

Outcome Standards

Revised Standards for Registered Training Organisations

*Final Policy Draft*

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## Preamble to the Outcome Standards

High quality vocational education and training (VET) is vital to Australia’s future, producing the knowledge and skills to position Australia as an economically prosperous, socially equitable and environmentally sustainable nation.

All Australian governments have agreed to build a high-performing and world-class VET sector with TAFE at the heart, a system in which training is accessible to Australians from all walks of life, supporting students to succeed and all Australians to train, upskill and retrain.

Public providers form a key pillar of a diverse VET sector, one in which a wide variety of high-quality providers are needed to deliver training across different contexts. This includes a diverse range of private providers, community and adult education providers, enterprise RTOs and VET delivered in secondary schools. RTOs deliver to learners of all ages in wide ranging contexts, meeting skills needs across the entire economy and this diversity is a strength of the VET sector.

The Standards for RTOs have been revised to strengthen the focus on quality outcomes for learners and employers, provide greater clarity for RTOs and regulators, allow for more flexibility and innovation in training delivery and support. The changes are designed to better reflect the diversity of the VET sector and ensure the Standards are fit-for-purpose across different RTO settings and delivery contexts. This will help to embed quality aspirations and ensure the Standards clearly articulate characteristics required of RTOs to foster a shared understanding of high-quality delivery for all users of the VET system.

## 1. Training and Assessment

**Outcome: Quality training and assessment engages VET students and enables them to attain nationally recognised, industry-relevant competencies.**

### **Training**

#### **Training is engaging and well-structured and enables VET students to attain skills and knowledge consistent with the training product.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. training is consistent with the requirements of the training product
2. the mode(s) of delivery enable VET students to attain skills and knowledge consistent with the training product
3. training is structured and paced to support VET students to progress, providing sufficient time for instruction, practice, feedback and assessment
4. training techniques, activities and resources engage VET students and support their understanding
5. where the training product requires work-integrated learning, work placements or other community-based learning, necessary skills and knowledge are able to be attained in that environment.

#### **Effective engagement with industry, employer and/or community representatives informs the industry relevance of the training.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. how it identifies relevant industry, employer and/or community representatives and seeks meaningful advice and feedback from those representatives
2. it uses the advice and feedback to inform changes to training strategies and practices
3. training reflects current industry practice.

### **Assessment**

#### **The assessment system is fit-for-purpose and consistent with the training product.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. assessment is consistent with the requirements of the training product
2. assessment tools are reviewed prior to use to ensure assessment can be conducted consistent with the principles of assessment and rules of evidence
3. the outcomes of review inform any necessary changes to assessment tools.

#### **The assessment system ensures assessment is conducted in a fair and appropriate way and enables accurate judgements of VET student competency.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. assessment is conducted in a way that is consistent with the following principles of assessment:
2. fairness – assessment takes into account VET student needs, including through applying adjustments where appropriate and enabling reassessment if necessary
3. flexibility – assessment is appropriate to the context, training product and VET student, and assesses skills and knowledge held by the VET student irrespective of how or where they have been acquired
4. validity – assessment of skills and knowledge is integrated with practical application and would enable the VET student to demonstrate these skills and knowledge in similar situations
5. reliability – assessment evidence is interpreted consistently by assessors and the outcomes of assessment are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment
6. assessors make individual assessment judgements that are justified based on the following rules of evidence:
7. validity – the assessment evidence assures the assessor that the VET student has the skills and knowledge described in the training product
8. sufficiency – the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement of competency to be made
9. authenticity – the assessment evidence presented is the VET student’s own work
10. currency – the assessment evidence demonstrates the current skills and knowledge of the VET student.

#### **The assessment system is quality assured by appropriately skilled and credentialled people through a regular process of validating assessment practices and judgements.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. validation of assessment practices and judgements ensures the assessment system consistently produces valid assessment judgements that are consistent with the training product and the requirements of these Standards
2. validation for each training product on the RTO’s scope of registration occurs regularly and at least every 5 years, as informed by risks to training outcomes, any changes to the training product, and feedback from VET students, trainers and assessors, and industry
3. a risk-based approach is used to determine the component of the training product to be validated and the sample size of assessments
4. validation is undertaken by one or more people who collectively have:
5. industry competencies, skills and knowledge relevant to the training product
6. a practical understanding of current industry practices relevant to the training product
7. one of the credentials for validation specified in the Credential Policy
8. in addition, where an AQF qualification or skill set from the Training and Education Training Package that enables individuals to make assessment judgements is being validated:
9. the person(s) undertaking validation are independent and are not employed or subcontracted by the RTO to provide training and assessment
10. validation occurs following completion of training and assessment by the first VET student cohort
11. validation outcomes are not solely determined by those who have designed or delivered the training or assessment
12. how validation outcomes are used to inform revisions to the assessment system.

#### **VET students with prior skills, knowledge and competencies are supported to seek recognition of prior learning to progress through the training product.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. VET students are offered opportunities to seek recognition of prior learning and are made aware of the RTO’s policies for this
2. recognition of prior learning is based on evidence of prior skills, learning and/or experience, and is conducted in accordance with the assessment system
3. decisions about recognition of prior learning are fair, consistent and transparent, maintain the integrity of the training product, and are documented.

### **Credit transfer**

#### **VET students who have previously completed an equivalent training product are supported to have their training recognised.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. VET students are offered opportunities to seek credit transfer and are made aware of the RTO’s policies for this
2. credit transfer is based on evidence of prior completion of an equivalent training product demonstrated by AQF certification documentation or an authenticated VET transcript (unless prevented by licensing or regulatory requirements or the training product)
3. decisions about credit transfer are fair, consistent and transparent, and are documented.

### **Facilities, resources and equipment**

#### **Facilities, resources and equipment for each training product are fit-for-purpose, safe, accessible and sufficient.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. how it identifies the facilities, resources and equipment required to deliver the training product, including which of these will be provided by the RTO or third parties
2. where facilities, resources and equipment are provided by the RTO or third parties, how it ensures:
3. the ongoing suitability and safety of the facilities, resources and equipment for the VET student cohort
4. that VET students have access to the resources and equipment they need to participate in the training and assessment
5. where training involves work-integrated learning, work placements, or other community-based learning, strategies are in place to manage any risks associated with these facilities, resources and equipment.

## VET Student Support

**Outcome: VET students are treated fairly and are properly informed, supported and protected.**

### **Information**

#### **VET students have access to clear and accurate information, including to make informed decisions about the training product and the RTO, and are made aware of changes that affect them.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. information given to VET students is clear, accurate and current, including where this is disseminated by a third party
2. how it identifies the information that is needed by VET students prior to enrolment and how that information is communicated
3. the following information is easily accessible to VET students:
4. the training product code and title, duration, mode(s) of delivery, location, commencement dates, scheduling, any requirements to commence or complete the training product including assessment requirements, whether any licencing or occupational licence requirements apply, and details of any third party arrangements
5. the training support services and wellbeing support services that are available and how to access them
6. any fees and costs payable by the VET student, including payment terms and conditions, refund policies and the availability of any relevant government training entitlements and subsidy arrangements
7. the VET student’s obligations or liabilities, including any obligations relating to work placements, materials, equipment or IT, costs and processes associated with VET student withdrawal and obtaining a Unique Student Identifier
8. prior to enrolment or before any fees are required to be paid, written information is provided to the VET student about the agreed training to be provided, the amount of any fees to be paid by the VET student, and the VET student’s obligations
9. how it identifies changes that affect VET students, including transition of superseded, deleted, or expired training products, and informs VET students of these as soon as practicable.

#### **VET students are advised, prior to enrolment, about the suitability of the training product for them, taking into account their skills and competencies.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. a system for reviewing the skills and competencies of VET students prior to enrolment, including their language, literacy and numeracy proficiency and digital literacy, as appropriate to the training product
2. it provides advice, based on the review, to VET students about the suitability of the training product for them.

### **Training support**

#### **VET students have reasonable access to training support services, trainers and assessors and other staff to support their progress through the training product.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. how it determines the training support services to be provided to each VET student and makes these available
2. VET studentshave reasonable access to trainers and assessors and other staff
3. VET students are informed about how and when they can access trainers and assessors and other staff
4. VET students receive timely responses to queries.

#### **Reasonable adjustments are made to support VET students with disability to access and participate in training and assessment on an equal basis.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. VET students are supported to disclose their disability if they wish
2. reasonable adjustments are made where appropriate
3. where reasonable adjustments are not possible, the reasons why have been communicated to the VET student.

### **Diversity and inclusion**

#### **The learning environment promotes and supports the diversity of VET students.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. it fosters a safe and inclusive learning environment for VET students
2. it fosters a culturally safe learning environment for First Nations people.

### **Wellbeing**

#### **The wellbeing needs of the VET student cohort are identified and strategies are put in place to support these needs.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. it identifies the wellbeing needs of the VET student cohort, as relevant to the training content, and appropriate wellbeing support services
2. it advises VET students of the actions they can take, the staff they may contact and the wellbeing support services that are available.

### **Feedback, complaints and appeals**

#### **Effective feedback and complaints management addresses concerns and informs continuous improvement.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. information about how to provide feedback and make complaints is publicly available and easily accessible
2. VET students are supported to provide feedback and make complaints
3. a complaints management system that:
4. ensures parties are afforded procedural fairness
5. identifies reasonable timeframes for responding to and resolving complaints
6. provides avenues for further action where complaints are not resolved
7. outcomes of complaints are documented and communicated to relevant parties
8. feedback and complaints are used to inform continuous improvement.

#### **Effective appeal processes are available where decisions of the RTO or a third party adversely impact a VET student.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. VET students are informed about avenues for appeal
2. an appeals management system that:
3. ensures appellants are afforded procedural fairness
4. identifies reasonable timeframes for actioning appeals
5. provides avenues for review by an independent party, if requested by the appellant (at no or low cost to them)
6. appeal outcomes are documented and communicated to the appellant
7. the outcomes of appeals are used to inform continuous improvement.

**3. VET Workforce**

**Outcome: VET students are trained, assessed and supported by people who are qualified, skilled and committed to professional development.**

### **VET workforce management**

#### **Effective workforce management ensures appropriate staffing to deliver the services.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. how it ensures the number of trainers, assessors and other staff is appropriate for the delivery of services
2. it facilitates access to continuing professional development for staff to enable them to effectively perform their roles.

### **Trainer and assessor competencies**

#### **Training and assessment is delivered by credentialled people with current skills and knowledge in training and assessment.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. training and assessment is only delivered by people with relevant credentials as specified by the Credential Policy
2. where the Credential Policy enables a person to work under direction, a system for ensuring the person does not make assessment judgements and for ensuring the quality of their practice
3. how it ensures each trainer and assessor undertakes continuing professional development to maintain current skills and knowledge in training and assessment, including engaging and supporting VET students.

#### **Training and assessment is delivered by people with current industry skills and knowledge relevant to the training product.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. each person delivering training or assessment:
2. has industry competencies, skills and knowledge that are relevant to, and at least to the level of, the training product being delivered and/or assessed
3. maintains an understanding of current industry practices
4. where an expert is engaged to support trainers and assessors, this is based on a specific need for expertise related to the training product or VET student cohort, and there is a system for ensuring:
5. the expert has relevant industry competencies, skills and knowledge and specialised industry or subject matter expertise
6. the expert works under direction of a person with the credentials specified in the Credential Policy and, where the expert is involved in the assessment judgement, they work alongside the trainer or assessor to conduct the assessment
7. sufficient oversight of the expert to ensure the quality of the training and assessment.

## 4. Governance

**Outcome: Effective governance and a commitment to continuous improvement supports the quality and integrity of VET delivery.**

### **Leadership and accountability**

#### **4.1. The RTO operates with integrity and is accountable for the delivery of quality services.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. the governing persons are suitable to oversee the operation of the RTO, including by having regard to the Fit and Proper Person Requirements
2. the governing persons act diligently and make informed decisions to support compliance with the Standards
3. the governing persons lead a culture of integrity, fairness and transparency in the delivery of services.

#### **4.2. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. roles and responsibilities are documented and well-understood within the RTO, with clear lines of accountability for decision-making
2. staff are supported to understand the Standards as relevant to their role, and are informed about any changes to legislative and regulatory requirements that affect the services delivered
3. a system for ensuring third parties are aware of their obligations and meet the requirements of the Standards.

### **Risk management**

**4.3. Risks to VET students, staff and the RTO are identified and managed.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. it identifies, manages and reviews risks to VET students, staff and the RTO
2. it manages financial risks to the organisation, including by maintaining a financial plan and appropriate monitoring and oversight of the RTO’s financial position, financial performance and cashflows
3. a system for identifying, managing and disclosing (as relevant) real or apparent conflicts of interest
4. where the RTO offers training or assessment to VET students aged under 18, risks to their safety and wellbeing are identified and managed consistent with principles for child safe organisations, having regard to the training content and mode(s) of delivery.

### **Continuous improvement**

#### **4.4. The RTO undertakes systematic monitoring and evaluation to support the delivery of quality services and continuous improvement.**

The RTO demonstrates:

1. a system for monitoring and evaluating its performance against the Standards
2. mechanisms for collecting and analysing data and feedback, including from VET students, staff, industry, employers and regulators
3. how it uses the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation to inform continuous improvement.

# Glossary for the Draft Revised Standards

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| **AQF certification documentation** is the set of official documents that confirms that an AQF qualification or statement of attainment has been issued by an RTO or other AQF authorised issuing organisation to an individual. |
| **Assessment judgement** means a determination of whether competency has been achieved by a VET student consistent with the training product and these Standards. |
| **Assessment system** means a coordinated set of documented policies, procedures and assessment tools designed to ensure that assessment, including recognition of prior learning, produces consistent and valid judgements of VET student competency and meets the requirements of these Standards. |
| **Assessment tools** comprise the instrument and instructions for gathering and interpreting assessment evidence to determine competency, including:   * the context and conditions of assessment * the tasks to be administered to the VET student * the evidence to be gathered from the VET student * the criteria used to judge competency, and * the administration, recording and reporting requirements. |
| **Authenticated VET transcript** has the meaning given in the *Student Identifiers Act 2014.* |
| **Credential Policy** means the policy document made by the Ministerial Council that outlines credentials required for delivering training and assessment and undertaking validation. |
| **Credit transfer** is an administrative process to recognise and award credit for prior successful completion of an equivalent unit of competency or module. |
| **Direction** means oversight, guidance and quality assurance provided in respect of a person to ensure the quality of training and assessment delivered by that person. |
| **Governing persons** means the person(s) and/or body(ies) that are responsible for overseeing and directing, and exercise a degree of control or influence over, the management or operation of the RTO,including executive officers |
| **Mode of delivery** means the methods for delivering training and/or assessment, including face-to-face, online, distance, or blended methods. |
| **Reasonable adjustments** are adjustments made by an RTO in respect of a VET student with disability, consistent with Part 3 of the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*. |
| **Recognition of prior learning (RPL)** is an assessment process that involves assessment of an individual’s relevant prior learning and experience (including skills and knowledge obtained through formal and informal learning) to determine the extent to which they meet the requirements specified in the training product. |
| **Third party** means an entity with which the RTO has an arrangement for that other entity to deliver any of the following services on behalf of the RTO:   * training * assessment * training support services, and * activities related to the recruitment of prospective VET students including marketing, enrolment, induction or collection of fees.   A third party does not include:   * employees of the RTO that deliver training or assessment * other entities that deliver VET student counselling or mediation or provide ICT or other support services * experts who contribute to training or assessment, or * an entity that refers VET students to the RTO where the referring entity does not receive payment from the RTO and the referring entity is a government agency or government funded agency. |
| **Training and Education Training Package** means the TAE – Training and Education Training Package referenced on the National Register as defined in the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*. |
| **Training product** means:   * AQF qualification, being an AQF qualification type endorsed in a training package or accredited in a VET accredited course, * skill set, being a single unit of competency or a combination of units of competency from a training package which link to a licensing or regulatory requirement or a defined industry need, * unit of competency, being the specification of the standards of performance required in the workplace as defined in a training package, and * accredited short course, being a course that leads to a statement of attainment accredited by the VET Regulator in accordance with the Standards for VET Accredited Courses made under subsection 188(1) of the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (or the equivalent requirements adopted by a non-referring State). |
| **Training support services** means services and resources to support individual VET students to meet training product requirements and complete the training product in which they are enrolled. |
| **Unique Student Identifier** has the same meaning as the term ‘Student Identifier’ as in the *Student Identifiers Act 2014*. |
| **Unit of competency** means the specification of the standards of performance required in the workplace as defined in a training package. |
| **Validation** is the review of the assessment system to ensure that the assessment tools are consistent with the training product and the requirements of these Standards, and ensure consistent outcomes are achieved through assessment practices and judgements. |
| **Wellbeing support services** means services and resources to support the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of VET students. |