

Glossary of Terms

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2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)

Is comprised of three elements:

1. Outcome Standards (legislation):
[*National Vocational Education and Training Regulator \(Outcomes Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations\) Instrument 2025.*](#)
Outcome focused requirements that support the delivery of nationally consistent and high-quality training that leads to quality outcomes for students, industry, employers and the Australian community.
2. Compliance requirements (legislation):
[*National Vocational Education and Training Regulator \(Compliance Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations and Fit and Proper Person Requirements\) Instrument 2025.*](#)
Administrative requirements, including the Fit and Proper Person Requirements and the Nationally Recognised Training Logo Conditions of Use Policy, that support integrity in the VET sector.
3. [*Credential Policy: Standards for Registered Training Organisations.*](#)
An enforceable policy that outlines the credentials required for delivering training and assessments and undertaking validation of assessment.

Please note: Some RTOs in Victoria and Western Australia are regulated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority or the Training Accreditation Council Western Australia respectively.

ableism

Discrimination and social prejudice against people with disability based on the belief that typical abilities are superior. Ableism assumes that people with disability require 'fixing'. It defines people by their disability and classifies them as less than people without disability. It includes stereotypes, misconceptions and generalisations of people with disability.

access and equity

Policies and approaches aimed at ensuring vocational education and training (VET) is responsive to the individual needs of students whose age, gender, cultural or ethnic background, disability, sexuality, language skills, literacy or numeracy level, unemployment, imprisonment or remote location may present a barrier to access, participation and the achievement of suitable outcomes.

access plans

Formal document used in some RTOs to detail services, supports, reasonable adjustments and accommodations made available to a student with disability and/or health condition; also known as an Individual Learning Plan, Disability Access Plan, Learning Access Plan, Learning Support Plan, Individual Education Access Plan.

accessibility

Appropriate measures to ensure people with disability access, on an equal basis as students without disability: the physical environment (such as buildings and classrooms); transportation; information and communications (including information and communications technologies and systems); and other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and rural areas.

accessible information

Information provided in formats that allow every learner to access content on an equal basis as students without disability. For example, a video that includes captions, and a transcript that is accessible to all students, including students who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

accreditation

The formal recognition of a course by the [Australian Skills Quality Authority](#), in accordance with the [Standards for VET Regulators 2015](#) and the [Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021](#). An accredited course is a program of learning leading to an [Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\)](#) qualification for the relevant education and training sector.

adult and community education (ACE)

Education and training intended principally for adults. Adult and community education (ACE) includes general, vocational, basic and community education, as well as recreation, leisure and personal enrichment programs.

alt text

Alt text (alternative text) – also known as ‘alt attributes’, ‘alt descriptions’ and technically incorrectly as ‘alt tags’ – is used within HTML code to describe the appearance and function of an image or table on a page. Alt text allows people who are Blind or vision impaired to access to a description of an image; it is also used where low bandwidth connections require the display of a description in place of the image.

assessment

Process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard required in the workplace, as specified in a training package or a VET accredited course.

assistive technologies

Assistive technology (AT) is any item, piece of equipment, software program or product system that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disability. AT can be:

- low-tech: communication boards made of cardboard or fuzzy felt
- high-tech: special-purpose computers
- hardware: prosthetics, mounting systems and positioning devices
- computer hardware: special switches, keyboards and pointing devices
- computer software: screen readers and communication programs
- inclusive or specialised learning materials and curriculum aids
- specialised curricular software
- electronic devices, wheelchairs, walkers, braces, educational software, power lifts, pencil holders, eye-gaze and head trackers, and much more.

(Source: [Assistive Technology Industry Association](#))

audit (performance assessment)

A systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining evidence to determine whether the activities and related outcomes of a training organisation comply with the 2025 Standards for RTOs enabled by the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*.

Australian Human Rights Commission

An independent statutory organisation that works to protect and promote the human rights of all people in Australia, including students with disability. For more information visit: <https://humanrights.gov.au/>.

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)

The national regulator for Australia's VET sector responsible for accrediting and regulating RTOs across Australia and monitoring RTO compliance with the 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) (see above). [ASQA](#) also accredits and regulates RTOs that deliver VET to international students.

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

The national policy for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training system. The [AQF](#) includes quality assured qualifications across the different education and training sectors and in a broad range of fields of study/disciplines within a single comprehensive national qualifications framework.

AQF qualification

The result of an accredited program of learning that leads to formal certification that a graduate has achieved learning outcomes as described in the [Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\)](#).

award of a qualification

Occurs when a student has met the requirements of the qualification and the qualification is certified through the provision of a testamur. The term 'conferral' may also be used to describe this process.

capability building

Capability building refers to developing the skills and knowledge required for tasks. In this case, it is about RTO staff, trainers and assessors building knowledge, understanding and skills to support students with disability and being able to confidently apply the requirements of the [*Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\) \(DDA\)*](#) and [*Disability Standards for Education 2005 \(Cth\) \(DSE\)*](#).

captions

Written description intended for audiences who cannot hear the dialogue; in contrast to subtitles, captions also include a description of who is speaking as well as sounds.

certification

The verification and authentication of a student's entitlement to a qualification.

credit

The value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications. Credit reduces the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification through credit transfer, articulation, recognition of prior learning or advanced standing.

credit transfer

A process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for components of a qualification based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications.

Companion Volume Implementation Guide

Part of the non-endorsed quality assured components of training packages. It is designed to provide information about the entire training package and give implementation advice for RTOs.

competency

The consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments.

compliance with accredited course requirements

Meeting the requirements of the VET Quality Framework or [*Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021*](#).

consultation

Discussion with the student and associates to understand their individual circumstances and needs.

continuous improvement

Actions taken throughout an organisation to continually increase effectiveness and efficiency. The organisation and its stakeholders benefit from this process. Also known as quality improvement.

courses

Includes subjects, units, units of competency, modules, accredited and non-accredited courses and programs.

curriculum

Includes training packages, qualifications, units of competency, learning objectives and outcomes, course requirements, curriculum documents, accredited course documents, training and assessment strategies.

delivery methodologies

The various formats and approaches used to deliver a course. These may include face to face, online (synchronous and asynchronous), a blend of these or a hybrid.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR)

The Australian Government [*Department of Employment and Workplace Relations*](#) works to ensure Australians can experience the wellbeing and economic benefits that quality education, skills and employment provide.

disability

The result of the interaction between people living with impairments and barriers in the physical, attitudinal, communication and social environment. The definition of disability in the [*Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\) \(DDA\)*](#) is broad and includes physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological and learning disability.

Disability Inclusion and Access Plans (DIAP)

Also known as a Disability Action Plan or Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. A DIAP outlines ways in which an education provider ensures its services, workplace, premises and facilities are accessible and inclusive to people with disability. They express an organisation's commitment to go beyond compliance and break down attitudinal, physical, communication and social barriers.

disability confident

Means having an organisational or professional culture supported by policies, procedures, training and practices that ensure inclusion for people with disability.

disability discrimination

Disability discrimination occurs when a person with a disability is treated less favourably than a person without the disability in the same or similar circumstances. Disability discrimination can also occur where a person is imputed to have a disability or associated with a person with disability such as a relative or carer.

disclosure

The personal decision to share information about disability, and the impact it has on aspects of a person's life, in order to determine strategies for support and reasonable adjustment.

educational technology

Tools (physical hardware or software) used to facilitate learning, improve performance and assist learners; an example of this may be the use of speech-to-text technology.

e-Learning

Any forms of electronically supported learning and teaching.

e-Learning/online tool

Tool or system that supports online learning.

electronic/digital

Materials that are accessible by a computer or other digital devices; may include text, images, audio, video or a combination of these.

empowerment

The autonomy and self-determination of a person to represent their own interests. Opportunities for a person to act on their own authority.

enablement

Ensuring that individuals have every opportunity to exercise their autonomy, self-determination and own authority. Recognising that each person has the ability to make choices and determine the course of their life.

enrolment

Includes course counselling and student consultation, application and registration, information about fees and administration, assessment of learner needs and disclosure of learner support requirements. It also includes orientation to the teaching and learning methods and approaches.

evidence

Actions, information and documentation that supports and corroborates an organisation's assertions that they are compliant with legal and regulatory requirements, and accountability against their quality assertions. It can also relate to assessment – evidence of competency.

format

How information is converted or packaged (e.g., text-editing programs or presentations) and delivered or presented to the user; the ending within file names usually shows the format the file is saved in (e.g. .doc, .docx, .rtf, .xls, .csv, .jpg, .pdf).

foundation skills

A combination of English language, literacy and numeracy skills, digital literacy skills and employability skills required for participation in work, the community and education and training.

harassment

Harassment occurs when someone makes others feel intimidated, insulted, humiliated or places them in a hostile environment. Harassment because of a disability, such as insults or humiliating jokes, is against the law if it happens in a place of employment or education, or from people providing goods and services.

inclusive education

Education that encompasses culture, policy and practice that recognises individual strengths and capabilities, accommodates individual learner requirements and commits to removing barriers to participation; this involves attentive consideration of legislation, policy and the mechanisms for funding, administration, design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of education and training.

industry

The organisations or bodies that have a stake in the training, assessment and client services provided by vocational education providers.

information and communication technology (ICT)

Technologies that provide access to information through telecommunications. This includes the Internet, wireless networks, computer and network hardware, software, mobile phones/telephony, broadcast media and all types of audio and video processing and transmission.

inherent requirements

Fundamental parts of a course that must be met by all students for them to be deemed competent; they are the abilities, skills and knowledge students need to complete the course. Removal of inherent requirements compromises learning outcomes.

micro credential

Micro-credentials are short and targeted training products. Micro-credentials in vocational education and training (VET) offer more flexible ways of learning. They also deliver in-time training to meet emerging and urgent skills needs. Micro-credentials support people to move between jobs and industries and can be used as building blocks towards full qualifications. Micro-credentials also support people to move between jobs and industries and can be used as building blocks towards full qualifications (Source: [Department of Education](#)).

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Compliance Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations and Fit and Proper Person Requirements) Instrument 2025

Administrative requirements (including the Fit and Proper Person Requirements and NRT Logo Conditions of Use Policy) that support integrity in the VET sector. These standards are one component of the 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) (see above).

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Outcomes Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations) Instrument 2025

Outcome focused requirements that support the delivery of nationally consistent and high-quality training that leads to quality outcomes for students, industry, employers and the Australian community. These standards are one component of the 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) (see above).

orientation

An orientation occurs prior to a student commencing their course or study. During orientation, students are provided with essential information about the VET provider and the course in which they are enrolled. Orientation may include providing the student with information relating to services and supports available, scheduling, use of the learning tools and technologies, on-site tours and instruction about the methodologies used.

onboarding

The planned actions and processes for familiarising a new student to the training tools and technologies, training and assessment strategies and requirements, supports, services and facilities provided by the RTO.

pathway/s

Allows students to move through qualification levels with full or partial recognition for the qualifications and/or learning outcomes they already have. (Also see credit transfer, recognition of prior learning.)

participation

All students can access and engage with the learning activities, resources and materials, services, supports and facilities on an equal basis with others, and without barriers.

practice guides

Guides based on the key steps of the learner journey and aligned to the [*Disability Standards for Education 2005 \(Cth\) \(DSE\)*](#). Each guide presents an overview and explanation of an element of the practice, and practice considerations and checkpoints. The guides include a brief summary of how they relate to the regulatory framework. They also recommend free, accessible resources and training for RTOs staff and trainers and assessors. Practice guides aim to build capability to better support students with disability and meet the obligations as outlined in the [*Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\) \(DDA\)*](#), DSE and the 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).

practice illustrations

Practical examples highlighting situations that may occur for students with disability when participating and studying a course in the VET sector. The illustrations of practice aim to demonstrate the links to the [*Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\) \(DDA\)*](#), [*Disability Standards for Education 2005 \(Cth\) \(DSE\)*](#) and the 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and provide potential options for adjustments and resolutions for an example provided.

The intent is to assist in building the capability of RTOs to understand their obligations under the DSE and be confident in supporting the rights of students with disability.

pre-enrolment

The time and actions occurring before someone enrolls in VET pathways. It is the method by which the student raises awareness of pathways and choices, gathers and explores information about study pathways and options, and plans and selects courses in preparation for application and enrolment. These activities assist the student to make informed choices.

principles of assessment

The four principles of assessment – fairness, flexibility, validity and reliability – aim to support robust and rigorous assessment systems, processes and tools.

print disability

Inability to (or difficulty with) accessing printed text due to disability.

prospective student

Person who approaches an RTO about seeking admission to, or applying for enrolment in, the institution.

qualification

Formal certification, issued by an RTO, in recognition that a person has achieved learning outcomes or competencies relevant to identified individual, professional, industry or community needs.

reasonable adjustment

Legislative term that, for VET, refers to a measure or action taken by an education provider to enable learners with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as learners without disability. The nature and range of adjustment to an assessment tool or assessment method, which will ensure valid, authentic and sufficient evidence is gathered to make reliable assessment decisions to meet the characteristics of the person(s) being assessed.

recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Assessment process that judges an individual's competency/s that may have been acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual meets the requirements specified in the training package or VET accredited courses.

registered training organisation (RTO)

Training organisation registered with [*Australian Skills Quality Authority \(ASQA\)*](#), [*Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority \(VRQA\)*](#) or [*Training Accreditation Council \(TAC\) \(WA\)*](#) in accordance with the requirements of the VET Quality Framework, to provide specific VET and/or assessment services (includes technical and further education [TAFE], community, enterprise and private/independent training providers).

scaffolding

Variety of instructional techniques used to move students progressively towards stronger understanding and, ultimately, greater independence in the learning process.

scope of registration

Particular training products that an RTO is registered to provide.

screen reader

Redigital device by reading the presented information with the use of a synthetic voice; in addition to reading text, a screen reader also allows a user/learner to navigate and interact with the content using their voice; for braille users, a screen reader can also supply the information in Braille.

self-assurance

When training providers have their own systems and practices to monitor, evaluate and continually improve their training outcomes and performance against the 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).

skill set

Single unit of competency or a combination of units of competency from a training package that link to a licensing or regulatory requirement, or a defined industry need.

Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021

Legislative instrument used to formally identify the requirements for accrediting VET courses. Visit [*Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021*](#).

statement of attainment

Statement given to a person confirming that the person has satisfied the requirements of specified units of competency or modules.

structured text

Text information that has been organised with an established reading order and headings using software functions such as applying styles or tagging.

student/learner

Person enrolled in a formal program of learning in an educational institution and/or a workplace setting.

student-centred

Student-centred learning, also known as learner-centred education, broadly encompasses methods of teaching that shift the focus of instruction from the teacher to the student. Student-centred education and training focusses on designing learning experiences that recognise and respond to the individual needs of each student.

student journey

The [*Australian Skills Quality Authority \(ASQA\)*](#) defines the key elements of the VET student journey as: marketing and recruitment, enrolments, support and progression, training and assessment and completion.

Student Support/Learning Plan

Student-focused planning and monitoring tool that documents the enrolment, learning schedule and learning opportunities throughout the student's study. It also includes notes and information about support and discussions had with the student throughout their studies.

student support services

Services provided by the RTO to maximise the chance of a student successfully completing their training. This may include providing support through:

- study support and study skills programs
- language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) programs or referrals to these programs
- provision of equipment, resources and/or programs to increase access for learners with disability and other learners in accordance with access and equity principles
- use of trained support staff including specialist teachers, note takers and interpreters
- flexible scheduling and delivery of training and assessment
- provision of learning materials in alternative formats
- other mechanisms, such as assistance in using technology for online delivery components
- access and referral to specialist services (e.g. counselling, occupational expertise).

support worker

Person who provides individual assistance to a student with disability in order to enhance their life experience. In the VET sector, there are generally two types of support workers:

- **external support worker**

Person who is externally employed (paid and unpaid) by individuals and organisations to provide personal services and supports to the student with disability while on-site completing their tertiary education and training.

- **internal support worker**

Person employed by the tertiary provider under a contract of employment to provide services and supports to students with disability to enhance their learning experience.

trainer and assessor

Person who teaches and assesses a learner's competency in accordance with Outcome Standards 3.2 and 3.3 of the [*National Vocational Education and Training Regulator \(Outcomes Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations\) Instrument 2025*](#). Trainers and assessors may also be known as lecturer, teacher, VET practitioner, educator, etc.

Training Accreditation Council (TAC)

The [*Training Accreditation Council*](#) (the Council or TAC) is Western Australia's Vocational Education and Training (VET) regulator and is established under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*. The Council can register training organisations and accredit courses.

training and assessment strategies or delivery and assessment strategies

Critical information describing how an RTO will deliver and assess the training product for their learner cohort. The 2025 Standards for RTOs are a foundation for quality training – describing the key factors that contribute to quality VET. The Standards will help to foster a VET sector that is trusted, capable and equipped to deliver quality training and provide the skills we need for the future.

Training and assessment strategies or delivery and assessment strategies will help 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.

training package

Training packages are developed to meet the training needs of an industry or a group; training packages do not suggest how a learner should be trained, rather, they specify the skills and knowledge required to perform effectively in the workplace.

training product

[*Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\)*](#) qualification, skill set, unit of competency, accredited short course and module.

transition (from school)

Decision-making, planning and preparation to successfully move from high school to post-school options, such as VET. Transition planning is a process that helps people plan, prepare and work towards achieving their future directions and goals. It is planning now for a desired future.

unit of competency

Defines the knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill to the standard of performance expected in the workplace, as defined in a training package.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Framework to improve and optimise teaching and learning for all people; UDL describes a way of teaching and learning that is flexible and facilitates equal access for learners.

unjustifiable hardship

Service providers such as education providers and employers are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' to help a person with a disability carry out inherent requirements and eliminate barriers to participation. In some circumstances it may be unreasonable to provide complete accessibility and there is provision in the [*Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\) \(DDA\)*](#) to apply unjustifiable hardship in these circumstances.

usability

Extent to which a product can be used by identified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction in a specified context of use; usability is different from accessibility.

VET accredited course

A VET accredited course is:

- a structured sequence of training developed to meet training needs that are not addressed by existing training packages
- a course accredited by the national VET regulator or by a delegated body of the national VET regulator
- a course that has been assessed by [*Australian Skills Quality Authority \(ASQA\)*](#), [*Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority \(VRQA\)*](#) and [*Training Accreditation Council \(TAC\) \(WA\)*](#) as compliant with [*the Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021*](#) and the [*Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\)*](#).

vocational education and training (VET)

Vocational education and training (VET) is provided by RTOs to enable students to gain qualifications and specific workplace skills for all types of employment; RTOs include TAFE colleges, ACE providers and agricultural colleges, as well as private providers, community organisations, industry skill centres, and commercial and enterprise training providers.

vocational placement

Required placement for a student who is completing a course to undertake practical training and gain experience in a real-life workplace. It is sometimes known as field placement, student placement or work placement.

VOCEDplus

Free international research database for the tertiary education sector, relating to workforce needs, skills development and social inclusion. It encompasses VET, higher education, ACE, informal learning and VET in Schools.

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)

The [VRQA](#) is Victoria's education and training regulator. It is an independent statutory authority that works to assure the quality of education and training in Victoria through the application of standards to some education and training providers and accreditation of courses and qualifications.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

Guidelines developed through the W3C process in cooperation with individuals and organisations around the world, with a goal of providing a single shared standard for web content accessibility that meets the needs of individuals, organisations and governments internationally.

World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)

International community of Member organisations aimed at progressing the full potential of the World Wide Web through the development of protocols and guidelines that ensure the long-term growth of the Web.

Disclaimer

The 'supporting students with disability resources' provide guidance on legislation and policy for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) regarding vocational education and training for students with disability, but they should not be considered legal advice or impose additional legal obligations. RTOs should seek tailored legal advice to understand their specific obligations.

This resource is funded by the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations through the Supporting Students with Disability in VET project.