Language Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) Application Process

Application Process

Commonwealth, state and territory governments and approved VET Student Loan providers can apply for approval of a tool for assessing a student's competence in reading and numeracy. The application must address the relevant criteria as set out in [Assessment of LLN testing tools for the VET Student Loans program](#).

Applications to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (the department) for consideration should be sent to VETStudentLoans@dewr.gov.au.

Form of application

Applications must contain the following information, evidence and other material (section 82 VET Student Loans Rules 2016 refers):

- applicant provider's name
- contact information for the provider
- registered business name of the applicant provider (if different)
- any other business name(s) of the applicant provider
- business address of the applicant provider
- name/description of the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) testing tool(s) proposed for approval (including version and other relevant identifiers as necessary)
- name and other relevant details of body/person undertaking the review of the proposed LLN testing tool
- certification/information from the body/person undertaking the review of the proposed LLN testing tool as follows:
  - name/description of the LLN testing tool(s) reviewed (including version and other relevant identifiers as necessary)
  - declaration of any potential conflicts of interest, or that there are no conflicts of interest, and specifically:
    - certification of their independence from the tool assessed
    - certification of their independence from 'selling' adult LLN assessment tools
    - certification of their independence from the applicant RTO
  - details of their relevant qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience, and specifically:
    - details of their expertise in reviewing LLN testing tool(s)
    - details of their expertise in LLN assessment, including with the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF)

      o   certification of their findings (including sufficient details of those findings, and relevant details of the evidence and other materials relied upon in reaching those findings), documented in accordance with Appendix I 'Checklist of auditable requirements for LLN testing instrument', of Assessment of LLN testing tools for the VET Student Loans program. Copies of the evidence and other material relied on in reaching the findings should be submitted with the checklist.

Applications that do not meet the above requirements may be considered invalid.

Assessment of Applications

When you apply for approval of an external LLN tool you should refer to Assessment of LLN testing tools for the VET Student Loans program.

In deciding whether to approve an assessment tool we consider the:

- criteria for approval of tools for testing competence in reading and numeracy against the ACSF and
- measures for quality assurance of such tools.

Independent review

You must arrange to have your proposed assessment tool independently reviewed against the above-mentioned document. In determining the appropriateness of the body or person that has undertaken the review we will give weight to the following:

- absence of real or apparent bias or conflict of interest indicated by:

  o   independence from the product assessed (that is absence of propriety, commercial or financial interest; not involved in its development; not involved in its use; not associated with an organisation that uses the tool)

  o   independence from 'selling' adult LLN assessment tools (that is no current, material commercial, financial or similar interests)

  o   independence from the applicant registered training organisation (RTO) (that is not employed or subcontracted by the RTO to provide training and assessment, no other involvement or interest in the operations of the RTO)

- has the necessary expertise indicated by:

  o   conducting such approval or auditing processes, preferably within the VET sector
  o   adult LLN assessment including with the ACSF.

The details and findings of the body or person, as well as other materials relied on in reaching those findings should be documented against the 'Checklist of Auditable Requirements for Foundation Skills assessments'. This checklist is at Appendix I of Assessment of LLN testing tools for the VET Student Loans program.

The review by the independent expert must be evidence based. The review and assessment that does not meet the above criteria, or does not include findings, is unlikely to be given weight in the decision-making process.

Approval of Applications

We must be satisfied that the tool is:

- a valid, reliable, fair and well-constructed way of assessing whether competence is at, or above, Exit Level 3 in the ACSF
- appropriately verified and evaluated using evidence-based assessment by a suitably qualified independent body.

When a tool is approved, we:

- must give the applicant written notice of the decision as soon as practicable after making the decision
- may publish the approval on our website.

Whenever possible we will aim to approve an assessment tool not only for you but also for all providers. Tools approved for use to meet the VET Student Loans program student entry requirements are listed below.

Review process

We will advise the applicant if a tool for assessing a student's competence is not approved. Details about the review process are set out in section 83 of the VET Student Loans Rules 2016.

Provider responsibilities

Your use of the tool comes with the responsibility of developing a procedure for recording the results of the assessments (section 81 of the VET Student Loans Rules 2016 refers).

Section 81 states that you must report the results:

- to the student as soon as practicable after the assessment
- to the Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, in the form, manner and by the time requested by the Secretary.

Your student entry procedures must:

- specify that you retain these results for at least 5 years (section 105)
- describe the process (including the tools) for validity and reliability assessing a student's competence in reading and numeracy against the ACSF (subsection 82(1))
- require that the process be conducted with honesty and integrity (subsection 82(1)).

Approved LLN assessment tools

Assessment tools approved for use to meet the VET Student Loan program student entry requirements are:

- Core Skills Profile for Adults, published by the Australian Council for Educational Research Limited in July 2013
- Basic Key Skills Builder (bksb) (Australian Edition)
- Safe Work Resources VFH LLN Assessment Tool (provided via The Learning Resources Groups' LLN Robot Platform)
- assessment tools approved for specific provider use.