# **AQTF2021**

## Standardsfor Accredited Courses

© Commonwealth of Australia 2021

This work is copyright. It may be reproduced in whole or in part for study or training purposes, subject to the inclusion of an acknowledgement of the source and provided that it is not used for commercial use or sale. All rights are reserved. Reproduction for purposes other than those indicated above requires prior written permission from the Commonwealth.

9

## Contents

Part 1		Preliminary	
	1	Definitions	4
Part 2		Introduction and purpose	
	2	Introduction	6
	3	Purpose of the Standards	6
Part 3		Course design standards	
	4	Duplication	7
	5	Course design standards	7

## Appendix 1

## Part 1 Preliminary

The AQTF2021 Standards for Accredited Courses replaces the AQTF2007 Standard for Accredited Courses. The replacement of the AQTF2007 Standards does not affect previous decisions by a VET regulator to grant an application for the accreditation of a course or the re-accreditation of a course.

The AQTF2007 Standards are to apply to an application for accreditation, or application for the re-accreditation, made prior to the Council of Australian Governments Skills Council approval of this document.

#### **1 Definitions**

1.1 In this document, unless the contrary intention appears:

*accreditation* means the course is nationally recognised and that an RTO can issue a nationally recognised VET qualification or VET statement of attainment following its full or partial completion. Once a course has been accredited, it is listed on the National Register.

*articulation* means the arrangements that facilitate the movement or progression of learners from one qualification or course to another, or from one education and training sector to another.

*assessment* means the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard required in the workplace, education or community place as specified in a Training Package or VET accredited course.

*assessment requirements* means the endorsed component of a Training Package, or a component of a VET accredited course. Assessment requirements set out the Performance Evidence, Knowledge Evidence and Assessment Conditions.

*AQF qualification* has the same meaning as in the Australian Qualifications Framework.

**AVETMISS** has the same meaning as in the National VET Data Policy.

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

*credit arrangements* means the arrangements that facilitate the movement or progression of learners from one qualification or course to another through a formal process.

*foundation skills* has the same meaning as in the National Foundation Skills Strategy for Adults.

*industry* means the bodies that have a stake in the development of courses and the training and assessment services provided by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). These can include, but are not limited to:

- 1. enterprise or industry clients, such as employers;
- 2. group training organisations;
- 3. industry organisations;
- 4. industry regulators;
- 5. professional associations;
- 6. Skills Service Organisations or their successor;
- 7. Industry Reference Committees or their successors;
- 8. industry training advisory bodies; and
- 9. unions.

*industry regulator* means a body or organisation responsible for the regulation of, or licensing arrangements within, a specific industry or occupation.

*module* relates to a specific area of learning at a given level of knowledge or skills performance, and is made up of a number of learning outcomes and assessment criteria. It directly aligns to the stated educational, community or legislative outcomes of its course. Modules do not have direct industry, occupational or vocational outcomes as these are reflected in units of competency.

*National Foundation Skills Strategy for Adults* means the document of that name, endorsed by the former Standing Council for Tertiary Education Skills and Employment, as amended from time to time.

**National Register** means the national register on vocational education and training in Australia. It is the authoritative source of nationally recognised training and registered training organisations who have the approved scope to deliver nationally recognised training.

*National VET Data Policy* means the document by that name, endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments Skills Council, or their successor.

*pathways* allow students to move between qualification levels with full or partial recognition for the qualifications and/or learning outcomes they have attained.

**Recognition of Prior Learning** means an assessment process that assesses the competency/s of an individual that may have been acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual meets the requirements specified in the training package or VET accredited course.

RTO means registered training organisation.

*RTO Standards* means the applicable standards applied by the VET Regulator.

*Skills Service Organisation (SSO)* or their successor, means an organisation by that title funded by the Commonwealth to support Industry Reference Committees in their role.

*Training Package* specifies the knowledge and skills required by individuals to perform effectively in the workplace, which are expressed in units of competency. Training packages detail how units of competency

are packaged into nationally recognised and portable qualifications that comply with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

*units of competency* means the specification of the standards of performance required in the workplace as defined in a VET accredited course or Training Package.

#### VET Regulator means:

a) the National VET Regulator; and

b) a body of a non-referring State that is responsible for the kinds of matters dealt with under the VET legislation for that State.

*vocational competency* means industry knowledge and experience, at least at the level being delivered and assessed. A person who has vocational competency will be familiar with the content of the vocation and will have current and direct relevant experience in the industry.

## Part 2 Introduction and purpose

#### **2 Introduction**

VET accredited courses are designed to address skill requirements for industry, education, legislative, enterprise or community needs, where these are not covered in nationally endorsed Training Packages. VET accredited courses also have the capacity to address changes in skill needs, and the needs of emerging industries, in a responsive manner. A collaborative approach between national bodies with responsibility for the development and endorsement of Training Packages and VET Regulators provides an effective and timely response to the changing needs of industry.

Accreditation means the formal recognition of a course by the VET Regulator.

#### **3 Purpose of the Standards**

The AQTF2021 Standards for Accredited Courses apply to the course design for accredited courses.

Accreditation of a course is confirmation by the VET Regulator that the course meets the AQTF2021 Standards for Accredited Courses and the Australian Qualifications Framework. In deciding whether to accredit the course, the VET Regulator must consider whether the course:

- meets industry, education, legislative, enterprise or community needs;
- provides appropriate competency outcomes and a satisfactory basis for assessment;
- meets national quality assurance requirements; and
- is aligned to the appropriate level of the Australian Qualifications Framework where it leads to a VET qualification.

Accreditation means the course is nationally recognised and that an RTO can issue a nationally recognised VET qualification or VET statement of attainment following its full or partial completion. Once a course has been accredited, it is listed on the National Register.

A national template for course accreditation is at Appendix 1 to these standards. The template provides the basis for the development of strategies for training and assessment by each RTO and describes essential course information including the packaging rules, outcomes to be achieved, standards for assessment and required resources

## Part 3 Course standards

In deciding to grant an application for the accreditation of a course, the VET Regulator **must** consider whether the course meets the following course design standards.

In deciding the application, the applicant **must** give the VET Regulator any further information required to investigate the course, or part of the course, if requested.

The VET Regulator may cancel the accreditation of a VET accredited course if the course ceases to meet these standards.

#### **4 Duplication**

4.1 The course must not duplicate, by title or coverage, the outcomes of an endorsed Training Package qualification or skill set or accredited course.

#### **5 Course standards**

- 5.1 VET accredited courses are based on an established industry, education, legislative, enterprise or community need.
- 5.2 VET accredited courses are based on nationally endorsed units of competency where these are available and where these are not available the course is based on:
  - (a) units of competency developed as part of the course in accordance with the unit of competency template; or
  - (b) where 5.4 applies modules.

These units of competency or modules are developed in consultation with, and validated by, industry, enterprise community and/or professional groups and documented in accordance with these standards.

- 5.3 VET accredited courses include skills and knowledge components, expressed as:
  - (a) units of competency; or
  - (b) where 5.4 applies modules.
- 5.4 VET accredited courses may only include modules in exceptional circumstances where the legal entity or individual who owns copyright of the course establishes a case, to the satisfaction of the VET Regulator, that explains the need for the module and why it is not possible to develop a unit of competency prior to commencing course development.
- 5.5 VET accredited courses either lead to a:
  - (a) VET qualification and have course outcomes that are consistent with the AQF qualification descriptor identified for the course; or
  - (b) VET statement of attainment when course outcomes meet an identified industry, education, legislative, enterprise or community need but do not have the breadth and depth required for a VET qualification as stated in the Australian Qualifications Framework. The course title will read 'Course in...'.
- 5.6 VET accredited courses identify foundation skills relevant to the course outcomes.
- 5.7 VET accredited courses confirm recognition to be given to the course by licensing, regulatory, professional or industry bodies where applicable.

- 5.8 VET accredited courses specify rules for the structure of the course.
- 5.9 VET accredited courses identify exit points from the course which provide for vocational or educational outcomes where applicable.
- 5.10 VET accredited courses provide information on educational pathways and articulation where applicable.
- 5.11 VET accredited courses specify any entry requirements to the course and justify any explicit limitations to access.
- 5.12 VET accredited courses specify course assessment strategies, which:
  - (a) are valid, reliable, flexible and fair;
  - (b) provide for the collection of evidence of competency that is sufficient, valid, authentic and current;
  - (c) are consistent with the assessment requirements in the relevant Training Package(s) where nationally endorsed units of competency are used;
  - (d) are consistent with the assessment requirement in the relevant accredited course where units from an accredited course are used;
  - (e) ensure that workplace and regulatory requirements, where relevant, are met; and
  - (f) identify and justify any requirements for workplace and/or simulated assessment.
- 5.13 VET accredited courses provide guidance on appropriate delivery modes, together with advice on limitations on course delivery modes and any requirements for work placements or on-the-job training.
- 5.14 VET accredited courses specify facilities and resources and the vocational competency requirements of trainers and assessors essential for the delivery of the course. Vocational competency must be considered on an industry-by-industry basis and with reference to the assessment requirements of the VET accredited course and assessment conditions of units of competency.
- 5.15 VET accredited courses incorporate and identify course monitoring and evaluation processes which ensure that:
  - (a) the course content and outcomes are reviewed and remain current and relevant throughout the period of accreditation;
  - (b) a VET regulator is informed of any proposed changes to the course (for example, changes to entry requirements, course structure, inclusion of training package units, or changes to core and elective units) and, if required, any relevant material is provided to the VET Regulator to enable it to determine whether the course remains current and continues to comply with these standards throughout the period of accreditation; and
  - (c) if the course is changed as a result of course monitoring and evaluation, any RTO that has been licensed or franchised to deliver the course is advised of the changes by the copyright owner.

#### Template for course documentation for accreditation

The national template is mandatory and is designed to assist in development of courses for accreditation and re-accreditation under the Act that lead to an Australian Qualifications Framework qualification or to a VET statement of attainment. The template is divided into three sections (A, B and C) which together form the course document.

The course document (Sections A, B and C) is the specification for the VET accredited course. It provides the basis for the development of strategies for training and assessment by each RTO and describes essential course information.

- Section A provides information about persons in respect of whom a course is to be accredited and course classification code
- Section B contains details of industry, education, legislative, enterprise or community needs, and the rules under which the course may be accessed, delivered and assessed
- Section C includes the units of competency or modules that are contained in the course

## Section A: Applicant and course classification information

1. Person in respect of whom the course is being accredited	Provide the name of the legal entity of accreditation of a course as a VET acc Provide both the ongoing organisation contact details where these are differe	credited course. n contact details and the day to day	
2. Address	Provide the street, postal and email ad individual in respect of whom the cour		
3. Type of submission	State whether the submission is for acc If the submission is for re-accreditation of the existing course.		
4. Copyright acknowledgement	Provide evidence that the applicant fo licensed to exploit the copyright in any Include the name of the legal entity or	y units of competency or modules.	
5. Licensing and franchise	Indicate if this course may be used und are relevant state requirements for use contact details for these arrangements	e by other providers. Provide	
6. Course accrediting body	Provide the name of the VET Regulate	pr.	
7. AVETMISS information	Provide AVETMISS classification codes that describe the industry, occupational group and field of education for which the course is intended.		
	ANZSCO code – 6 digit (Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations – occupational type)	Insert code and description	
	ASCED Code – 4 digit (Field of education)	Insert code and description	
	National course code	To be provided by the VET Regulator once the course is accredited	
	[Classification codes for AVETMISS website at www.ncver.edu.au]	data may be found on the NCVER	
8. Period of accreditation	Accreditation dates will be confirmed course is accredited.	by the VET Regulator once the	

## **Section B: Course information**

1. Nomenclature		
1.1 Name of the qualification	Standard 4.1 for Accredited Courses	
	State the name of the qualification or Course in.	
	The name of the qualification or Course in, must not duplicate the name of a Training Package qualification or skill set.	
	It must comply with the length specified in AVETMISS (no more than 100 characters, including spaces).	
1.2 Nominal duration of the	Standard 5.8 for Accredited Courses	
course	State the nominal duration of the course in hours.	
2. Vocational or educational or	itcomes of the course	
2.1 Outcome(s) of the course	Standard 5.1 for Accredited Courses	
	State the intended outcome(s) of the course	
2.2 Course description	Standard 5.1 for Accredited Courses	
	Provide a short description outlining the course. This description will be published on the National Register of VET (training.gov.au)	
3. Development of the course		
3.1 Industry, education,	Standards 4.1, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4 for Accredited Courses	
legislative, enterprise or community needs	Provide evidence of industry, education, legislative, enterprise or community need and support for the course.	
	Describe the consultation and validation process.	
	Identify the major client and/or industry groups.	
	<i>Confirm the proposed course does not duplicate a qualification or skill set.</i>	
3.2 Review for re-accreditation	Standards 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4 for Accredited Courses	
	If applying for re-accreditation, provide details of how monitoring and evaluation have been taken into account in the revised course.	
	Include a table that clearly maps the existing course structure against the new course structure	
	Include a statement that clearly states whether the course replaces the previous accredited course and state whether it is equivalent or not equivalent to that course.	
4. Course outcomes		
4.1 Qualification level	Standard 5.5 for Accredited Courses	
	Describe how the intended course outcomes are consistent with the AQF level in the context of the proposed level for the course	
4.2 Foundation skills	Standard 5.6 for Accredited Courses	

	<ul><li>Provide a summary of the foundation skills to be achieved in the course.</li><li>If the course leads to a VET statement of attainment (e.g. Course in), this is optional.</li></ul>
4.3 Recognition given to the course (if applicable)	Standard 5.7 for Accredited Courses State the recognition given to the course by professional or industry bodies, if applicable, for example by granting membership.
4.4 Licensing or regulatory requirements (if applicable)	Standard 5.7 for Accredited Courses State the extent to which the course satisfies licensing or regulatory requirements, if applicable.
5. Course rules	
5.1 Course structure	Standards 5.8 and 5.9 for Accredited Courses Course structure must be presented in table format or as a combination of text and table, including information on, pre- requisites and nominal hours.
	1. Outline the structure of the course and the rules for completion. Course structure will reflect the intended skill and knowledge outcomes of the course and may be:
	<ul> <li>core only</li> <li>core and electives</li> <li>core and specialisations</li> <li>core, specialisations and electives</li> <li>electives only</li> </ul>
	2. Any exit points from the course that provide for vocational or educational outcomes should be identified.
	3. Include a statement that a VET statement of attainment will be issued for any unit of competency or module completed if the full VET qualification is not completed.
	The structure is accredited in its own right and assigned a National Register course code.
5.2 Entry requirements	Standard 5.11 for Accredited Courses
5.2 Entry requirements	1. Describe entry requirements essential to the course. Wherever possible, these should be expressed in terms of competencies.
	Limitations to entry must be justified.
	2. Guidance on foundation skills, such as language literacy and/or numeracy skills to support participants to achieve competence in the course outcomes may be included here.
6. Assessment	
6.1 Assessment strategy	Standards 5.12 for Accredited Courses
	1. Describe the course assessment strategy in terms of how it

	<ul> <li>effectively judges participants' achievement of outcomes. The strategy should outline the approach to assessment and evidence gathering to be followed by the RTO, including any mandated and/or recommended modes of assessment.</li> <li>2. Describe how assessment of the course will be consistent with the RTO Standards or their successor and identify course assessment strategies which: <ul> <li>are consistent with the assessment requirement in the relevant endorsed or accredited Training Product (s) where units of competency are used;</li> <li>ensure that workplace and regulatory requirements, where relevant, are met, and</li> <li>justify mandatory workplace assessment, or assessment through simulation if these are to be used and include advice on how they may be achieved.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6.2 Assessor competencies	Standard 5.14 for Accredited Courses
	1. Confirm compliance with the requirements for the competence of staff involved in assessment in the RTO Standards, or their successor and provide guidance on the vocational competency requirements for assessors.
	2. Justify any specialist vocational competency requirements for assessors in addition to the requirements in the RTO Standards, or their successor for the competencies of assessors.
	3 Units of competency that have been imported from Training Packages or VET accredited courses must reflect the requirements for trainers specified in that Training Package or accredited course.
7. Delivery	
7.1 Delivery modes	Standards 5.12 and 5.14 for Accredited Courses
	1. Identify and justify any delivery modes essential to this course, particularly work placements or on-the-job training.
	2. Identify and justify any limitations to the delivery modes that may be chosen for this course.
	3. Identify any educational support mechanisms for maximising participants' completion of the course.
	4. Indicate how the course may be varied to reflect the needs of learner groups through the contextualisation of unit content or delivery.
7.2 Resources	Standard 5.14 for Accredited Courses
	1. Provide details of any specialised facilities and equipment essential for the delivery of the course.
	2. Provide advice on the vocational competency requirements for trainers. Any requirements above the requirements of the RTO Standards or their successor, must be justified.

	3. Units of competency that have been imported from Training Packages or VET accredited courses must reflect the requirements for trainers specified in that Training Package or VET accredited course.	
8. Pathways and articulation		
8.1 Pathways and articulation	Standard 5.10 for Accredited Courses	
	1. Provide details of potential pathways for course participants, both into the course and into other VET and higher education courses on completion, including details of any formalised articulation and/or credit arrangements.	
	2. If this course contains nationally endorsed units of competency, identify any connections with other Training Package qualifications that are relevant to vocational pathways for course graduates.	
9. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation		
9.1 Ongoing monitoring and	Standard 5.15 for Accredited Courses	
evaluation	1. Describe the arrangements that the copyright owner proposes to use for monitoring and evaluating the course to maintain its relevancy and currency.	
	2. Include stakeholders who will be involved and the process to be undertaken.	
	3. Confirm that significant changes to the course resulting from course monitoring and evaluation procedures will be reported to the VET Regulator.	

### **Section C: Units of competency**

Section C of the course documentation consists of the units of competency making up the course (or modules, where relevant).

The following must be included:

1. A list of the codes and titles of units of competency imported from the Training Package(s) and/or VET accredited course(s);

(Note: the code and title of the units must be current and the same as the code and title used in the parent Training Package(s) and/or VET accredited course(s)

And/or

2. The units of competency developed for the course, which comply with the requirements outlined in the following unit of competency and assessment requirements templates;

And/or

3. Modules for the course.

(Note: Modules may only be included in exceptional circumstances where the legal entity or individual who owns copyright of the course establishes a case, to the satisfaction of the VET Regulator, that explains the need for the module and why it is not possible to develop an appropriate unit of competency (see standard 5.4). Applicants must consult with the VET Regulator prior to the development of the course).

## Unit of Competency Template

<b>UNIT CODE</b> <i>Mandatory field</i>	The VET Regulator from which accreditation is sought will determine the coding requirements for units of competency.
UNIT TITLE	The title accurately and concisely describes the unit outcome.
Mandatory field	It must comply with the length specified in AVETMISS (no more than 100 characters, including spaces).
<b>APPLICATION</b> <i>Mandatory field</i>	The application section briefly describes how the unit is practically applied in the industry and in what context(s) the unit may be applied. It includes:
	<ul> <li>a summary statement of the unit;</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>focused, useful information on how and where the unit of competency could be practically applied and who might use it; and</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>the unit of competency's relationship to any licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements. Where no requirements exist, insert:</li> </ul>
	No licensing, legislative or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.
<b>PREREQUISITE UNIT</b> <i>Optional field</i>	List any unit(s) or module(s) in which the candidate must be deemed competent prior to the determination of competency in this unit.
<b>COMPETENCY FIELD</b> <i>Optional field</i>	Used only when the course developer wishes to categorise a set of units within a VET accredited course in relation to a type of work.
<b>UNIT SECTOR</b> <i>Optional field</i>	Used only when the course developer wishes to categorise a set of units within a VET accredited course in relation to a particular industry sector.
<b>ELEMENTS</b> Mandatory field	<b>PERFORMANCE CRITERIA</b> <i>Mandatory field</i>
Elements describe the essential outcomes of the unit.	Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.
1. Elements describe actions or outcomes that are demonstrable	1.1 Performance criteria clearly relate to but do not duplicate the element.
and assessable.	1.2 They are expressed as a standard of performance and specify the context for application.
	1.3 They specify the required level of performance in relevant tasks, roles and skills.
	1.4 They reflect the applied knowledge that enables competent performance.

#### **RANGE OF CONDITIONS**

Optional field

Specifies different work environments and conditions that may affect performance. Essential operating conditions that may be present (depending on work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item and local industry and regional contexts) are included.

Range of conditions are advisory in nature and aimed at assisting in the delivery of the unit of competency by providing additional context. This includes essential operating conditions and any other variables essential to the work environment.

#### FOUNDATION SKILLS

Mandatory field

This section describes those language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills that are essential to performance.

Foundation skills essential to performance in this unit, but not explicit in the performance criteria are listed here, along with a brief context statement.

Where all foundation skills essential to performance in this unit are explicit in the performance criteria, insert:

Foundation skills essential to performance are explicit in the performance criteria of this unit of competency

UNIT MAPPING INFORMATION	Specifies the code and title of any equivalent unit of competency.
Mandatory field	If no equivalent unit, insert: No equivalent unit.

## Assessment Requirements Template

<b>TITLE</b> Mandatory field	Assessment Requirements for [insert Unit of Competency Code and Title]
<b>PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE</b> <i>Mandatory field</i>	• This field must specify the evidence required to demonstrate that the tasks outlined in the elements and performance criteria have been completed in the context of the job role.
	<ul> <li>This field must specify the evidence required to demonstrate the ability to respond to different situations and requirements relevant to the unit/industry context</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Provide clear information that will support evidence of consistent performance, over an appropriate period of time. Examples are:</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>'Conduct examinations of at least three minutes each for a minimum of four clients with different needs'</li> <li>'Produce one digital and one hand written simple, community related text'</li> <li>'Develop, implement and review a fitness plan that</li> </ul>
	supports achievement of own fitness goals'.
	• Do not repeat elements and performance criteria in this field.
<b>KNOWLEDGE EVIDENCE</b> <i>Mandatory field</i>	<ul> <li>Specifies what the individual must know in order to safely and effectively perform the work task described in the unit of competency.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Relates directly to the performance criteria and/or range of conditions.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Indicates the type and depth of knowledge required to meet the demands of the units of competency.</li> </ul>
ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS	• Stipulates any mandatory conditions for assessment.
Mandatory field	<ul> <li>Specifies the conditions under which evidence for assessment must be gathered, including any details of equipment and materials, contingencies, specifications, physical conditions, relationships with team members and supervisors, relationship with clients or customers, and timeframes.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Specifies assessor requirements in addition to the Standards for RTOs, including any details related to qualifications, experience and industry currency.</li> </ul>

