill in a low risk environment to develop confidence. The group responds well to a classroom-based approach as they form a supportive cohort.

- **BIG Building Supervisors**
  BIG Building supervisors are industry experts. They have on average worked for more than 20 years in the building industry. Most hold trade qualifications and two are quantity surveyors. All have been supervisors for at least 10 years. Newton Baga has spent time interviewing the supervisors and all have expressed concern about returning to a classroom as many did not have positive experiences of schooling. Given the experience of the group and their aversion to a classroom approach, it has been

determined that an RPL pathway will be used. Newton Baga will allocate a trainer/assessor to each supervisor and they will spend time on site with the supervisor collecting evidence of the supervisor's competence. Any gap training that is required will be done one on one in their workplace. There is one supervisor who has identified that she has dyslexia. She has explained that it is more effective for her to receive information verbally rather than in traditional text-based forms. For example, she has explained that leaving her a voicemail is more effective than sending her an email. When she does need to use text-based documents it is helpful for her to use mind maps and flow charts. The RTO is able to accommodate these needs easily and is working with her trainer/assessor and employer to ensure that she is supported throughout the program.

Newton Baga is also scheduling mentor days on Saturdays where participants from both groups can attend. The sessions will be staffed by a minimum of two trainers and assessors and participants are able to gain feedback, assistance, and support in an informal environment to progress their learning.

A focus on the Amount of Training

Amount of training is a term that is not formally defined in the Standards for RTOs. There are also other terms that are used in VET that overlap with the concept of amount of training. Further information on this topic can be accessed via the TAC Fact Sheet on Amount of Training.

The amount of training for a training product is impacted by the needs of the learner and the choices an RTO makes about the training approach that will be effective for them. When an RTO determines the amount of training for a training product, they consider what is needed for the individual learner to be able to achieve the outcome in the unit of competency or accredited course.

The Standards for RTOs require that when RTOs take these decisions, they consider three key aspects:

1. the existing knowledge and skills of the learners;
2. the mode of delivery used; and
3. if the RTO is delivering part of a qualification.

Together, these three aspects and the needs of the individual will determine how much training is provided and how the RTO will provide the training.

CASE STUDY:

NEWTON BAGA BUILDING TRAINING – AMOUNT OF TRAINING

The unit - *CPCCBC4005A - Produce labour and material schedules for ordering* is a core unit in the Certificate IV in Building and Construction and both learner groups are required to complete the unit. One of the elements from the unit is:

2. Produce material and labour schedules, overlays and orders.

2.1. Nominated suppliers and contractors are detailed in work schedules.

2.2. Relevant overlay drawings are produced.

2.3. Orders include contract details and instructions.

2.4. Contract rates are applied to material and labour schedules.

Newton Baga has taken the following approach to amount of training for each of the groups. The new entrants to the qualification have no experience in this area and have approximately 60 hours of training. This is made up of:

- 20 hours face to face classes;
- 30 hours practice assignments that have the students also practicing using the software for scheduling and planning; and
- 10 hours of work placement to practice applying the knowledge and skill in the workplace.

The group also has the option of attending the mentor sessions however this is not a compulsory activity and so is not included in the amount of training.

The BIG Builder supervisors complete this activity on every project that they work on. The consultation with BIG Building has determined that this unit would be completed by RPL, therefore the amount of training is nil. As the assessment for the supervisor group is undertaken gap training can be undertaken if needed.

In Summary

Each training and assessment strategy will be a unique reflection of the way the RTO will deliver and assess a training product to meet the needs of industry and the specific target group.

When RTOs develop a strategy document:

- The development process is a purposeful and thoughtful planning of a training and assessment experience for the learner;
- The process is iterative, meaning the RTO will tweak all aspects of the strategy repeatedly;
- The RTO will revisit and refine aspects of the strategy over time, not only in its initial development, but throughout the lifecycle of the qualification; and
- The process involves the RTO engaging with a wide range of stakeholders over time for a range of different purposes.

Components of the Training and Assessment Strategy

Example Training and Assessment Strategy

Please note that this is an example only and would need to be adapted for your RTO. Using this example does not guarantee compliance.

The training and assessment strategy is the framework that guides the learning requirements and the training and assessment arrangements of a qualification and is reviewed at least annually.

Registered Training Organisation		**RTO #:**	
Qualification Code and Title	Each TAS will specify the Training Product that is described by the TAS. Use the code and name of the training product as it is listed on training.gov.au.	**Release:**	
Location			

COURSE DETAILS

Purpose	Add description of why the qualification is being delivered and what the expected outcomes would be.
Target Learner Cohort	Describe the characteristics of the target group for the TAS. The description should include information about the knowledge and skill they may have, any learning needs, learning style preferences, literacy, language and numeracy skills, any support needs. This section can also include the motivation for engaging in the learning, any specific goals of the group and any particular abilities that the group may have. The statements should be specific to the learner cohort rather than motherhood statements which add no value. The description should be rich enough that it provides context to the approach that is described by the TAS.
LLN Levels	
Duration	
Licensing Requirements	
Pre/Co-requisites	
Client Entry Requirements	Any formal entry requirements specified by the Training Package. There are situations where RTOs design a strategy for a very specific learner cohort. In these circumstances the RTO may require entrants to meet additional requirements to participate in the program. It is

	important to distinguish between the requirements that are mandated by the Training Package and those that may be applied by the RTO.
Pathways	For some qualifications it is possible to exit the qualification at varying points with a recognised outcome. If this is possible in the training product that the RTO delivers, it should be described.
Job Outcomes	

COURSE STRUCTURE

Use this section of your TAS to provide a description of how the program will be delivered. The section should describe the approach to be used, any entry or analysis activities that are undertaken, for example, completing a LLN test, participating in an interview, and how these activities would be used to refine the approach for the clients' needs. This section of the TAS would also include information about how the program was scheduled, for example, the order units were to be completed in, any clustering of units, the arrangements for any work placements. It should be clear from the description in this section that the training approach supports the students to fully develop the required skills and knowledge prior to being assessed.

Qualification Packaging Rules	List the core and elective units that have been selected through consultation with the learner group. You must ensure that the choice of electives meets the requirements of the packaging rules and is reflective of an authentic job role. If the TAS is for a skill set you would list the units in the skill set and if the TAS is for a single unit of competency, that unit will be listed.
Units of Competency	
Class Size	
Amount of Training	Determining the amount of training is a requirement of the Standards for RTOs. This section should clearly describe how the amount of training has been established and why it is suitable for the target group of the TAS. The amount of training should 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 (where they are formative and contribute to learning); • 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.

	More information is available in the Amount of Training Fact Sheet
Mode of Delivery	Describe how the training and assessment is to be delivered. This might include for example, face-to-face, online, through workplace training or a mixture of different modes. The information provided in this section should be consistent with and supportive of the information in the remainder of the TAS document.
Reasonable Adjustment	Further information is available in the following documentation: • Improving participation and success in VET for disadvantaged learners; and • Assessment in the VET Sector (chapter 5)
Assessment methods	Use this section of your TAS to provide a description of how the program will be assessed. This may include information about assessment of each of the units if this information is not included in other documents such as an assessment plan. The section should describe the approach to be used, the scheduling of assessment, how you will meet any pre-requisite requirements for assessment as well as a description of the assessment methods to be used for each unit.
Assessment Tools	Training Packages and the Assessment Requirements documents often specify specific approaches and / or resources that are to be met when conducting assessment. These must be reflected accurately in the choices made about the assessment approach. Some RTOs will also include information about assessment validation in the strategy document. You may also choose to direct the reader to the RTOs validation schedule, policies and processes. TAS documents will often describe specific resources required for the delivery and assessment of the Training Product. If the TAS document does not include this information, it should direct the reader to the document that does include this information. This might include an assessment, a session plan, or a specific resource list for a unit of competency or cluster of units. This may also include information about the resources the learner might be required to provide or have access too. An example would be if the delivery was online, there would be a requirement to access a computer and potentially stable internet connection. More information is available in the Assessment or Identifying and Meeting Learner Needs Fact Sheets
Assessment Conditions	Add any details of specific assessment conditions for the qualification – this may include for example off the job assessment before on the job assessment. The Department of Training and Workforce Development have published a detailed guide to the conduct of assessment for the VET

	Sector called, Assessment in the VET Sector. The publication provides in depth information about assessment practice as well as links to key supporting legislation. The document also contains examples from a range of RTOs.
Delivery Schedule	If appropriate.
Industry Consultation	More information on industry engagement is available in the Industry Engagement Fact Sheet.
Recognition Arrangements - RPL and/or Credit Transfer	More information on RPL is available in the Recognition of Prior Learning Fact Sheet and the Users' Guide to the Standards for RTOs.

RESOURCES

Facility Requirements **Equipment Requirements** **Learning and Assessment Resources**	TAS documents will often describe specific resources required for the delivery and assessment of the Training Product. If the TAS document does not include this information, it should direct the reader to the document that does include this information. This might include an assessment, a session plan, or a specific resource list for a unit of competency or cluster of units. This may also include information about the resources the learner might be required to provide or have access too. An example would be if the delivery was online, there would be a requirement to access a computer and potentially stable internet connection.
Trainers and assessors	Use this section of the TAS to document the staff that will be involved in the delivery and assessment of the Training Product for this target group. This may include RTO employees as well as workplace personnel where appropriate. This section should provide an overview of how the staff involved meet the qualification and experience requirements for their role. This section of the TAS is often supported by more detailed information in a staff matrix about how the trainers and assessors meet the requirements of clauses 1.13 – 1.16 of the Standards for RTOs.
Support services arranged by RTO	

VALIDATION

Validation **Stakeholder Feedback** **Transition Arrangements** **Date of Next Review**	Use this section to describe how the training and assessment strategy will be evaluated and monitored for effectiveness over the lifecycle of the Training Product and target groups engagement in training and assessment. Feedback and data will typically come from a range of sources including industry, the learners and the trainers and assessors to enable the RTO to make informed decisions about any changes or improvements that may be required. More information is available in the Assessment Validation Fact Sheet.