Assessment Policy and Guidelines

1.0 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.

2.0 Assessment

2.1 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.

2.2 Effective and objective assessment is critical 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.

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

3.0 Policy

Assessments will support student's engagement in learning and the creation of supportive learning communities.

CMI assessment system will ensure that assessments (including RPL) comply with the assessment requirements of the training product and meet the principles of assessment and rules of evidence.

All assessments will:

- comply with the assessment guidelines included in the applicable nationally endorsed Training Packages or the assessment requirements specified in accredited courses
- include coversheets that contains student declaration with respective to student and assessor's name, date and signature.
- lead to the issuing of a Statement of Attainment or Award under the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) when a person is assessed as competent against nationally endorsed unit(s) of competency in the applicable Training Packages.
- respect, recognise and develop student's current knowledge and experiences and provide appropriate opportunities for the formal recognition of prior learnings.
- be equitable for all learners, taking into account cultural and linguistic needs
- have provision for reassessment on appeal.

All assessments including knowledge test, questions, at CMI must be submitted electronically in a soft copy. All the assessments must be typed by the students. However, flexible arrangements can be made if students are unable to submit their assessment electronically due to compassionate or compelling circumstances.

At CMI, assessments are conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence.

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4.0 The Principles of Assessment and The Rules of Evidence

i)   The Principles of Assessment

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

- **Validity**- Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner.
  Validity requires:
  - ➤ assessment against the unit(s) of competency and the associated assessment requirements covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance;

- ➢ assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application;
- ➢ assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and
- ➢ judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements

- **Reliability**- Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment

- **Fairness** - The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner's needs.
  The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process, and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.

- **Flexibility** - Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by:
  - ➢ reflecting the learner's needs;
  - ➢ assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired; and
  - ➢ drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements, and the individual

ii)   The Rules of Evidence

These are closely related to the principles of assessment and provide guidance on the collection of evidence to ensure that it is valid, sufficient, authentic and current.

- **Validity**- The assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.

- **Sufficiency**- The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made of a learner's competency.

- **Authenticity**- The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner's own work.

- **Currency**- The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.

To achieve these principles, the assessment system must exhibit the following characteristics:
- The standards, assessment processes and all associated information are straight forward and understandable;
- The characteristics of potential students are identified, to enable all potential assessment issues to be identified and catered for;
- The chosen processes and materials within the system of assessment do not disadvantage students;
- An appropriate and effective review and dispute resolution mechanism is in place to investigate, examine and redress any issue of unfairness or disadvantage identified, involving access, assessment, certification or any other related issue; and
- Where potential disadvantages are identified, the system is amended to avoid or counter them, or appropriate steps taken to overcome them including reassessment if required.

iii)   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.

iv)   Assessors

The role of an assessor is to objectively assess and judge a student's evidence against a set of standards. In order to do this effectively, assessor will have current knowledge and skills in the relevant industry area and at least to the level being taught.

An assessor must:
- Interpret and understand the criteria;
- Ensure that evidence meets the standards;
- Ensure that evidence is valid, authentic, reliable, consistent, current and sufficient; and
- Use expertise to make fair and objective judgements.

v) **The training and ongoing professional development of assessors must include such areas as:**
- Roles, responsibilities and ethics;
- Procedural and administrative duties;
- Performance and knowledge evidence gathering and presentation;
- Interpretation and usage of standards;
- Selecting and using appropriate methods of assessment; and
- Requirements regarding processing and recording of results, progress and feedback.

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

All assessments at CMI will be conducted by qualified assessors who have the assessor competencies

- TAE40116 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment or its successor or
- TAE40110 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment plus the following units:
- TAELLN411 (or its successor) or TAELLN401A, and
- TAEASS502 (or its successor) or TAEASS502A or TAEASS502B or
- A diploma or higher-level qualification in adult education.

In addition to these requirements specified above, CMI's training and assessment will be delivered only by persons who have:
- Vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered and assessed.
- Current industry skills directly relevant to the training and assessment being provided.
- Current knowledge and skills in vocational training and learning that informs their training and assessment.

The assessor will and must comply with the assessment guidelines and the requirements of this policy and procedures.

5.0 Forms of evidence

5.1 In general, basic forms of skills evidence include:
- Direct performance evidence - current or from an acceptable past period
- extracted examples within the workplace (applicable to RPL assessment);
- natural observation in the workplace (applicable to RPL); and
- simulations, including competency and skills tests, projects, assignments

5.2 Supplementary evidence, from:
- oral and written questioning;
- personal reports; and
- Witness testimony.

5.3 Appropriate and valid forms of assessment utilised for both skills and knowledge may include:
- Evaluation of direct products of work;
- Natural observation;
- Skill tests, simulations and projects;
- Evaluation of underpinning knowledge and understanding;
- Questioning and discussion; and

- Evidence from prior achievement and activity.

5.4 Students with special needs

- One fundamental principle of an assessment system is that each student must have access to fair and open assessment. Students with special needs should be offered the same opportunities as any other student.
- 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 students with needs such as low literacy, lack of confidence or non-English speaking background.
- A trainer/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 student 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 student at all stages.
- In case a student requires special training needs, Trainer will be provided with '*student support' form* by the training manager before the course commences or as and when the special learning need arises. Trainer will be required to lodge individual training methodology to address the special needs.

6.0 Reasonable adjustment

i. To meet the needs of all learners', adjustments can be made to the way assessments are conducted but not to the requirements of the assessment. The purpose of these adjustments is to enhance fairness and flexibility so that the specific needs of students can be met.

Examples of reasonable adjustments may include but are not limited to:

- providing additional time for student to practice the assessment tasks
- presenting questions orally for students with literacy issues
- asking questions in a relevant practical context
- adapting machinery and equipment to make it more easily used
- presenting work instructions in diagrammatic or pictorial form instead of words and sentences
- simplifying the design of job tasks

ii. It is the responsibility of each trainer/assessor to assess student needs and make whatever reasonable adjustments are practicable to maximise a students' opportunity to demonstrate their competence.

iii. In case a student requires reasonable adjustment, Assessor will be provided with '*student support form'* before the course commences or during the course duration to lodge any reasonable adjustments to make to gather alternative evidence.

7.0 Reassessment

Learners unsuccessful at achieving competency at the first attempt will be given two further opportunities for re-assessment at a mutually agreed time and date. If a learner fails the re-assessment after three attempts, they will be advised to re-enrol in the unit. Students will be given total 3 attempts including 1 original plus 2 reassessments.

Cost of reassessment will be as follows:

- 1st Original submission: Free of cost
- 2nd Reassessment fee: Free of cost
- 3rd Reassessment fee: 300

If student fails in the 3rd reassessment, then students will have to repeat unit. Repeat unit fee- $300.

Not attending for an assessment will be counted as one assessment attempt for each occurrence unless:

- the student can provide a certificate from a registered medical practitioner indicating that the student was medically unable to attend the assessment; or

- the student can provide independent evidence of exceptional compassionate circumstances beyond the student's control, such as serious illness or death of a close family member to explain the non-attendance at the assessment.

8.0 Assessment Procedures & Guidelines

The Assessment Process section defines the procedure used for conducting assessments. The method applies to assessments conducted for the purposes of national recognition in both institutional contexts. Equally it applies to assessment only pathways, training and assessment pathways or Recognition of Prior Learning

8.1 Assessments Requirements

All Assessment must:

- Comply with the Assessment Guidelines included in the applicable nationally endorsed Training Packages or the assessment requirements specified in accredited courses;
- Lead to the issuing of a Statement of Attainment or qualification under the AQF when a person is assessed as competent against nationally endorsed unit(s) of competency in the applicable Training Package or modules specified in the applicable accredited course.
- Comply with the principles of assessment defined above including validity, reliability, fairness and flexibility;
- Provide for applicants to be informed of the context and purpose of the assessment and the assessment process;
- Where an RPL assessment is conducted at the workplace to streamline the assessment, focus on the application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace and cover all aspects of workplace performance, including task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills and job role environment skills;
- Involve the evaluation of sufficient evidence to enable judgements to be made about whether competency has been attained;
- Provide for feedback to the applicant about the outcomes of the assessment process and guidance on future options;
- Be fair for all persons, taking account of cultural and linguistic needs; and
- Provide for reassessment on appeal in line with the CMI's re-assessment procedure (highlighted in this policy)

8.2 Assessment Process

i. Establish the assessment context:

The assessor establishes the context and purpose of the assessment by identifying the relevant competency standards, assessment guidelines and qualification framework, identifies the Institute support materials that have been purchased and developed to facilitate the learning and assessment process.

ii. Prepare the student:

The assessor meets with the student to:

- the context and purpose of the assessment process
- the competency standards to be assessed and the evidence to be collected
- Assess the needs of the student and, where applicable, negotiate reasonable adjustment for assessing students without compromising the integrity of the competencies
- Provide verbal and/or non-verbal feedback upon completion of any summative assessment; regarding the student's understanding of the competency standards, evidence requirements and assessment process
- Determine if the student is ready for assessment and, in consultation with the student, decide on the time and place of the assessment

iii. Each unit has an individual assessment tool and mapping document which establishes the details assessment methodology including:

- Outlining the assessment methods
- Providing instructions for the assessor
- Providing instructions for the students

- Being mapped to the unit of competency through a separate mapping document
- Ensuring assessment is summative

8.3 Plan and prepare the evidence gathering process

- The assessor must use the CMI assessment tools to gather sufficient and quality evidence about the student's performance in order to make the assessment decision
- The assessor must organise equipment or resources required to support the evidence gathering process
- The assessor must complete the reporting requirements and make a judgment in accordance with the assessment decision making rules and deem the student competent or not yet competent using the overall decision-making rules.

All assessment methods are identified on the unit summary page as a part of the assessment requirements.

8.4 Collect the evidence and make the assessment decision

The assessor must:

- Establish and oversee the evidence gathering process to ensure its validity, reliability, fairness and flexibility
- Collect appropriate evidence and assess this against the relevant Units of Competency
- Incorporate allowable adjustments to the assessment procedure without compromising the integrity of the competencies.
- Evaluate the evidence in terms of validity, consistency, currency, equity, authenticity and sufficiency
- Record details of evidence collected
- Make a judgment about the student's competency, based on the evidence and the relevant Unit[s] of Competency.

8.5 Provide feedback on the assessment

i. The assessor must provide advice to the student regarding the outcomes of the assessment process. This includes providing the student with:
   - Clear and constructive feedback on the assessment decision
   - Information on ways of overcoming any identified gaps in competency revealed by the assessment outcome
   - The opportunity to discuss the assessment process and outcome information on reassessment and the appeals processes.
   - An opportunity for reassessment if appropriate or requested by the student

8.6 Record and report the result

- Feedback is provided to every student at the end of every assessment. The assessor will provide advice to the student about the outcomes of the assessment process.

- The assessor records the assessment outcome, maintains records of the assessment procedure, evidence collected and the outcome, and provide signed and dated assessment outcomes to the RTO/ Training Manager, that are achieved for each unit.

- The assessor also maintains the confidentiality of the assessment outcome

8.7 Participate in the reassessment and appeals process

The trainer/assessor will:

- Provide feedback and counselling to the learner, if required, regarding the assessment outcome or process including guidance on further options.

- Provide the learners with information on the reassessment and appeals process

- Report any assessment decision that is disputed by the learner to the Training Manager and/or Administration Manager.

- Participate in the reassessment or complaints and appeal according to the policies and procedures of CMI. The process and policy for complaints and appeals and reassessment is available on CMI's website.

9.0 Validation

CMI will validate each training product at least once every five years, with at least 50 per cent of products validated within the first three years of each five-year cycle, taking into account the relative risks of all of the training products on the CMI's scope of registration.

Systematic Validation of CMI's assessment practices and judgements will be undertaken by one or more persons who are not directly involved in the particular instance of delivery and assessment of the training product being validated, and who collectively have:

- vocational competencies and current industry skills relevant to the assessment being validated;
- current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning; and
- the training and assessment credential
- Please refer to the Validation Policy for more information available from CMI's reception.

10. Industry Consultation

CMI will engage with the industry and utilise the information gained in the development, validation and monitoring of training and assessment services provided by CMI.