

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Assessments will vary from course to course. They may include assignments, knowledge assessments or quizzes, testimonials, observations or references of various kinds. Assessments may be completed on-line or be in other formats depending on your course. Each course will have a specified completion time which must be adhered to unless there is a request for a special consideration and/or extension of time. Refer to the Extension of Time and Special Consideration section of this policy information.

Assessments undertaken at a distance may utilise the services of an external supervisor or assessor.

GUIDELINES

What is competency?

Competency involves the specification of skills and knowledge and their application to a particular standard of performance required in the workplace. Aspects of work performance included in this concept involve:

- Performance at an acceptable level of technical skill;
- Organising one's tasks;
- Responding and reacting appropriately when things go wrong; and
- Transferring skills and knowledge to new situations and contexts.

Standards are statements of the required workplace levels of performance.

Assessment

Assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on the extent and nature of performance and other requirements, as described in a set of standards, or learning outcomes, resulting in a judgement of whether or not competency has been demonstrated. Effective and objective assessment is key to the successful implementation of competency standards in the workplace and in education. This is the judgement of performance and knowledge against the relevant industry competency standards.

Assessment is carried out by the comparison of a candidate's evidence of skills and knowledge, against the requirements of the Standards.

Underlying principles of assessment

For an effective assessment system in a competency environment, some basic principles must apply:

Validity

The assessments actually assess what they claim to assess and what they have been designed to assess.

Authenticity

The evidence collected is authentic - that is, it is actually derived from valid sources and is directly attributable to the individual.

Reliability

Reliable assessment uses methods and procedures that ensure that the competency standards are interpreted and applied consistently from person to person and from context to context.

Consistency

The assessment system must ensure that evidence collected and provided for judgement is consistent across the range, without undue reliance on any small number of select workplace contexts or projects.

Currency

Assessment evaluates whether or not the individual's skills and knowledge are current and can be applied in today's workplace.

Sufficiency

Evidence of competency should be sufficient to cover all the elements, performance criteria and required range of variables in the standards against which assessment is to be carried out.

Flexibility

Every portfolio or set of candidate evidence is unique.

Fairness and Equity

An assessment system and its processes must not disadvantage any person or organisation. All eligible candidates must be guaranteed access to assessment, which does not discriminate on any basis. Assessment guidelines must include an approach for working with candidates who have special needs.

Assessors

The role of an assessor is to objectively assess and judge a candidate's evidence against a set of standards. In order to do this effectively, an assessor must have a sound knowledge of, and be skilled in, the relevant industry area. In addition, the assessor must have acknowledged competency in assessment itself and hold an appropriate Workplace Assessor qualification or equivalent.

Assessors must be capable of taking a flexible approach to the assessment of evidence. Clearly, this approach must always take time and cost into account - both to ensure the best use of assessor time and from the viewpoint of the candidate and his or her employer. An assessment system must evaluate the scope of knowledge and skills covered by the criteria - both performance (skill) and underpinning knowledge & understanding.

It is crucial that assessors always understand and practise fair, objective, unbiased and flexible assessment processes.

Forms of Evidence

Direct Evidence is something produced by or achieved by the candidate, current or from an acceptable past period.

Indirect evidence or supplementary evidence reflects the value of the work produced.

Supporting documentation such as references, job descriptions, performance reviews, or third party testimonials, may be required to verify authenticity or currency where there is evidence of past performance. |

In some cases an interview by phone or in person may be required to support the application is the authentic evidence of the applicant.

Skills Recognition

Skills Recognition is a process by which participants can apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Recognition of Current Competency (RCC)

Skills recognition is the process of recognising what individuals already know or can do, their knowledge and experience, without requiring them to undertake a course of study or training. The critical factors are the relevance and currency of the learning, not how or when it was acquired.

The source of learning may have taken many forms, including:

- Learning from a previous course of study or non credential learning activity
- Learning from a relevant life experience (eg volunteer or community work, hobbies or interests)
- Learning from work experience (informal on-the-job learning, staff development, team activities)

Credit Transfer

Credit transfer recognises the equivalence of an accredited course previously completed, and where the course aligns either in part or to the whole of a course provided by Qantas College.

Participant eligibility for credit transfer will not unfairly advantage or disadvantage an enrollee from entering a course. Qantas College may design courses and programs with deliberate articulation pathways. These will be clearly depicted in course information.

Candidates with Special Needs

Each candidate must have access to fair and open assessment. Candidates with special needs should be offered the same opportunities as any other candidate.

As special needs extend to more than identify physical or learning difficulties, an assessor will also need to consider the best approach when dealing with candidates with needs such as low literacy, lack of confidence or non-English speaking background.

An assessor must take special needs into consideration from the planning stage onwards and adopt particular assessment methods as appropriate. Depending on any specification given in the standards, the assessor may be able to accept alternative evidence from a candidate with special needs.

If there is uncertainty, the assessor should call on other assessors or a verifier for assistance and guidance, as required. In such a case, the situation must be fully documented, with appropriate feedback being provided to the candidate at all stages.

Feedback

Where students are assessed as not competent they will be provided with additional feedback on their assessment outcome to assist in achieving the required performance standard on reassessment.

Reassessment

Students who are dissatisfied with their assessment outcome may apply for reassessment by contacting their trainer or assessor.