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1  Purpose

1.1 To provide a framework for assessment of VET courses at the University of Notre Dame Australia (University).

1.2 To articulate the University’s commitment to meeting regulatory requirements including the Australian Skills Quality Authority’s (ASQA) VET Quality Framework.

1.3 To provide a framework within which University staff will reflect on assessment practices that enhance learning and teaching.

2  Regulatory Principles

2.1 This Policy must be read in conjunction with all relevant regulatory instruments detailing national requirements for the delivery of VET programs including:

• ASQA VET Quality Framework
• National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011.
• Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2012 (Standards).
• Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

3  Scope

3.1 This Policy applies to all VET qualifications offered at or by the University

4  Responsibility

4.1 Academic Council (AC), and its sub-committee, the Vocational Education and Training Academic Subcommittee (VETAS) are responsible for overseeing the University’s adherence to this Policy and to the Australian Skills Quality Authority’s VET Quality Framework in relation to academic matters.

5  Assessment Principles

5.1 Assessment in all VET courses will be based on National Competency Standards drawn from either nationally endorsed Training Packages or courses accredited by ASQA.

5.2 Assessment in VET programs will comply with the Principles of Assessment (set out in 5.3) and the Rules of Evidence (set out in 5.4).
5.3 **Principles of Assessment**

The University will ensure that assessment complies with the Principles of Assessment (validity, reliability, flexibility, fairness and sufficiency) by ensuring that:

- Assessment is conducted by assessors with the required assessor competencies and is moderated to facilitate consistent interpretation of the requirements of the unit being assessed (**reliability**);

- Assessors cover the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential for competent performance in the workplace; knowledge and skill are integrated with practical application; and judgements of competence are based on sufficient evidence and advice contained in the evidence requirements for the unit (**validity**);

- Students’ needs are accommodated; provision is made for recognition of competencies no matter how, where or when they have been acquired; and assessment methods appropriate to the context, competency and student are used (**flexibility**);

- Reasonable adjustments are made where necessary to take account of individual student needs; the student fully understands and can participate in the assessment process; and the student can appeal the result and/or be reassessed if necessary (**fairness**);

- Appropriate evidence is collected (quality and quantity) to ensure that all aspects of competency have been satisfied and that competency can be demonstrated repeatedly (**sufficiency**).

5.4 **Rules of Evidence**

The University will ensure that assessment complies with Rules of Evidence endorsed by the National Skills Standards Council. Rules of Evidence provide guidance on the collection of evidence to ensure that it is valid, sufficient, authentic and current.

- To accept evidence as authentic, an assessor must be assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the student’s own work.

- Competency requires demonstration of current performance, so the evidence collected must be from either the present or the very recent past (i.e. within the last two years).

6 **Qualification Delivery and Assessment Strategy**

6.1 A Qualification Delivery and Assessment Strategy (**QDAS**) will be developed for each course, clearly outlining the methods of assessment for each unit of competency or group of competencies, the student support available to students, the context of assessment and the validation process. In developing QDAS consideration will be given to the requirements of the current, relevant Training Package and outlined in each unit of competency.
7 Assessment Pathways

7.1 The University recognises that are three broad pathways leading to the recognition of competencies and the issuing of a qualification or Statement of Attainment within the National Training Framework.

- **Training and Assessment.** The student undertakes a structured program of training and assessment. In this training and assessment are integrated, assessment evidence is collected and feedback is provided to the student on an ongoing basis. It is through this combination of training and assessment that the student acquires the skills and knowledge identified in the relevant competency standards.

- **Assessment Only (also known as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)).** There is no structured training and the student is simply required to provide current, quality evidence of their attainment of the relevant units of competency. In RPL the student presents evidence that he or she possesses the required skills and knowledge identified in the relevant competency standards and the assessor makes a judgement on whether the student is competent. Approaches to assessment may be directed by the student, such as in the compilation of portfolios, or by the assessor, such as observation of workplace performance, demonstrations of skills and oral and written testing.

Information on RPL will made available to students before they enrol and will outline the University’s approach to RPL for VET Students, include information and advice for assessors and a self-assessment and application form.

- **Combination of Training and Assessment and RPL.** This involves a mixture of ‘training and assessment’ and ‘assessment only’ pathways. These arrangements may be used where students have already gained competencies through work and life experience but also require access to training in new areas of competence. In these situations, the student may undertake an initial assessment to determine their current competence using RPL. Having identified the student’s current competence, a structured training and assessment program may then be established to ensure that the student acquires the required additional competencies – this would be achieved through a ‘training and assessment pathway’.

7.2 National recognition

Each of the assessment pathway leads to full recognition under the AQF. Accordingly, a student may gain a full qualification or a Statement of Attainment by using any one or combination of the pathways described above.
8 Assessment Methods

8.1 Assessment methods at the University may include, but are not limited to:

- Direct observation,
- Structured activities e.g. simulations, roles, group work, case studies, assignments, projects, field work, practicum, electronic forums, presentations.
- Questioning - either verbal or written.
- Portfolios – for example, work samples, journal, log book.
- Review of products – for example: reports, performance, exhibitions.
- Formal and informal tests, including examinations.

9 Assessment Tools

9.1 The University will use appropriate instruments and procedures to gather and interpret evidence of competence.

- Instruments are the specific questions or activities used to assess competence by the assessment method selected. An instrument may be supported by an outline of acceptable performance and the decision-making rules or guidelines to be used by assessors.
- Guidelines are the information or instructions given to the student and the assessor about how the assessment is to be conducted and recorded.
- Where appropriate, a number of units of competency may be grouped together for holistic assessment. Training Packages and accredited courses provide advice on units that may be assessed together.

10 Access and Equity

10.1 Assessors will make reasonable adjustment to assessment methods and tools to enable students with special needs to demonstrate competence. See Access and Equity Policy and Guidelines.

11 Preparing for Assessment

11.1 Clear information will be provided to students regarding the method, context and timing of the assessment. This information will be included in the Student Training and Assessment Plan.
12 Conducting Assessment

12.1 Assessment will be conducted or supervised by persons who:

- Hold the competencies determined by the National Skills Standards Council or its successor, as defined in the Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2012; and
- Have the relevant vocational competencies at least to the level being assessed; and
- Can demonstrate current industry skills directly relevant to the assessment being undertaken; and
- Continue to develop their VET knowledge and skills as well as their industry currency and assessor competence.

13 Assessment Basis

13.1 The University shall use the following awards:

- **Satisfactory (S)** for a student who has demonstrated that they are competent to the specified standard against the element/s being assessed or **Not Yet Satisfactory (NYS)** to a student who has not demonstrated that they have achieved the specified standard against the element/s being assessed.

- **Competent (C)** is awarded to a student who has achieved all of the elements specified for a unit of competency to the specified standard, and **Not Yet Competent (NYC)** is awarded to a student who has failed to achieve all of the elements specified for that unit of competency to the specified standard.

13.2 Feedback will be constructive, timely and sufficient to inform the student of additional evidence/training they require to demonstrate competence. The length and type of feedback will vary depending on the nature and purpose of the assessment activity.

14 Appeals / Reassessment

14.1 Students have the right to appeal an assessment decision in accordance with the Policy: Appeals & Complaints Process for VET Students.

14.2 Students have the right to an initial assessment and two (2) re-assessments.
15 Certification

15.1 Students who complete the requirements for a VET qualification will receive a Qualification and a Transcript of Results.

15.2 Students who partially complete the requirements for a VET qualification will receive a Statement of Attainment certifying the unit/s of competency they have been assessed as competent in.

15.3 The University will adhere to the protocols for issuing Qualifications, Records of Results and Statements of Attainment as set out in the current AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy and the National Skills Standards Council (NSSC) Policy: Application of the Australian Qualifications Framework Qualifications Issuance Policy within the VET Sector.

16 Validation and Moderation

16.1 Where there is more than one assessor for a particular unit of competency, at least quarterly, the assessors will moderate their assessment methods, procedures and judgements against the particular unit to ensure quality, consistency and fairness. Judgements will be reviewed following this process and adjusted if required.

16.2 To support continuous improvement, a systematic approach to validation of assessment is conducted annually with industry stakeholders and peer assessors in other RTOs, where available.

17 Associated Documents

The following documents are associated with this policy:

- VET Assessment Guidelines
- Validation and Moderation of Assessment Guidelines
- Policy: Appeals & Complaints Process for VET Students