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Mandatory Workplace Requirements

On the Mark: 5 Good Practice Principles

Guide for Training Product Developers
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Mandatory Workplace Requirements: Good Practice Guide

On the Mark: 5 Good Practice Principles

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Thank you to the many stakeholders who generously contributed their time and insights during the consultation phase of this project. Your feedback was essential in informing the content of this guide and will support developers in considering how best to represent mandatory workplace requirements in national training products.

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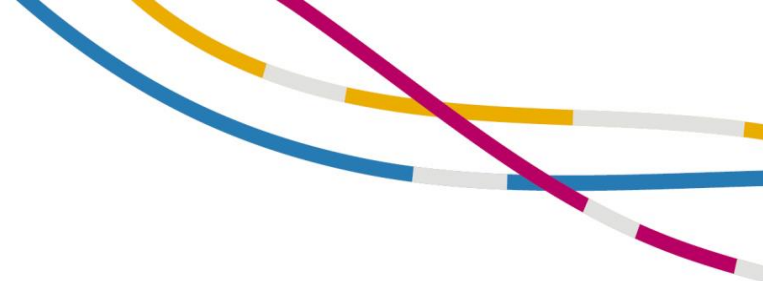


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About this guide

This guide is for training product developers, currently Industry Reference Committees (IRCs) and the Skills Service Organisations (SSOs) and contractors or consultants who support them.

It supports good practice in the development of vocational education and training (VET) products that include mandatory workplace requirements.

VET system stakeholders have identified a need for clarity around mandatory workplace requirements in training products to support a shared understanding and interpretation of these requirements by training providers, industry partners, VET system regulators and funding bodies.

Disruptions in learner access to workplaces, caused by COVID-19, exposed the fragility that mandatory workplace requirements can create in the workforce development pipeline when qualification completions are impeded. Clearly expressing mandatory workplace requirements in training products can help VET system users to understand and prepare for issues that may arise in future.

The skill development needs and training delivery contexts of each industry can vary, therefore the way that mandatory workplace requirements are represented in training products will also vary. This guide is structured around a set of principles that can be applied to all training products to support consistent and clear representation of mandatory workplace requirements within the current Training Package Organising Framework.

The guide consists of the following 6 sections and a glossary at guide end, which you may wish to customise and expand to reflect your specific context.

Section 1:	Gives background on the need for this guide
Section 2:	Outlines the Training Package Organising Framework that you must apply
Section 3:	Unpacks terminology associated with mandatory workplace requirements
Section 4:	Sets out 5 good practice principles for mandatory workplace requirements
Section 5:	Specifies 9 steps to address the good practice principles
Section 6:	Provides support in completing each of the 9 steps
Glossary	Details terms relating to mandatory workplace requirements

Each section of the guide provides advice to help you:

- determine and justify when it is appropriate to include mandatory workplace requirements in training products
- express mandatory workplace requirements so that training product users can consistently interpret them.



1. Background

Employers in many industries value learners being able to develop and demonstrate skills and knowledge in a workplace setting. Work placement, as a component of vocational education and training, gives learners the opportunity to practise newly acquired skills while building their understanding of industry expectations and pressures. For these reasons, many registered training organisations (RTOs) have implemented training delivery models that include work placement or work-based delivery to provide learners with high-quality learning experiences and outcomes.

However, training package products are outcomes statements and do not prescribe training delivery methods. A mandatory workplace requirement in a training product is different to a work placement that is voluntarily adopted by an RTO as a mode of delivery, and from training conducted under a contract of employment (as in apprenticeships and traineeships).

When used in training package products, mandatory workplace requirements are related to the conditions under which specified performance evidence and/or knowledge evidence are demonstrated in the workplace. Mandatory workplace requirements are therefore tied to assessment and the demonstration of required skills and knowledge.

Where a unit specifies a mandatory workplace requirement, that requirement *must* be completed before the learner is deemed competent in the unit and can be awarded the related qualification.

However, industry disruption can restrict learner access to workplaces and so create a barrier to qualification completion that is detrimental to the learner and to industries in need of skilled workers. It is therefore important to make sure that the specification of mandatory workplace requirements in training products does not create unnecessary barriers to qualification completion. This involves balancing the benefits of demonstrating skills and knowledge in the workplace with the challenges those requirements can create in the workforce development pipeline.

2. Training Package Organising Framework

As a training product developer, you must comply with the Training Package Organising Framework when developing training package products. The 4 components of the framework (Figure 1) support the development of training packages; none however articulate requirements for specifying mandatory workplace requirements in training products.

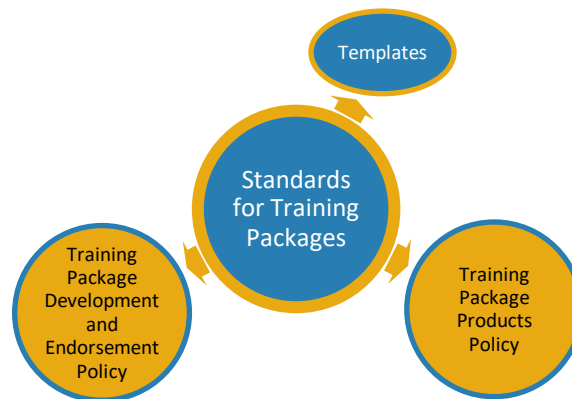


Figure 1 Components of the Training Package Organising Framework

The **Standards for Training Packages** are the overarching standards that specify the design and development requirements of training packages. They include templates that expand on those requirements. Of relevance to mandatory workplace requirements:

- **Standard 6:** Assessment requirements specify the evidence and required conditions for assessment.

The **Training Package Development and Endorsement Process Policy** specifies the process that must be followed when developing a training package through to its approval for implementation. Of relevance to mandatory workplace requirements:

- Training packages prescribe assessment requirements but they do not prescribe how someone should be trained.
- Where training products include mandatory workplace requirements, consultation with employers must demonstrate evidence of support for proposed requirements (including from small to medium-sized enterprises), and employer willingness to support a learner's work placement. This information must be provided in the Case for Endorsement.

This policy also enshrines 6 *Training Package Quality Principles*. Of relevance to mandatory workplace requirements are:

- **Principle 2:** Support portability of skills and competencies, including reflecting licensing and regulatory requirements.
- **Principle 4:** Be flexible to meet the diversity of individual and employer needs, including the capacity to adapt to changing job roles and workplaces.
- **Principle 6:** Support interpretation by training providers and others through the use of simple, concise language and clear articulation of assessment requirements.

The **Training Package Products Policy** outlines the design rules that you must adhere to when developing or modifying a training package product. There are no requirements in this policy for how, or whether, mandatory workplace requirements should be included in training products.



3. Understanding mandatory workplace requirements

The terminology associated with mandatory workplace requirements is not consistently used by VET stakeholders.

Mandatory workplace requirements refer to requirements for skills and knowledge to be demonstrated, and evidence collected, in a workplace.

Mandatory workplace requirements are specified in national training products where they have been identified through industry consultation as essential for providing confidence in the ability of graduates to operate safely and effectively in the workplace.

The treatment of mandatory workplace requirements should distinguish between tasks or activities that:

- must be demonstrated in a workplace – these are mandatory workplace requirements
- must be demonstrated through simulation because they are not appropriate (e.g. too rare, risky, sensitive) or possible (e.g. due to geographic location) to demonstrate in a workplace – these are not mandatory workplace requirements but they also require careful specification in the assessment requirements
- may be demonstrated in a workplace or in an environment that replicates the workplace – these are not mandatory workplace requirements but also require careful specification in the assessment requirements.

If you are responsible for more than one training package, there may be value in using consistent language and approaches to the specification of mandatory workplace requirements across training products where possible. This would help training product users to interpret and implement mandatory workplace requirements more consistently.

Refer to page 47 for a glossary of terms that are found in training products in relation to mandatory workplace requirements.



4. The 5 good practice principles

There is no single ‘right’ way to include mandatory workplace requirements in training products. Variation should be expected according to the specific skill-development needs of an industry and the realities of implementation in that industry.

However, the following **general principles** should guide you when developing training products.

Mandatory workplace requirements must be:

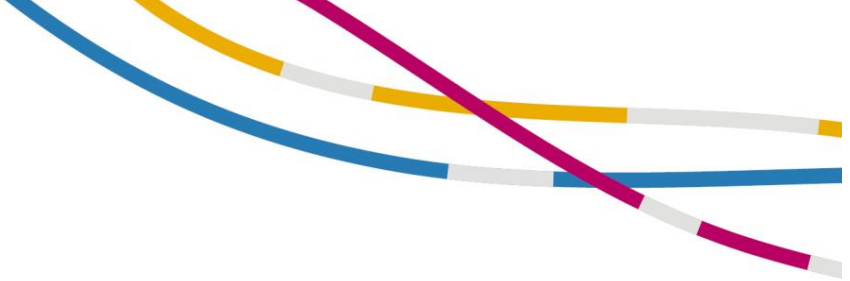
1. **Necessary** – based on needs expressed by industry.
2. **Achievable** – able to be implemented by RTOs and employers.
3. **Justified** – based on valid rationale.
4. **Defined** – clearly stated in the training product.
5. **Supported** – backed by support information and guidance.

By applying these principles, you can be confident that the mandatory workplace requirements you specify in a training product are fit for industry and qualification purposes and are clear to product users.

Table 1 shows how the training product development process you follow can help you produce mandatory workplace requirements that are necessary, achievable, justified, defined and supported.

Table 1 Mandatory workplace requirements: Principles to apply when developing training product

Principles		Training Product Development Process		
Mandatory workplace requirements must be:		Stages in development process	Outcomes produced by development process	Steps training product developers should use in the development process
1 Necessary:	based on needs expressed by industry	Research – Understand the need for mandatory workplace requirements and stakeholder capacity to provide or meet them	Rationale for including mandatory workplace requirements and/or basis for developing simulation requirements	1. Investigate why industry considers that mandatory workplace requirements are needed 2. Explore what is possible and appropriate through simulation
2 Achievable:	able to be implemented by RTOs and employers		Evidence of employer support for mandatory workplace requirements and RTO/system capacity to implement	3. Determine industry/employer capacity to support mandatory workplace requirements 4. Analyse impact of mandatory workplace requirements on training product implementation
3 Justified:	based on valid rationale		Documentation of how and why mandatory workplace requirements should be included in the training product	5. Establish whether mandatory workplace requirements are the right solution to address the issues identified by industry
4 Defined:	clearly stated in the training product	Development – Articulate mandatory workplace requirements in the training product	Clarity on how and where the mandatory workplace requirements are specified (number of hours, shifts, experiences, conditions, etc.)	6. Establish specific requirements appropriate for industry and qualification purposes 7. Use clearly defined terminology and consistent language and location for the mandatory workplace requirements
5 Supported:	backed by support information and guidance	Implementation – Support interpretation of mandatory workplace requirements	Advice for companion volume/s or other non-endorsed guides	8. Provide support information to promote correct and consistent interpretation of mandatory workplace requirements 9. Provide guidance to build employer commitment and capacity to support mandatory workplace requirements



5. Steps in the training product development process

5.1 Research stage

The intent of the *Training Package Development and Endorsement Process Policy* is that training packages reflect identified workforce outcomes and are driven by industry need. The training package development process includes extensive consultation with industry and other stakeholders.

The research stage in any training product development work you do should include a specific focus on mandatory workplace requirements.



Step 1: Investigate why industry considers that mandatory workplace requirements are needed

There are many reasons why industry stakeholders may want a mandatory workplace requirement included in a training package product. Although those reasons reflect valid industry concerns, some may not be relevant to training package specifications. The consultation process should make sure that industry stakeholders understand what mandatory workplace requirements are and what can, and cannot, be achieved in training products.

Your initial consultation on mandatory workplace requirements should focus on understanding why stakeholders believe they are needed. This includes understanding the problem that stakeholders are trying to address and what they believe mandatory workplace requirements will achieve. The breadth and depth of industry consultation is important to make sure that perspectives are gathered from those subject matter experts and individuals who are familiar with the work functions and active in the relevant industry contexts.

If mandatory workplace requirements are already included in your training products, the consultation process should gather information to review them and consider whether there have been any new developments, or industry or VET system changes, that affect them.

Approach

Use consultation questions that unpack stakeholder thinking about mandatory workplace requirements.

Ask stakeholders to:

- reflect on the effectiveness of mandatory workplace requirements, if they are currently included in the training product that is to be revised
- consider whether options other than mandatory workplace requirements would be more effective for addressing industry needs
- describe the benefits of mandatory workplace requirements for developing needed workforce skills and knowledge and how they relate to a specific qualification or unit
- think about how work placement benefits a 'typical' learner and then consider whether the same applies for other types of learners
- identify the skill and knowledge outcomes that would be demonstrated through mandatory workplace requirements.



Go to page 21 for support in completing step 1.



At the end of this step, you should have:

- learned what industry stakeholders are trying to achieve through mandatory workplace requirements
- documented evidence of industry need to use in the Case for Endorsement.



Step 2: Explore what is possible and appropriate through simulation

Industries can find it difficult to accommodate the volume of learners needing access to a workplace. While these difficulties can be short-term and/or related to context-specific factors, some RTOs experience ongoing work placement issues. For example, having to compete with higher education for access to placements or limited availability of qualified supervisors in some industries.

The VET system may achieve greater learner throughput from the available work placements if simulation is used to replace some requirements for assessment in the workplace. There are also many situations where simulation is preferable to assessment in the workplace, e.g. where situations required for assessment are infrequent or unplanned, or there are safety concerns for the learner or others in the workplace.

Some industry stakeholders are concerned that simulation may reflect poor practice in training and assessment. When done well, however, simulation can effectively replicate the workplace and provide a viable alternative.

Clear specifications for simulation in training products can drive VET system investment in appropriate simulation resources and facilities. Through consultation with subject matter experts, you should identify which skills and knowledge learners can demonstrate using simulation.

Approach

Use consultation questions to gather information on what is possible through simulation and what a simulated environment needs to replicate to produce valid outcomes.

Ask subject matter experts:

- how simulation is currently used by industry and training providers
- what simulation technologies, systems and/or approaches are possible, viable and effective
- whether appropriate simulation could reduce the need for assessment in the workplace
- how simulation requirements should be specified in the training product to produce the outcomes required by industry.



Go to page 26 for support in completing step 2.



At the end of this step, you should have:

- determined what skills and knowledge can be demonstrated through simulation
- documented the conditions that are required for effective simulation – these can be included as specifications in the assessment conditions.



Step 3: Determine industry/employer capacity to support mandatory workplace requirements

As previously noted, the *Training Package Development and Endorsement Process Policy* requires that where training products include mandatory workplace requirements, consultation with employers must demonstrate evidence of:

- support for proposed requirements (including from small to medium-sized enterprises)
- employer willingness to support or provide work placement for learners.

The policy also requires that training packages are flexible to meet the diversity of individual and employer needs.

Your consultation process should seek to understand how mandatory workplace requirements would impact different learners and employers so that you can make sure that the training product you develop accommodates diverse needs.

Approach

Use consultation questions to explore the potential impacts on learners and employers of including mandatory workplace requirements in the training product.

Ask consultation participants:

- if there are barriers that would prevent learners from participating in mandatory workplace requirements and whether they affect certain types of learners more than others
- if there are restrictions on the scope of work that learners are allowed to undertake in a workplace
- what it takes for employers to effectively support mandatory workplace requirements, e.g. if specific facilities are needed in the workplace or whether workplace supervisors need to meet specific requirements
- what capacity employers have to support mandatory workplace requirements and what influences that capacity
- whether certain employers (e.g. regional, small to medium-sized enterprises, niche sectors) have less capacity
- how employers will work with RTOs to support implementation.



Go to page 29 for support in completing step 3.



At the end of this step, you should have:

- developed an understanding how mandatory workplace requirements impact learners and employers
- compiled evidence of employer support for mandatory workplace requirements to use in the Case for Endorsement.



Step 4: Analyse impact of mandatory workplace requirements on training product implementation

As we saw in step 3, many factors influence whether employers and RTOs can implement mandatory workplace requirements. Even with employer support, implementation can be hampered by barriers to learner participation or RTO operational challenges.

While implementation is not the focus of training product development, which is concerned with specifying the outcomes that industry needs from training, it can be helpful for you to consider whether implementation issues will prevent RTOs from delivering those outcomes. For training products to meet the needs of industry and employers, you should be aware of the costs and practicalities of implementing mandatory workplace requirements and what you can do to help make them achievable.

Your consultation process must include educators, state or territory training authorities and other funding bodies, industry regulators and VET regulators to explore the potential impacts of including mandatory workplace requirements in a training product.

Approach

Use consultation questions to explore how mandatory workplace requirements impact the training and assessment that RTOs provide.

Ask consultation participants:

- how mandatory workplace requirements affect learners' progression through their qualification and achievement of learning outcomes
- the impact of mandatory workplace requirements on the viability of delivering training and assessment for an RTO
- what features of partnerships between RTOs and employers are critical for supporting the implementation of mandatory workplace requirements.



Go to page 31 for support in completing step 4.



At the end of this step, you should have:

- investigated the factors that influence RTO capacity to implement mandatory workplace requirements and their impact on learner uptake and outcomes
- gathered intelligence to inform decisions on how to specify mandatory workplace requirements in the training product.



Step 5: Establish whether mandatory workplace requirements are the right solution to address the issues identified by industry

Based on intelligence and evidence gathered through steps 1 to 4, you can evaluate whether mandatory workplace requirements are an appropriate and workable solution for the training product.

At this point it is important for stakeholders to be aware of what can be achieved through training product design.

Although mandatory workplace requirements may have been used in the past as a solution for implementation issues, this alone is not an appropriate reason for their ongoing inclusion in a training package. Mandatory workplace requirements cannot, and should not be expected to, address systemic VET issues, e.g. to improve the quality of delivery, build RTO capability or employer capacity, or change funding arrangements.

It is important to keep an open mind when thinking through the issues you identify in this step, and the most suitable specification solutions. You can use a decision tree (see page 33) to objectively consider the implications of various identified issues and how the design of the mandatory workplace requirement might accommodate them.

Approach

Organise information gathered through the consultation process to decide whether mandatory workplace requirements provide the best solution for addressing the issues identified by industry.

In the decision-making process, take account of implementation risks and realities by considering:

- whether industry-identified reasons for mandatory workplace requirements are appropriate to address through training products or whether there are better alternative mechanisms for addressing them
- whether employer capacity to support mandatory workplace requirements will accommodate the volume of learners undertaking the qualification and/or units
- whether the impacts on learners will disadvantage specific learner groups
- whether viability or other operational issues will prevent RTOs from implementing mandatory workplace requirements
- whether the specification of simulation requirements could provide a suitable alternative for mandatory workplace requirements.

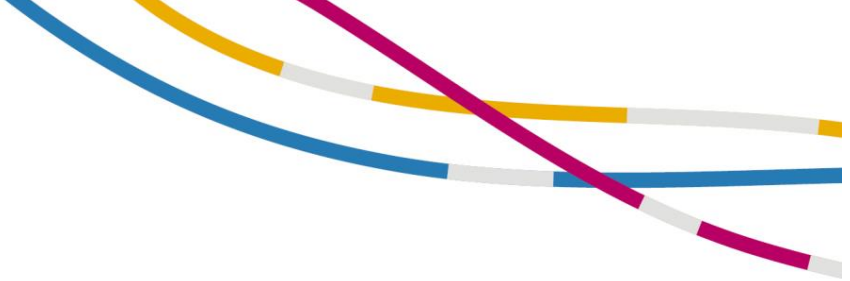


Go to page 33 for support in completing step 5.



At the end of this step, you should have:

- decided whether mandatory workplace requirements need to be included in the training products you are developing
- documented a rationale for the decision to use in the Case for Endorsement.



5.2 Development stage

The *Training Package Quality Principles* require that training packages use simple, concise language and clear articulation of assessment requirements.

In the development stage you need to achieve clarity on how and where the mandatory workplace requirements are specified in the training product.

It is also helpful during the development stage to consider how and when mandatory workplace requirements will be reviewed in future so that they continue to reflect industry needs and VET system capability.



Step 6: Establish specific requirements appropriate for industry and qualification purposes

Once a decision has been made to include mandatory workplace requirements in a training product, work with stakeholders to determine exactly what the requirements will entail and how they should be expressed. During this process you should identify the specific activities or tasks that must be demonstrated in a workplace.

If you identified barriers to implementing mandatory workplace requirements in earlier steps, you will need to think about how the requirements can be prescribed in a way that makes implementation possible.

Approach

Designing the specification for mandatory workplace requirements is likely to involve multiple rounds of engagement with key stakeholders. To help stakeholders to negotiate from an informed position, prepare an issues paper to document industry need, implementation considerations, practical solutions, and areas for compromise.

Use the issues paper to broker stakeholder agreement on:

- whether the mandatory workplace requirements relate to a whole qualification or to specific unit/s
- what performance evidence and/or knowledge evidence needs to be demonstrated in the workplace
- the amount of time (and/or number of activities and/or type of experience) needed in a workplace to achieve the required outcomes (the volume and frequency of requirements)
- circumstances under which the workplace requirement can or should be simulated
- who should be involved in assessment and supervision in the workplace.




Go to page 34 for support in completing step 6.



At the end of this step, you should have:

- developed specifications for mandatory workplace requirements to include in the training product
- documented decisions that you will use to guide product development.



Step 7: Use clearly defined terminology and consistent language and location for the mandatory workplace requirements

For users to interpret mandatory workplace requirements in the way they are intended, you need to make sure that:

- language is straightforward and readily understood
- terminology is defined unambiguously and used consistently
- the level of prescription is clear and in line with the *Training Package Products Policy*
- components of the training products are internally consistent so that all sections of qualifications and units support (rather than contradict) each other.

Approach

For mandatory workplace requirements to be treated as 'mandatory', they must be included in the endorsed components of a training package.

Establish a visible and consistent location for mandatory workplace requirements in the training product:

- in the qualification packaging rules, identify which listed unit/s are subject to mandatory workplace requirements
- locate mandatory workplace requirements in each of the following 2 locations in the assessment requirements associated with the unit of competency:
 - performance evidence – specify which of the listed items must be demonstrated in the workplace and the required volume and frequency for their demonstration
 - assessment conditions – specify required conditions for gathering performance evidence, including requirements for facilities, equipment and supervision
- include sub-headings for mandatory workplace requirements in the performance evidence and assessment conditions – it may be useful to have a similar sub-heading to identify requirements for simulation and/or workplace replication, but these requirements should be separated from mandatory workplace requirements.

Express the mandatory workplace requirements clearly by:

- using words and phrases consistently when specifying the information in more than one section or component of a training package
- defining terms that may be open to interpretation, e.g. shifts, service periods.

As you draft the mandatory workplace requirements, test them with intended users (including RTOs, funding bodies and auditors) to make sure they are correctly and consistently interpreted.



Go to page 38 for support in completing step 7.



At the end of this step, you should have:

- included mandatory workplace requirements in the endorsed component of the training package
- collected user feedback to inform the development of support information for a companion volume.



5.3 Implementation stage

Even when you have done everything you can to make training product requirements clear, users can still need help with interpretation and implementation.

Various VET sector stakeholders take on an advisory role for RTOs. You can aid this by including explanations, guidance and tools in training package companion volumes.



Step 8: Provide support information to promote correct and consistent interpretation of mandatory workplace requirements

Although Companion Volume Implementation Guides (CVIGs) are not endorsed, they can provide valuable guidance for RTOs and help all stakeholders to put mandatory workplace requirements into practice as intended by industry.

CVIGs are not the place to specify mandatory workplace requirements; they should already be clearly specified in the qualifications and units of the training package. Instead, examples can be included in a CVIG to illustrate how the mandatory workplace requirements might be implemented.

CVIGs can also include industry advice for delivery and assessment, including advice on choosing training pathways, the value of work-based training, and approaches to simulation. Within the range of advice provided in a CVIG, it is important to maintain clarity regarding what is ‘mandated’ by the mandatory workplace requirements and what is merely recommended for implementing of the training product.

Approach

Keep information on mandatory workplace requirements separate from advice on approaches to delivery and use of simulation so that users are not confused about what is mandatory.

Establish a visible and consistent location for guidance on mandatory workplace requirements:

- consider creating a separate guide for mandatory workplace requirements
- accurately reflect the specification that is in the endorsed component of the training package – don’t include additional requirements for mandatory workplace requirements in the CVIG that are not specified in the endorsed component
- distinguish between the explanation of what the mandatory workplace requirements mean (what is mandated) and advice on how they could be implemented (what is advised).

As you draft content for the companion volume/s, test it with a range of users, including RTOs and regulators, to make sure it is interpreted as intended.



Go to page 44 for support in completing step 8.



At the end of this step, you should have:

- included advice on mandatory workplace requirements in the non-endorsed component/s of the training package.



Step 9: Provide guidance to build employer commitment and capacity to support mandatory workplace requirements

Employer support is critical for the viability of mandatory workplace requirements as part of training package implementation, but many learners and RTOs find it difficult to secure the involvement of a workplace. The guidance and resources you include in a CVIG can help RTOs to engage with employers.

Approach

Work with industry stakeholders to develop messaging that encourages employers to support mandatory workplace requirements.

Develop information or guidance material for the CVIG that RTOs can use to:

- communicate the benefits of mandatory workplace requirements to employers
- explain the roles, responsibilities and expectations for host employers participating in mandatory workplace requirements
- build the capability of RTO staff to engage with employers to implement mandatory workplace requirements.

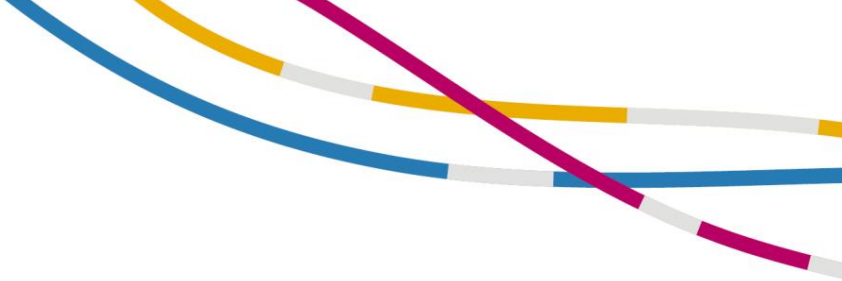


Go to page 46 for support in completing step 9.



At the end of this step, you should have:

- included guidance in the non-endorsed component/s of the training package that supports employer engagement with mandatory workplace requirements.



6. Support in completing the 9 steps

This section contains information and examples that you can use to inform your processes for developing mandatory workplace requirements and including them in training products.

Figure 2 outlines how the steps in this guide can be used to help you to produce the evidence and specifications required to develop training product components that refer to mandatory workplace requirements.

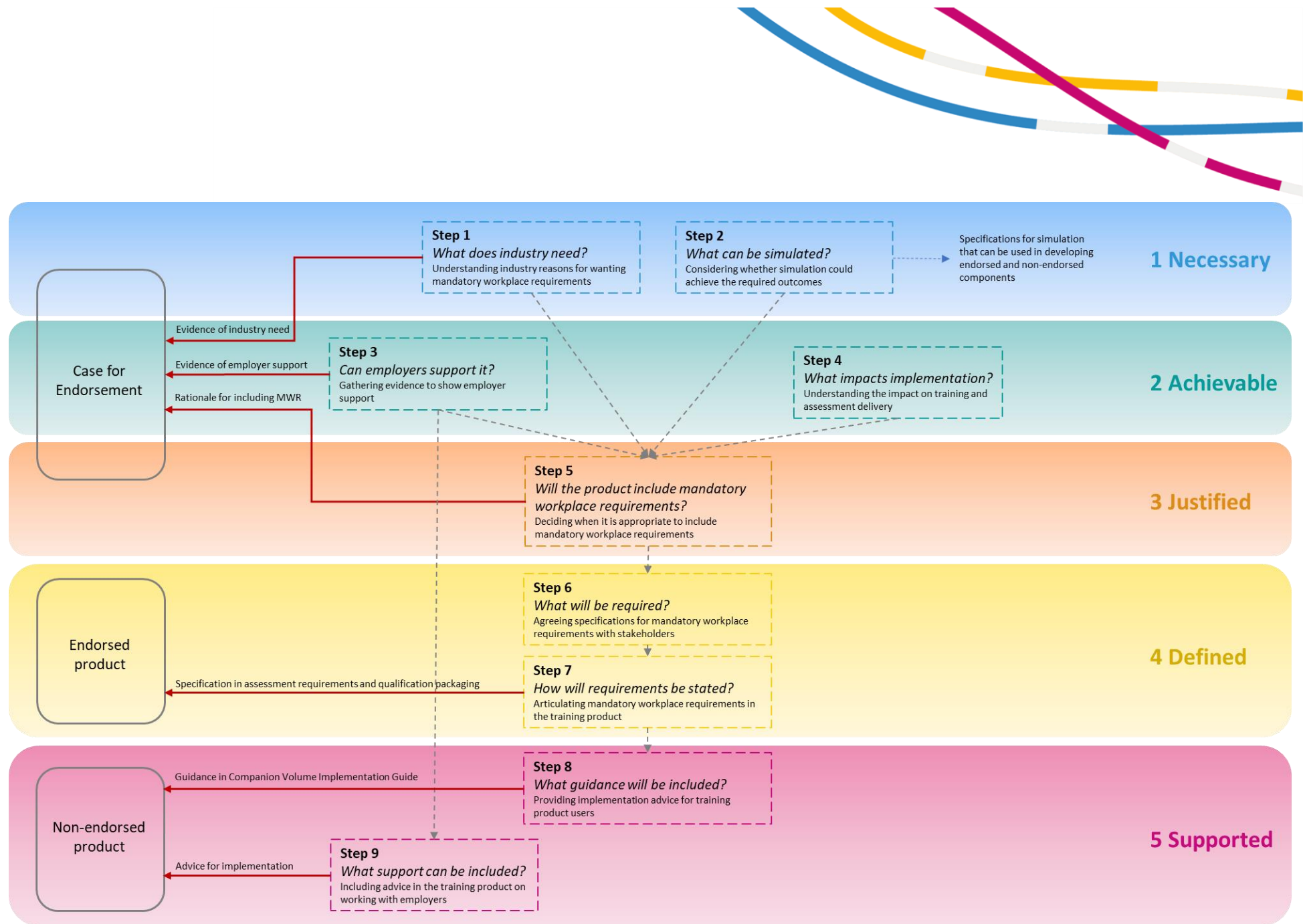


Figure 2 Overview of steps to include mandatory workplace requirements in training products

Support for step 1: What does industry need?




Step 1 is about understanding industry reasons for wanting mandatory workplace requirements.

Learner exposure to the workplace is valued by industry and employers for many reasons. However, training products specify the skills and knowledge that must be demonstrated, not how they should be acquired or how much they should be practised in the workplace and so mandatory workplace requirements cannot be specified in training products for the purposes of learning or practising skills.

Table 2 presents a range of reasons why industry stakeholders might suggest mandatory workplace requirements, and how those reasons relate to training product specifications. Although the reasons identified in the table may reflect valid industry concerns, they do not all warrant the inclusion of mandatory workplace requirements in training products. In some cases, solutions other than mandatory workplace requirements are more appropriate.


Table 2 Reasons for mandatory workplace requirements and relationship with training product

Reasons why industry might suggest mandatory workplace requirements	Evidence of industry need	Training product specification
<p>Complexity</p> <p>Some workplaces cannot be easily simulated or replicated due to the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• scale and purpose of operations, e.g. process manufacturing• physical environment, e.g. forestry• unexpected events, e.g. working with animals• pace of operations, e.g. hospitality• interaction with other professions and roles in the workplace, e.g. community services and health• interaction with clients and customers, e.g. childcare.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explanation of features of the workplace that are essential to the demonstration of skills and cannot be replicated in another environment.	<p>In the training product, specify which tasks/activities must be demonstrated in a workplace.</p> <p>When the training product includes many tasks/activities that must be demonstrated in a workplace, it may be helpful to estimate the time (in hours, events or work shifts) that a learner would need in a workplace to access the required range of opportunities to demonstrate the skills and knowledge for those tasks/activities.</p> <p>In some cases, a range of hours, shifts or events may be appropriate to allow for variation between learners and workplaces.</p>




Reasons why industry might suggest mandatory workplace requirements	Evidence of industry need	Training product specification
Currency <p>It is costly for an RTO to maintain current industry equipment. Work placement allows learners to access current equipment, e.g. automotive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail on standard industry equipment and technology. • Information on the rate of technological change in industry. • Stocktake of whether industry equipment is available in RTOs. • Advice from RTOs on their capacity to supply or access the required equipment. 	<p>The training product can specify the type of facilities and equipment that learners must access to demonstrate the required skills and knowledge.</p> <p>However, where industry technology is changing rapidly, training products that include specific equipment requirements can quickly become outdated. In some industries, currency may be maintained more effectively if the training product specifies that skills and knowledge are demonstrated in a workplace.</p>
Delivery quality <p>Work placement has been identified as a way to address issues with the perceived quality of delivery and assessment in some industries.</p>	<p><i>Industry concerns about delivery quality should be addressed through the VET regulator and the Standards for RTOs¹, not through prescription in national training products.</i></p>	
Ethics <p>It is not ethical to undertake some activities outside of a workplace, such as where there are animal welfare or waste issues. Examples of this are where the slaughter of animals during assessment must be in an abattoir so that the meat is not wasted; sick and injured people and animals not being treated outside clinical settings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation of the ethical concerns specific to the industry and skills to be demonstrated. • Information on the ethical guidelines and policies that operate in the workplace and that enable learners to demonstrate the required skills. 	<p>The tasks/activities that cannot be undertaken outside a workplace must be identified in training products.</p> <p>Specification must include the number of times the task or activity should be demonstrated and under what conditions. This may include a requirement for the number of tasks/activities to be completed in a specified period of time.</p>


¹ Standards for RTOs 2015: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2019C00503>



Reasons why industry might suggest mandatory workplace requirements	Evidence of industry need	Training product specification
<p>Industry exposure</p> <p>In some industries, exposure to the workplace is seen as necessary for learners to develop an understanding of what working in the industry entails, particularly in industries where learners may have unrealistic or unclear views of the industry, e.g. veterinary nursing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explanation of why it is essential for learners to demonstrate an understanding of the industry through experience in the workplace. 	<p>Training packages cannot specify delivery methods to acquire knowledge of the industry.</p> <p>When work placements are included in training delivery, they are often conducted toward the end of a program, but it is better to establish a learner's suitability for the industry much earlier through career guidance or a preparatory program. This advice may be included in the CVIG.</p> <p>A training product may specify requirements for learners to demonstrate an understanding of the nature of work in the industry. If learners can only demonstrate this understanding while in the workplace, then a mandatory workplace requirement may be included in the training product.</p>
<p>Practice</p> <p>Learners need to build competence through repetition of a task over time and under varying conditions. In some industries there is a view that simulated workplaces are not suitable for this practice because they are too controlled and do not include unplanned incidents or allow things to go wrong.</p>	<p><i>Training packages cannot specify delivery methods for practising the required skills. They can only specify the conditions under which skills and knowledge must be demonstrated for assessment.</i></p> <p><i>Advice on the need for workplace-based practice may be included in the CVIG.</i></p>	



Reasons why industry might suggest mandatory workplace requirements	Evidence of industry need	Training product specification
Recruitment <p>For learners and employers, work placement enables opportunities for networking and relationship building that may lead to employment. The recruitment processes that work placement enables are valued by both parties.</p>	<p><i>While recruitment outcomes may be a benefit of work placement, they do not support the inclusion of mandatory workplace requirements in training packages.</i></p>	
Regulatory <p>For some industries, a period of work placement and/or demonstration of skills in the workplace is required for compliance with industry licensing, registration or standards, e.g. electrotechnology, nursing, meat processing, aviation, maritime.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement from an industry regulator specifying the workplace requirements that learners must complete for entry into the regulated occupation. 	<p>For the outcomes from VET to be useful for learners and employers, training products need to align with regulatory requirements.</p> <p>Training products should accommodate the regulatory requirement through the simplest means possible to avoid creating unhelpful tension between training product requirements and regulatory requirements.</p>
Risk mitigation <p>In environments where there are risks associated with personal injury for the learner or others, employers need to know that learners/graduates have developed the skills and knowledge to operate safely in the workplace.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry-specific advice and requirements from work health and safety regulators. • Data on workplace accidents and injuries in the industry. • Safety documentation and advice from equipment manufacturers. • Employer identification of hazards and their strategies for mitigating associated risks. • Worker testimonials. 	<p>In the training product, specify which tasks/activities must be demonstrated in a workplace.</p> <p>If risks are associated with lack of familiarity and/or fatigue in the workplace, learners could be required to demonstrate that they can operate inside the risk zone over an extended period of time, expressed in hours or work shifts. The mandated time period required in the workplace may therefore need to be longer than the time required to demonstrate specific skills or knowledge.</p>



Reasons why industry might suggest mandatory workplace requirements	Evidence of industry need	Training product specification
<p>Traditional pathways</p> <p>Historically, some industries have used work-based training as the primary means of workforce development. Some industries or sectors may expect that training products will continue to support this delivery model.</p>	<p><i>Training packages cannot specify training delivery methods or required delivery pathways, although advice on pathways can be included in the CVIG.</i></p> <p><i>You can also provide advice to STAs on appropriate pathways for qualifications, e.g. whether they are suitable for delivery through school-based apprenticeships/traineeships.</i></p>	
<p>Viability</p> <p>Where an industry has high equipment costs and low enrolments, learning and assessment in the workplace may be more cost-effective than simulation.</p>	<p><i>The viability of training delivery is an RTO decision that is informed by the availability of equipment/facilities, which may change over time.</i></p> <p><i>Mandatory workplace requirements cannot be justified solely on the basis of addressing viability issues. However, the required assessment conditions, including the physical environment, facilities and equipment, should be clearly specified in the training products so that RTOs can decide on a suitable approach to implementation.</i></p>	
<p>Work readiness</p> <p>Many stakeholders feel that work placement allows all learning to be brought together in a holistic demonstration of readiness to enter an industry prior to achievement of a qualification.</p>	<p>The need for work readiness is not a strong rationale for a mandatory workplace requirement unless other reasons are also present. However, industry data on workforce shortages and urgent demand for graduates with skills that can be immediately applied in the workplace may provide evidence of need.</p>	<p>Requirements for a holistic or capstone-style assessment in the workplace – as a demonstration of work readiness – can be specified in the training package by identifying the skills and knowledge that must be demonstrated concurrently.</p>

Support for step 2: What can be simulated?




Step 2 is about considering whether simulation could achieve the required outcomes.

Some industry stakeholders are wary of the use of simulation for assessment because of the variable quality of practice in VET.


A simulated environment for training or assessment must replicate the essential elements of the workplace by providing the learner with access to all the required facilities, resources and equipment that would be available in a contemporary workplace. You can list the specific requirements of the simulated environment under Assessment Conditions. Table 3 outlines when and how simulation may be appropriate in a training product.

Table 3 When and how simulation may be an appropriate alternative

Role of simulation	Issues	Implications for training product
<p>When simulation is preferable to performance in the workplace</p> <p>Risk: Where there are safety concerns for learners or others in the workplace, e.g. working at heights.</p> <p>Expense: Where it is cost prohibitive for employers to have learners in the workplace, e.g. using equipment with high capital costs that cannot be taken out of production for training purposes.</p> <p>Practice: Where learners need an opportunity to develop skills that require practice before entering a workplace, e.g. taking blood.</p> <p>Privacy: Where it would be inappropriate for learners to participate in or observe certain workplace activities, e.g. where the work task</p>	<p>There is evidence to show that simulation adds value to learning, making VET learners safer and better prepared to enter the workplace.</p> <p>Simulation using workshops and role plays is common in many industries where workplace assessment is not feasible. Some industries and RTOs have invested in advanced technology to create high fidelity simulation of the work environment. In other industries, actors can be used to simulate workplace situations and allow assessment to address requirements that may be difficult to achieve with certainty in the workplace, e.g. interacting with a client with hearing loss or with a surly customer.</p>	<p>Training packages cannot specify the training delivery environment or the approach used for training – that is the responsibility of RTOs to put in place and VET regulators to confirm.</p> <p>Training packages can specify the skills and knowledge that must be demonstrated through simulation. Particular requirements for the simulation – e.g. type of equipment, environment, participants, or scenarios – should be specified in the Assessment Conditions.</p> <p>In some cases, the training package may require that learners have demonstrated specific skills and knowledge through simulation before they are then demonstrated in the workplace.</p>



Role of simulation	Issues	Implications for training product
<p>affects the dignity of vulnerable clients or patients in care.</p> <p>Infrequency: Where the learner needs to experience something that happens only rarely in the workplace, e.g. emergency management, resuscitation.</p> <p>Evidence-based: Where simulation can provide a more certain and robust assessment process.</p>		
<p>When simulation is an acceptable alternative to performance in the workplace</p> <p>The skills and knowledge developed through VET are intended to be applied in the workplace.</p> <p>In demonstrating their competence, learners should be showing that they are able to apply the skills and knowledge in a work environment. Much of the assessment in VET should be under conditions that replicate a work environment; however, this does not necessarily have to be in a real workplace.</p>	<p>Advances in artificial intelligence and gamification are expanding what can be done through simulation. However, some stakeholders believe that without specification around what is acceptable for a simulated environment some RTOs may take a minimalist approach.</p> <p>For industries that require interaction with real people, scenarios and role plays with actors can be used to simulate some workplace activities.</p>	<p>Training packages should include clear specifications for the simulation environment, including information on such things as time constraints and required access to equipment, resources, situations and other participants.</p>



Role of simulation	Issues	Implications for training product
<p>When simulation is unlikely to be suitable</p> <p>As identified in step 1, there are times when issues, such as workplace complexity and equipment costs, make it impractical or unviable to simulate the workplace for assessment purposes.</p>	<p>Technological advances, RTO-industry collaborations, investments in facilities can alter what is possible for simulation. Training products that are too prescriptive may prevent the use of facilities or systems that were not available when the product was developed.</p>	<p>Even when simulation is highly unlikely to be possible, it is not necessary to include a mandatory workplace requirement in the training package. Instead, you should clearly specify the conditions required for demonstration of competence.</p> <p>In these cases, you can provide advice in the CVIG to highlight that work placement may be the most viable mechanism for ensuring assessment is conducted in appropriate conditions.</p>

Support for step 3: Can employers support it?



Step 3 is about gathering evidence to show employer support.

Table 4 outlines factors to consider when gathering evidence of employer capacity to support mandatory workplace requirements.

Table 4 Gathering evidence of employer capacity

Factors that may influence employer capacity to support mandatory workplace requirements	Information to gather from employers through consultation
Scale of industry and availability of workplaces	<p>Quantitative information that provides insight into learner demand for access to workplaces and the number of workplaces in the industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of industry workforce, number of employers, demand for new workforce entrants • Size and geographic distribution of enterprises • Volume of learners undertaking VET qualifications • Demand from other education sectors for learner access to workplaces
Current provision of work placements	<p>Quantitative information on how mandatory workplace requirements are currently supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of employers providing learners with access to the workplace • Number of learners undertaking work placement <p>Qualitative information on current arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from employers, RTOs and learners on how well current arrangements are working • Advice from employers on their capacity to continue or increase their support <p>Reports on existing models for employers to support mandatory workplace requirements, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working partnerships or formal agreements between employers and RTOs • Formalised structures that are used to help place learners • Professional development initiatives or resources to support workplace supervisors in their role • Advisory materials and guidance available to employers to build their capacity to support mandatory workplace requirements.

Factors that may influence employer capacity to support mandatory workplace requirements	Information to gather from employers through consultation
Employer role in providing support	<p>Identification of what employers need to provide to support mandatory workplace requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current equipment that aligns with training product requirements • Appropriate work health and safety and supervisory arrangements • Understanding of the objectives and expected outcomes of mandatory workplace requirements <p>Advice from employers, including small to medium-sized enterprises, on their capacity to meet these requirements. Understanding of the employer role in supporting mandatory workplace requirements may also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey/register of evidence of employers expressing their willingness to provide placements • Industry strategy or plan to support learner placements • Awareness-raising and capability-building activities by industry peak bodies.
Regulatory requirements	Information that industry regulators provide to employers about work placements, including support, advice or awareness-raising material.
Financial considerations	<p>Details on cost implications for employers of mandatory workplace requirements and how they are addressed, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing financial arrangements with RTOs that cover employer costs for work placement • Employer HR practices that accommodate supervisory requirements during work placements • Employer views on investment in industry workforce development through support for mandatory workplace requirements.
Intellectual property issues	Identification of whether concerns about data security and/or loss of intellectual property prevent some employers from offering work placements to learners, and advice to employers on alternative ways they can support mandatory workplace requirements.

Support for step 4: What impacts implementation?



Step 4 is about understanding the impact of mandatory workplace requirements on training and assessment delivery.

Although training product developers are not responsible for the implementation of training and assessment, industry stakeholders have a keen interest in how the products being developed will be implemented and support workforce development for their industry. Barriers encountered when implementing training products can have a significant impact on the availability of skilled workers for an industry. It is therefore sensible for you to consider whether the inclusion of mandatory workplace requirements in training products has the potential to hinder implementation.

Table 5 outlines how mandatory workplace requirements in a training product can affect the ability of stakeholders to implement a training product (RTOs) or complete a course (learners) and how these impacts may be proactively considered during development.

Table 5 Impact on implementation of mandatory workplace requirements

Implementation issue	Considerations for training product
Impacts on RTOs	
Completions When the need to complete a mandatory workplace requirement delays learners' achievement of a unit, it can have implications for an RTO's cash flow if funding is linked to unit or qualification completions.	As with issues relating to learner pathways (below), you may want to consider whether mandatory workplace requirements can be confined to a single unit, or only a small number of units, in a training product.
Compliance Mandatory workplace requirements that are unclear or inconsistently understood can create difficulties for RTOs if their interpretation varies from that of auditors.	Your development process should include testing training product drafts with target users – including RTOs and VET regulators – to make sure that the requirements can be interpreted correctly and consistently.
Coordination There is considerable workload for RTOs in arranging and supervising work placements. It can be a resource-intensive process to sign up employers to host work placements and confirm that they will provide a suitable work environment.	While implementation arrangements are not addressed in the endorsed training products, advice and guidance can be provided in the CVIG. Information that you gather about employer capacity to support mandatory workplace requirements can be used to inform advice for RTOs on how they can best partner with employers to implement those requirements.
Availability Some industries and regions have an ample supply of employers able to offer work placements, but this is not the case everywhere. In some industries RTOs compete with higher education providers for access to work placement opportunities. Smaller providers and those located in regional areas may have difficulty accessing work placements.	The evidence that you gather on employer capacity to support mandatory workplace requirements should take account of the range of provider types and locations where the product will be delivered.

Implementation issue	Considerations for training product
Impacts on learners	
Financial To participate in a mandatory work placement, some learners may have to forego income from their regular work. This is likely to impact some demographic groups more than others.	Consider the extent to which mandatory workplace requirements may influence the demographics of learners who can participate in training for the industry. If some demographic groups have difficulty completing qualifications that include mandatory workplace requirements this will affect the diversity of graduates available to enter the industry. This may be a concern for employers, particularly in industries experiencing skills shortages.
Childcare Some learners will need to make childcare arrangements while they are participating in a mandatory work placement. This will impact some demographic groups and not others.	In the training product you should only include mandatory workplace requirements that are essential to achieve the required industry outcomes. You might also think about whether:
Travel Some learners will need to travel significant distances to access a mandatory work placement. In some cases, this may necessitate accommodation away from home. This is likely to impact learners in regional areas but may also impact metro-based learners with limited transport options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the requirements can be implemented flexibly, e.g. nothing in the training product prevents mandatory workplace requirements from being conducted in a single block, or multiple blocks, or on a part-time basis, or at different points in a learning program advice could be included in the CVIG that draws attention to the kind of support that might need to be provided for some learners.
Clearance For placement in some workplaces, learners are required to satisfy vaccination requirements and clearances, e.g. working with children check, NDIS check, police check. The cost and personal implications of these may impact some demographic groups more than others.	
Pathways The need to complete mandatory workplace requirements may delay achievement of a qualification for some learners if their placement is disrupted by industry or personal factors. Learners may not get recognition for partial completion of qualifications if individual units are linked to mandatory workplace requirements.	Consider the immediate and long-term employability prospects of learners, and the resulting impact on workforce availability, if access to the workplace is disrupted. You may want to consider:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> if it is possible to have an adaptive approach to demonstrating the required skills and knowledge, which can be applied variably depending on circumstances whether mandatory workplace requirements can be confined to a single unit, or only a small number of units, in a training product.

Support for step 5: Will the product include mandatory workplace requirements?



Step 5 is about deciding when it is appropriate to include mandatory workplace requirements. This figure sets out a process to help you make that decision.

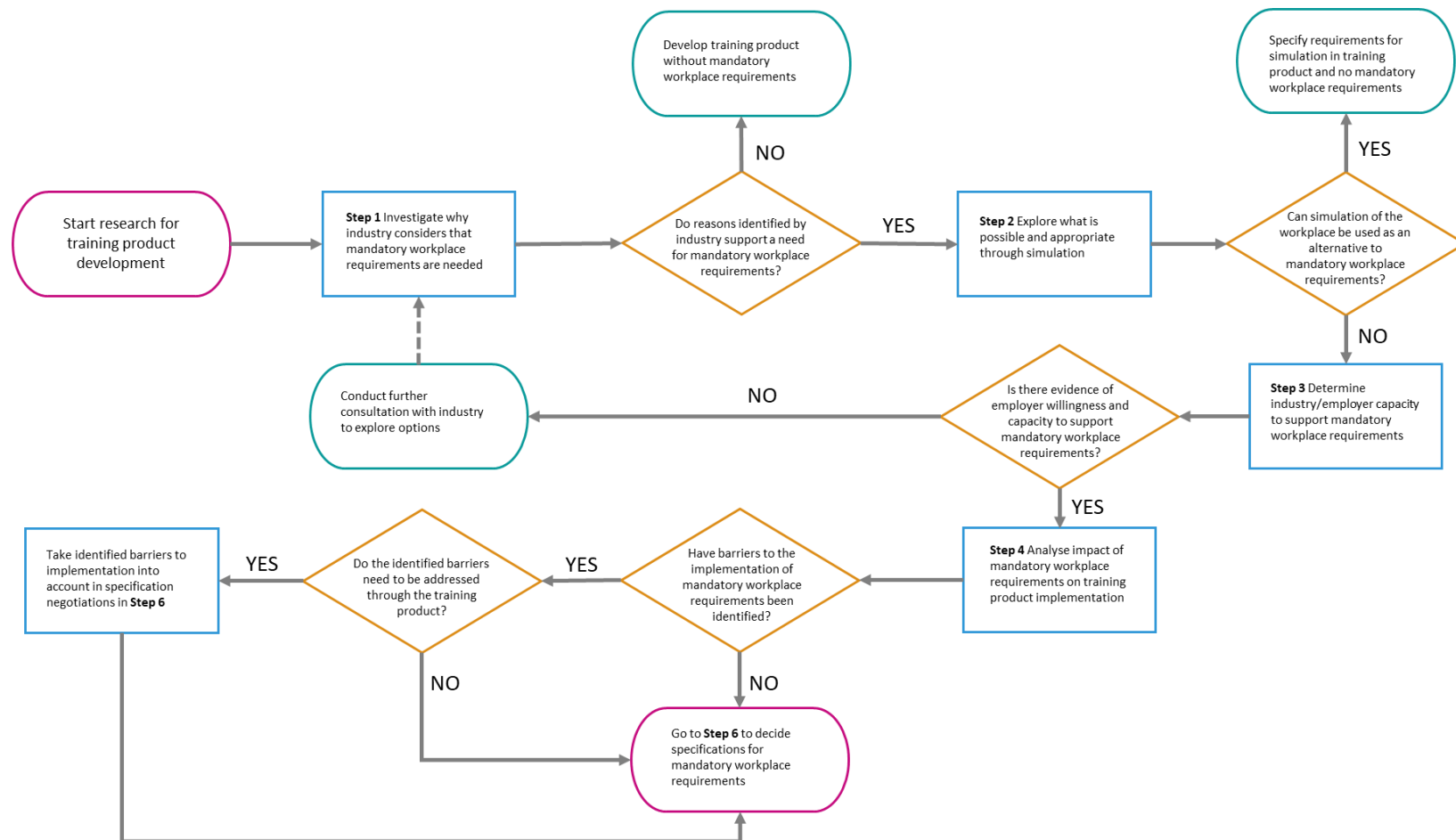


Figure 3 Process for deciding if including a mandatory workplace requirement is the right decision

Support for step 6: What will be required?




Step 6 is about agreeing specifications for mandatory workplace requirements with stakeholders.


Table 6 outlines issues to consider when negotiating the specifications for mandatory workplace requirements to include in a training product.

Table 6 Negotiating specifications for mandatory workplace requirements


Issue for consideration	Implications for training product	Examples
<p>What a competent learner looks like</p> <p>VET caters for many different types of learners with different levels of previous experience. This can result in wide variation in the time learners need to develop and practise the required skills.</p>	<p>A time-served approach to mandatory workplace requirements is at odds with the competency-based VET system. If industry stakeholders want to specify a duration (e.g. number of hours, shifts or other work periods) they must be linked to the skills and knowledge to be demonstrated.</p> <p>Detailed volume and frequency requirements can be more effective for ensuring that tasks are performed consistently to the required industry standard.</p> <p>You may consider whether it is possible to express requirements as a range, or to include conditions that accommodate individuals with differing background experiences.</p>	<p><i>HLTPAT002 Perform venous blood collections</i> includes tightly specified performance evidence.</p> <p><i>There must be evidence that the candidate has:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>followed established technical, infection control and safety procedures and collected blood suitable for testing using venous blood collection with a maximum of two attempts from at least 20 different people comprising adults of varied ages</i> <p>Flexibility to accommodate differing learner abilities could be added with a statement such as:</p> <p><i>Some candidates may demonstrate competence at the required standard with fewer performances of the task, in which case the basis for assessor judgement must be evidenced.</i></p>



Issue for consideration	Implications for training product	Examples
<p>What is common across all workplaces</p> <p>Most industries include a wide range of employers with significant variation in scale and type of operations. These differences impact the kinds of equipment and experiences available to learners on work placement.</p>	<p>Including mandatory workplace requirements in a training product does not ensure that learners have the opportunity to demonstrate all the required skills and knowledge.</p> <p>Specifications in the Assessment Conditions should be used to describe the facilities, equipment and resources that are required in the assessment environment. These should reflect what is common in industry. The development of these specifications provides an opportunity to ensure that industry stakeholders have a shared view of what is essential for the demonstration of competence.</p> <p>This process may also identify tasks/activities that cannot reliably be undertaken in a workplace setting because they do not occur frequently, or they are not common across all workplaces. These tasks/activities should not be included in mandatory workplace requirements.</p>	<p>RGRPSH201 <i>Handle racehorses in stables and at trackwork</i> includes detailed assessment conditions.</p> <p><i>Assessment of skills must take place under the following conditions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>physical conditions:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>safe handling areas, such as racing stables and racetracks</i> • <i>resources, equipment and materials:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>a variety of standardbred or thoroughbred horses assessed as suitable for the experience and skill of the individual and the activity</i> ◦ <i>personal protective equipment that is appropriate for activity and correctly fitted for individual</i> ◦ <i>gear and tack appropriate for racehorse and activity</i> • <i>specifications:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>work instructions and related documentation</i> • <i>relationships:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>interactions with supervisor</i> ◦ <i>other people and racehorses in the vicinity of the assessment activity.</i>



Issue for consideration	Implications for training product	Examples
<p>What must be observed by an assessor</p> <p>Learners are not observed by an assessor for the duration of their entire work placement, but mandatory workplace requirements must be linked to the demonstration of required skills and knowledge.</p>	<p>It is inappropriate and potentially disruptive for workplaces if learners are dropped into a workplace just for the duration of an observed assessable event.</p> <p>If a period of time in the workplace is prescribed for mandatory workplace requirements, it must allow enough time for assessable activities to occur during the learner's period in the workplace. It should not be necessary for the learner to be observed by an assessor through all this time. Log/records and third-party reports to gather evidence specified and verified by an assessor can provide evidence of activities. It is not necessary to specify these arrangements in the training product unless there are specific industry requirements for how some workplace activities should be observed.</p>	<p>The Assessment Conditions of <i>HLTPAT002 Perform venous blood collections</i> specify how learners should be supervised and what must be directly observed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>supervision of candidate's work activities by a person currently working in a phlebotomist role for at least 18 hours per fortnight</i> <i>at least 5 of the 20 collections must be directly observed in workplace by the assessor</i>
<p>What is specified by industry regulations</p> <p>In some industries, licensing or registration requirements add an extra layer of compliance for training and assessment.</p>	<p>Outcomes from training need to enable the learners to meet regulatory requirements for a licence or registration in the occupation related to the qualification they are undertaking.</p> <p>Given that regulatory requirements may change outside the training product review cycle, it may be prudent for training products to enshrine the regulatory requirements without unnecessarily replicating their detail.</p> <p>Beyond reflecting regulatory requirements, the training products should be as flexible as possible to avoid complicating implementation with duplicated requirements.</p>	<p>Units in <i>HLT54121 Diploma of Nursing</i> contain the following statement in the performance evidence:</p> <p><i>The tasks must be undertaken in accordance with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) professional practice standards, codes and guidelines.</i></p> <p>NMBA currently require 400 clinical placement hours for registration as an enrolled nurse but this requirement is not stated directly in the training product.</p>



Issue for consideration	Implications for training product	Examples
<p>What a learner can do in the workplace</p> <p>In some workplaces learners are not permitted to perform activities where there may be risks and sensitivities around client privacy and confidentiality, e.g. accessing client records in childcare.</p> <p>It may also be difficult for learners to access activities or situations that occur only rarely in the workplace.</p>	<p>When specifying tasks or activities that must be performed in the workplace you should consider whether learners will have the opportunity to undertake those activities. Options for assessment in a simulated environment may need to be provided in the assessment conditions. If so, the facilities, equipment and resources required for assessment should be clearly specified.</p>	<p><i>HLTAHW007 Undertake basic health assessments</i> specifies that simulation must be used in some circumstances:</p> <p><i>Skills must be demonstrated working:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>in a health service or centre</i> • <i>as part of, and under the supervision of, a multidisciplinary primary health care team</i> • <i>with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients and communities.</i> <p><i>In addition, simulations and scenarios must be used where the full range of contexts and situations cannot be provided in the workplace or may occur only rarely. These are situations relating to emergency or unplanned procedures where assessment in these circumstances would be unsafe or is impractical.</i></p>

Support for step 7: How will requirements be stated?



Step 7 is about articulating mandatory workplace requirements in the training products.

For mandatory workplace requirements to be ‘mandated’ they must be included in the endorsed components of training packages. For users to interpret the requirements correctly and consistently, the specifications included in different sections of the training package must not be contradictory. Having established exactly what was required in step 6 should help you complete this step 7 and include requirements consistently into the training products.


Table 7 provides examples of how mandatory workplace requirements can be specified in the training product.

Table 7 Example approaches to specifying mandatory workplace requirements in training products

Location in training product	Issues to consider	Example approaches
Qualification description	<p>Mandatory workplace requirements that apply at the qualification level may be identified in the qualification’s description. While this allows flexibility for course design and implementation, these requirements cannot be implemented unless they are also reflected in the assessment requirements for individual units of competency, and RTOs have reported difficulty in working out how some qualification-level requirements for hours in a workplace relate to individual units in the qualification.</p> <p>Allocating proportions of a qualification-level work placement requirement to individual units would reduce the flexibility of the training product and work against holistic approaches to training and assessment. Instead,</p>	<p><i>CHC30121 Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care</i> includes a statement in the qualification description to explain how the mandated hours relate to units in the qualification:</p> <p><i>The total number of hours may be applied collectively across all units of competency that include the requirement for workplace hours.</i></p> <p><i>HLT52015 Diploma of Remedial Massage</i> connects the mandated hours in the qualification description:</p> <p><i>To achieve this qualification, the candidate must have completed at least 200 hours of work as detailed in the Assessment Requirements of units of competency.</i></p> <p>... with unit assessment requirements, in the performance evidence:</p> <p><i>There must be evidence that the candidate has:</i></p>




Location in training product	Issues to consider	Example approaches
	<p>units should identify the critical tasks to be assessed in the workplace.</p> <p>To help RTOs work out how a mandatory workplace requirement could work in practice, you can provide advice on implementation in the CVIG. This may include guidance on placement arrangements and training program designs that would be suitable to support assessment of the core units in the qualification.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">performed the activities outlined in the performance criteria of this unit during a period of at least 200 hours of massage client consultation work
	<p>The qualification description should indicate where conformance with industry licensing or registration requirements has implications for mandatory workplace requirements.</p>	<p>Where industry has specified the inclusion of a period of time in the workplace:</p> <p><i>To achieve this qualification, the candidate must have completed at least 200 hours of work as detailed in the Assessment Requirements of units of competency.</i></p> <p>Where there are regulatory implications for mandatory workplace requirements:</p> <p><i>Licensing/registration conditions for entering the industry with this qualification include mandatory workplace requirements.</i></p>



Location in training product	Issues to consider	Example approaches
Qualification packaging rules	<p>For the benefit of training product users, auditors and funding authorities, qualifications that include mandatory workplace requirements should be readily identifiable at the qualification level, without having to read through all component parts (units and prerequisites).</p> <p>The packaging rules of a qualification could identify which of the listed units include mandatory workplace requirements.</p>	<p>Clearly identify in the packaging rules those units that contain a mandatory workplace requirement:</p> <div data-bbox="1308 501 1986 903"> <p>Packaging Rules Total number of units = 9 2 core units, plus 7 elective units from the list below</p> <p>Core units Unit code and title Unit code and title*</p> <p>Elective units Unit code and title Unit code and title Unit code and title</p> <p>* A mandatory workplace requirement is described in this unit</p> </div>
Assessment requirements: performance evidence	<p>It may be helpful to specifically identify when only some of the tasks/activities described in the performance evidence need to be demonstrated in the workplace. Tasks/activities that must be simulated could be similarly identified.</p>	<p>Clearly identify the context in which tasks/activities must be demonstrated:</p> <p><i>Evidence that the candidate has:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • followed established procedures and protocols in the workplace to independently conduct... • identified and controlled hazards in a simulated workplace environment in response to... <p><i>HLTAHA001 Assist with an allied health program</i> specifies assessment in the workplace and through simulation:</p> <p><i>There must be evidence that the candidate has:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assisted with 3 allied health programs, 1 in a simulated environment and 2 in the workplace



Location in training product	Issues to consider	Example approaches
	<p>Terminology used to explain mandatory workplace requirements should be used consistently in all sections of the training package and defined in the endorsed component if they could be subject to varying interpretations.</p> <p>The intended meaning of terminology adopted in the endorsed component may also need to be defined in the CVIG, e.g. service periods, client interactions, live events, real people, real clients, etc.</p>	<p><i>FBPCEL4004 Coordinate wine operations general cellar processes</i> includes an example of defining terms within the performance evidence:</p> <p><i>There must be evidence that the individual has independently coordinated the safe and efficient set-up, operation, hand over and shut down of two complete shifts of general cellar operations processes. Each shift must be a minimum of eight hours.</i></p> <p><i>FWPFGM3216 Fell trees manually (intermediate)</i> uses industry terminology to detail tasks that must be demonstrated:</p> <p><i>There must be evidence that the individual has assessed, planned and conducted the felling of six intermediate trees. This must include demonstration of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>two different scarf cutting techniques</i> <i>two different back cutting techniques, which must be for either forward leaning, side leaning or back leaning trees</i> <i>applying, on one occasion, an industry approved technique, such as the use of wedges, to ensure that the tree falls in the direction of the scarf cut.</i> <p><i>In performing all cuts, the individual must have complied with the following criteria:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>direction – the scarf must be in the direction of the desired fell</i> <i>depth – the depth of the scarf is 1/4 to 1/3 of the diameter of the tree</i> <i>top and bottom scarf cuts – the two cuts should meet without overcutting or undercutting, the scarf line is level and the scarf line is at 90 degrees to the intended direction of fall.</i> <p><i>In completing this work, the individual must demonstrate that, for each tree, the felling technique was consistent with current Australian Standards and industry codes of practice applicable to tree felling operations.</i></p>



Location in training product	Issues to consider	Example approaches
Assessment requirements: assessment conditions	<p>Assessment conditions must be consistent with information conveyed in the unit's performance evidence and qualification's description and packaging rules.</p> <p>The assessment conditions should be used to describe the facilities, equipment and resources that are <u>essential</u> in the assessment environment. Where there is a mandatory workplace requirement, these specifications will guide the selection of an appropriate workplace. Where there is not a mandatory workplace requirement, the specifications will determine how effectively the assessment environment replicates the workplace.</p>	<p><i>AHCARB319 Use arborist climbing techniques</i> does not mandate assessment in the workplace but specifies the conditions required for assessment:</p> <p><i>Assessment of the skills in this unit of competency must take place under the following conditions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>physical conditions:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>trees as stipulated in performance evidence</i> • <i>resources, equipment and materials:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>full arborists climbing kit</i> ◦ <i>climbing spikes</i> ◦ <i>communications equipment agreed by work crew</i> ◦ <i>PPE</i> ◦ <i>first aid and emergency response equipment</i> • <i>specifications:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>workplace and manufacturer instructions for safe operation, cleaning and storage of the equipment specified in the assessment conditions</i> ◦ <i>preferred industry practices (as outlined in the Companion Volume) for arborist tree climbing work</i> • <i>relationships:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>work team.</i>



Location in training product	Issues to consider	Example approaches
	<p>Where assessment must be conducted in the workplace, the assessment conditions should include a statement to that effect. In some cases, this may also include requirements for assessment through simulation.</p> <p>Issues arise when it is not clear which activities must be in the workplace and which can be simulated under certain circumstances.</p>	<p>For clarity on whether assessment in the workplace is mandated, any mandatory workplace requirement should be specified explicitly and unambiguously in the unit. Where assessment must be in the workplace for certain performance evidence items only, those items should also be clearly identified.</p> <p>Where a combination of assessment environments is necessary for a unit, this should be stated in the assessment conditions, e.g. <i>HLTAHA026 Support the medical imaging professional</i> specifies demonstration through simulation and in the workplace:</p> <p><i>All aspects of the performance evidence must have been demonstrated using simulation prior to being demonstrated in a therapeutic workplace under direction and supervision (direct, indirect, remote) as determined by the medical imaging professional.</i></p>

Support for step 8: What guidance will be included?



Step 8 is about providing implementation advice for training product users.

There are several ways you can support training product users in understanding the mandatory workplace requirements specified in the training products that you develop.

You could include a section in the Implementation Information field in the CVIG that:

- sets out the purpose of the mandatory workplace requirement, including advice on what industry expects learners to achieve from the requirement
- makes explicit the industry rationale for why a work task or activity must be demonstrated X times or for X hours in the workplace
- reflects information that you have provided in the corresponding Case for Endorsement on why industry has determined that mandatory workplace requirements are needed in a particular qualification or unit of competency.

You could also consider creating a separate companion volume or implementation guide with information relating to mandatory workplace requirements.

Table 8 lists advice or guidance that you may consider including to support implementation by training product users.

Table 8 Support for user interpretation and implementation of requirements

Advice or guidance to support training product users

Support in interpreting the requirement

Include information that helps users interpret the mandatory workplace requirement in your training product. You might consider including:

- **Definitions of terms used in the endorsed component that are related to the mandatory workplace requirement**
You could adapt or expand the glossary in this guide (p47) with terms specific to your industry or sector. For example, Skills Impact has included information in the CVIG for *FBP Food, Beverage and Pharmaceutical Training Package Version 6.0* to explain the resources and equipment lists included in the assessment conditions for retail baking and wine industry operations. A glossary of selected baking terms is also included to help training product users.
- **An explanation of the connection with regulatory requirements**
You could include a section in the CVIG that sets out the mandatory workplace requirements that are linked to regulatory requirements, such as:
 - MAR30818 *Certificate III in Maritime Operations (Marine Engine Drive, Grade 2 Near Coastal)* requires a number of days of sea service to be completed by the candidate before the qualification is awarded; a requirement set out in the qualification's description field
 - The qualification description of HLT54121 *Diploma of Nursing* explains that "To be eligible to apply for registration as an enrolled nurse and to practice in Australia, individuals must complete a Diploma of Nursing program accredited by ANMAC and approved as 'an approved program of study' by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) in accordance with the Enrolled Nurse Accreditation Standards".



Advice or guidance to support training product users

- **FAQs developed in response to user queries and feedback**

You could use feedback gathered when the training product was tested with users in step 7 to get a sense of where users need help to interpret mandatory workplace requirements.

- **Practice examples**

You could provide case study descriptions of what assessment looks like in different contexts.

Support in implementing the training product

Consider including information that helps users implement the training product with a mandatory workplace requirement. This might include advice on:

- **Use of work placement**

To help RTOs maximise the value of learner time spent in work placement, you could develop a rating system to indicate how much workplace experience is required for different units in a qualification.

- **Sequencing**

You could provide advice on optimal sequencing of work placement in a training program, e.g. at end as a capstone assessment or at other points to consolidate learning or develop reflective practice.

- **Assessment in the workplace**

You could explain expectations for supervision and observation in the workplace. This may include clarifying terms used in the training product, e.g. whether there is an intended distinction between the statements 'must be assessed in the workplace' and 'must be demonstrated in the workplace'.

- **Simulated environments**

You could provide advice on how the RTO can implement the requirements specified in the training product for simulated environments. This might include providing:

- practice examples for scenarios
- advice on using actors and/or simulation equipment.

- **Adaptations**

You could provide advice on what RTOs could do if there is disruption to the availability of work placements, e.g. what must be prioritised or options for partial completion. This advice could draw on the *AISC's Mandatory Work Placement Principles during COVID-19*.²

- **Resources**

You could provide advice on tools and support resources that may be suitable to support the implementation of mandatory workplace requirements, e.g. work logs and apps to record demonstration of skills in the workplace.

² <https://www.aisc.net.au/mandatory-work-placement-principles-during-covid-19>

Support for step 9: What support can be included?



Step 9 is about including advice in training products on working with employers.

In some industries, more could be done to educate employers about their role in providing work placements by encouraging them to take responsibility for supporting VET and helping them with the practicalities of what they need to do when hosting a learner. Table 9 describes the type of advice you could give to help RTOs work with employers to implement mandatory workplace requirements.

Table 9 Support for RTOs working with employers

Advice or guidance	Example
Partnering with employers You may choose to provide advice for RTOs on establishing and maintaining partnerships with employers to support mandatory workplace requirements. This advice might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how RTOs should engage with employers in your industry • examples of successful partnerships between RTOs and employers that identify key success factors • models for implementing work placements that identify RTO and employer roles and responsibilities. 	The <i>Companion Volume: Work Placement Guide</i> , produced by Skills IQ to support the implementation of the CHC Community Services and HLT Health training packages, explains how to set up work placements, the associated roles and responsibilities of an RTO and employer, and information on assessment in the workplace.
Advising employers You could develop material that RTOs can use to explain mandatory workplace requirements to employers. These might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information on the benefits of learner exposure to the workplace – for learners, employers and the industry • an explanation of the roles, responsibilities and expectations for host employers providing support for mandatory workplace requirements • advice on the specific skills and knowledge that learners must demonstrate in the workplace. 	The Human Services Skills Organisation has developed a resource for use by employers, RTOs and learners to support and simplify the mandatory workplace requirement process for the <i>Certificate III in Individual Support</i> .
Building employer capacity Using information you gathered during step 3 on employer capacity to support mandatory workplace requirements, you could prepare material for RTOs to use with employers to build their capacity. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advice on how workplace supervisors can prepare for their role in supporting learners in the workplace • explanations of how the skills and knowledge described in a training product relate to activity in the workplace • templates or content suggestions to support the RTO in preparing a handbook for employers. 	Handbooks for employers of apprentices are frequently provided by RTOs and Group Training Organisations. These contain information on the benefits of being a host employer, how competency-based training and assessment work, host employer responsibilities, and supervision and safety requirements.



Glossary of terms

This glossary provides commentary on terms that are used in the context of mandatory workplace requirements.

Term	Comment
Principles for mandatory workplace requirements	<p>Principles set out best practice approaches for determining mandatory workplace requirements, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• factors that industry should consider when including mandatory workplace requirements to ensure they are appropriate, reasonable, realistic and achievable, taking into account implementation factors and capacity of learners, training providers and employers to support• evidence that should be used when considering setting mandatory workplace requirements• process for setting the requirements and level of prescription• language that should be used when describing the mandatory workplace requirement to ensure it is easily distinguishable from other delivery options, such as simulated delivery.
Mandatory	<p>Something that must be done.</p> <p>When used in the context of 'mandatory workplace requirement' in a training product it refers to assessment in the workplace and is denoted by words like 'must' or 'required'.</p> <p>Does not apply when an alternative option is provided (e.g. 'must be in the workplace or a simulated environment', 'may (or should) be in the workplace'.</p>
Mandatory work placement principles during COVID-19 ³	<p>Principles published by the AISC during the COVID-19 pandemic to support understanding of mandatory work placement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Solutions support the best outcome for students2. Solutions meet industry intent for a work placement where specified in a national training product3. Changes are based on evidence4. Solutions ensure a coherent national approach5. Solutions comply with national and State/Territory health advice during the pandemic

³ AISC COVID-19 principles: <https://www.aisc.net.au/mandatory-work-placement-principles-during-covid-19>

Term	Comment
Mandatory workplace requirements	Those assessment components that must be completed in a workplace and cannot be achieved in a simulated environment. ⁴
Observation	An assessment method that allows assessors to monitor candidate performance and document evidence of what has been seen or heard. Observation may be physical or virtual (through the use of technology).
Physical environment	An environment that we can physically experience through our senses (touch, smell, sight, hearing, and/or taste).
Real	Refers to something or someone that is not an imitation or artificial. It is used in the context of mandatory workplace requirements when describing animals, clients, customers, learners or workplaces.
Replicated workplace or work environment	An exact and authentic representation of the combined resources, conditions and experiences found in the real workplace or environment for a given work task and job role. <i>ASQA's Users' guide to Standards for RTOs 2015</i> ⁵ : 'When using 'simulated' workplace environments, ensure they fully replicate the resources, environment and any time and productivity pressures that exist in the actual workplace.'
Shift	A work shift refers to the hours that someone works in a specific component of their job timetable. The meaning of 'shift' will vary depending on the job role, industry, and workplace. Assessors should apply their industry knowledge in determining the nature and scope of a shift when referred to in a mandatory workplace requirement and document their rationale in their assessment plan.
Service period	A fixed period of time that someone provides a service in their job timetable. As with 'shift' above, the meaning of 'service period' will vary depending on the job role, industry, and workplace. Assessors should apply their industry knowledge in determining the nature and scope of service periods when referred to in a mandatory workplace requirement and document their rationale in their assessment plan.
Simulation or simulated delivery	Where a situation or process in a work task or job role is imitated. Simulation is offered as an alternative to workplace requirements in many training products for a number of reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are risks or safety concerns for learners or others in the workplace associated with the work task (e.g. when working in hospitals or with emergency situations).

⁴ Case for Endorsement template, <https://www.dese.gov.au/aisc/resources/case-endorsement-template>

⁵ ASQA advice in regard to Clauses 1.1 to 1.4 and 2.2—Implementing, monitoring and evaluating training and assessment strategies and practices, <https://www.asqa.gov.au/standards/training-assessment/clauses-1.1-to-1.4-2.2>



Term	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The costs for employers to have learners in the workplace are prohibitive (e.g. workplaces that use equipment with a high capital cost that cannot be taken out of production for training purposes). • Learners would benefit from practising a task before entering a workplace to develop the skills that come with practice (e.g. drawing blood). • When a workplace must ensure patient or client privacy in all work activities (e.g. privacy constraints in an aged care facility). • When learners require experience in something that happens only rarely in the workplace (e.g. in emergency management or resuscitation or access to patients with a rare health condition). • Where innovations in simulation – using technology and virtual reality – provide viable alternatives (e.g. where candidates use assisted reality wearable solutions when performing welding). <p>It is expected that simulation will offer authentic replications of the resources, conditions and experiences found in a workplace.</p>
Supervision	<p>Supervision refers to the workplace experience itself and the learners undertaking the work placement as part of a mandatory workplace requirement.</p> <p>It is expected that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervision will ensure that the work that learners are exposed to and undertake will reflect the requirements of the training product • a schedule will be developed between the RTO and the employer that ensures that the learner is observed undertaking regular workplace tasks so that evidence can be gathered to contribute to the assessment.
Work placement	<p>A temporary experience in a workplace.</p> <p>Work placements can occur in order to satisfy a mandatory work requirement. They can also be separate from mandatory work requirements and relate to an experience that is part of a course of study that provides a learner with practical training and experience in a workplace.</p>
Work integrated learning	<p>Often used in higher education contexts to describe practical experiences with industry or community partners that allow students to apply their academic learning, e.g. internships.</p>