

POL-TRA-03 Assessment Policy

GOVERNANCE

Standard 1, Clause 1.8 – The RTO implements an assessment system that ensures that assessment (including recognition of prior learning):

- a) complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package or VET accredited course
- b) is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence.

SRTO Standard 1 Clause 1.9 – The RTO implements a plan for ongoing systematic validation of assessment practices and judgements for each training product on the RTO's scope of registration.

SRTO Standard 1 Clause 1.12 – The RTO offers recognition of prior learning to individual learners.

SRTO Standard 1 Clause 1.14 – The RTO's training and assessment is delivered only by persons who have the training and assessment credential specified in Item 2 or Item 3 of [Schedule 1](#).

SRTO Standard 1 Clause 1.15 – Where a person conducts assessments only, the RTO ensures that the person has the training and assessment credential specified in Item 2, or Item 3, or Item 5 of [Schedule 1](#).

SRTO Standard 1 Clause 1.16 – The RTO ensures that all trainers and assessors undertake professional development in the fields of the knowledge and practice of vocational training, learning and assessment including competency-based training and assessment.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Ironwood Institute follows a systematic approach to assessment practices (including recognition of prior learning – RPL) in accordance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 (SRTOs), the requirements of National Training Packages, and VET Accredited courses.

SCOPE

Ironwood's assessment policy applies to all assessment practices for all the courses within its scope of registration, and to any assessments conducted under the auspice of Ironwood through a partnering organisation.

DEFINITIONS

Refer to Definitions or Glossary of terms used in this and other policy documents in a separate document.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Assessment practices conducted under Ironwood's scope of registration, meet the requirements of the relevant Training Packages and VET Accredited courses, industry standards and expectations.
2. Ironwood ensures that all assessment practices follow the principles of assessment as per SRTOs: fairness, flexibility, validity, and reliability.

3. Ironwood Institute assessment practices are consistent with the rules of evidence as per SRTOs validity, sufficiency, authenticity, and currency.
4. Ironwood Institute follows a scheduled plan for the validation of assessment practices for each training product under its scope of registration.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

1. All Trainers and Assessors are provided with adequate resources to develop, design, and implement assessment practices that support the requirements of each of the training packages or accredited courses.
2. All appointed and authorised Trainers and Assessors possess and maintain relevant qualifications and vocational competency in accordance with those requirements specified in the SRTOs.
3. Trainers and Assessors incorporate the principles of assessment including validity, reliability, flexibility, and fairness when conducting assessments.
4. Trainers and Assessors apply the rules of evidence including validity, sufficiency, currency, and authenticity when conducting assessments.
5. Assessment practices offer the option of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
6. Different assessment modes may be used.
7. Ironwood Institute gathers evidence as part of its assessment practices.
8. Assessment practices are to be conducted in an ethical and professional manner.
9. Special considerations and reasonable adjustments are applied to assessments when necessary (e.g., students with special needs).
10. In all the assessment outcomes that Ironwood follows, a competency-based approach and an assessment model is adopted. A competency-based approach collects evidence about a learner's performance to a pre-set competency standard with emphasis placed on what a person can do (the outcome) rather than comparing a learner's achievement to others. There is no concept of pass or fail, only competent (C) or competency not achieved (CNA). The training is focused and allows for greater participation of the student in the assessment process.
11. Feedback is provided to students to inform them on their assessment progress and results.
12. Re-submission of full assessments or assessment pieces is available under certain conditions.
13. Appeal processes are encouraged for students who disagree with assessment outcomes.
14. Ironwood will securely retain and produce in full at performance assessment (audit) if requested to do so, all completed student assessment items for each student for a period of six months from the date on which the judgement of competence for the student has been made.
15. Ironwood will keep student assessment records for a minimum of two years.

Principles of Assessment Implemented at Ironwood Institute

Assessments are conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment as prescribed by SRTOs.

- Fairness
- Flexibility
- Validity
- Reliability

Rules of Evidence implemented at Ironwood Institute

Assessments are conducted ensuring compliance with the Rules of Evidence (ROE) as prescribed in the Standards for RTOs.

- Validity
- Sufficiency
- Authenticity
- Currency

Assessment Tools and Resources

1. Assessment tools are the resources used by Trainers and Assessors to identify and record the skills and knowledge students must demonstrate to be deemed competent in any given unit of competency. Assessment tools are crucial for the accurate and consistent assessment of students against competency standards.
2. Assessment resources are sourced from reputable Resource Development Entities which consult with industry to develop compliant assessment tools.

Assessor Requirements for Conducting Assessment

1. Trainers and Assessors are suitably qualified and have both, academic, and vocational competencies at least to the level being assessed, and as prescribed in SRTOs.
2. Trainers and Assessors hired by Ironwood Institute conducting assessment on its behalf will:
 - Ensure they assess and judge a student's skills and knowledge of competence against set standards, principles of assessment and rules of evidence.
 - Ensure that safety of the personnel involved in the assessment is always maintained.
 - Ensure that assessment focuses on the application of knowledge and skills to the standard of performance required in the workplace and cover all aspects of workplace performance.
 - Ensure the assessment process is open, structured, consistent, and comprehensive incorporating feedback to the student on the outcomes of the assessment process, as well as information regarding the appeals procedure and guidance on other options.
 - Interpret and understand the performance criteria and evidence requirements.
 - Select appropriate assessment methods and materials.
 - Make fair and objective judgements.
 - Provide all relevant paperwork to administration for processing in a timely manner.

Recognition of Prior Learning

1. All students are offered access to RPL upon enrolment. (See RPL Policy).
2. If an application for RPL by a student is successful, and a reduction in their course duration and/or course fees is applied. For International students, Ironwood is required to notify these changes on PRISMS and reflect the reduction in the student's records as well as advise students to contact DOHA for further information.

Special Considerations

1. Students who experience compelling circumstances or have special needs that affect their performance in an assessment, may be eligible to apply for consideration for reasonable adjustment to assessment.
2. Consideration may apply to students who during training or assessment experience one of the following circumstances:
 - Severe illness or psychological conditions for example, hospital admission, serious injury, severe anxiety, or depression (requires doctor's certificate).
 - Bereavement.
 - Hardship/Trauma for example, victim of crime, sudden unemployment.
 - Other exceptional circumstances (to be assessed on application).
3. Students wishing to apply for consideration in the above circumstances may do so by discussing the circumstances with their respective Trainer and Assessor or Student Support officer directly.
4. Approved applications for consideration may be subject to one of the following outcomes:
 - Extension of submission date.
 - Deferred Assessment.
 - Additional assessment.
 - Resubmit/reassessment; or
 - Opportunity to recommence course, dependent on availability on another date.
 - Re-enrol in the unit or enrol in an approved alternative unit.
 - No action.

Reasonable Adjustments to Assessment

1. Adjustments to assessment cannot compromise the integrity of assessment, elements, and performance criteria of the unit of competency.
2. Adjustments to assessment will not provide an unfair advantage/disadvantage to students.

Conducting Assessment Practices Ethically

1. Ironwood Institute staff will ensure there is no real or perceived conflict of interest in assessment practices. Examples include, but are not limited to the following circumstances:
 - Assessing a family member, relative or close friend.
 - Assessing a colleague or business associate particularly if the outcome of the assessment can be used to gain employment, promotion, pay increases or other benefits.
 - Assessing another Ironwood Institute staff member, particularly where a supervisor/subordinate relationship exists.
 - Assessing oneself.
2. If a real or perceived conflict of interest is identified, it is the responsibility of the assessor to discuss the situation with the CEO/Delegate at the earliest opportunity. The CEO/Delegate will decide whether the assessor should/should not assess the specific case, and/or where the assessor has already conducted part or all the assessment, whether assessment should be confirmed by another assessor.

Due Dates and Approving Extensions

1. Students will be informed of due dates for assessments.
2. A request for extension must be acknowledged and agreed by the Trainer and Assessor prior to the assessment due date.
3. An extension of assessment activities may be granted where a due date disadvantages a student in a significant way. Such circumstances include compassionate grounds, sickness supported by a doctor's certificate, employment obligations supported by the employer or language, literacy, and numeracy requirements of the student. A Trainer and Assessor can request to see evidence of progress towards the assessment activity before granting an extension.

Assessment Marking

When marking assessments, Trainers and Assessors will make comments and provide genuine feedback for the entire assessment.

Assessment Decisions and Outcomes

1. Assessment outcomes are recorded as one of the following
 - **C (Competent)** – Students are deemed 'competent' when they have consistently demonstrated their skills and knowledge to the standard required in the Unit of Competency and Assessment Criteria guidelines.
 - **CNA (Competency not achieved)** – Students are deemed as 'Competency not achieved' when they are unable/have not demonstrated satisfactory levels of competence in accordance with the minimum performance standards for a full unit.
2. Assessments not submitted by the due date without an approved extension or in the case where an extension has been granted but the assessment has not been submitted by the extended date, a CNA will be recorded, except in the case of a Funded Domestic Student, where **W – Withdrawn** will be recorded.
3. Students with a CNA may present two resubmissions, which must be received within two weeks after the end date of the unit.
4. Students with a CNA may resubmit beyond the two weeks after the end date of the unit, as agreed in writing from the Trainer and Assessor and pay a penalty of \$100 for any of the resubmissions.
5. Students with a CNA may present a resubmission beyond two weeks after the end date of a unit with evidence of compassionate and compelling reasons without financial penalty.
6. Students with a CNA who resubmit beyond the two weeks after the end date of the unit without an agreement from the Trainer and Assessor or without evidence of compassionate and compelling reasons will have their CNA result upheld.
7. No assessment or resubmission may be presented beyond 6 months after the end date of a unit. The student will be required to re-enrol in the unit when next available in the course or enrol in an approved alternate unit from another course.
8. Students assessed as CNA shall receive feedback and guidance from the Trainer and Assessor.

Feedback and Support for Continuous Learning Outcomes

Ironwood provides constructive feedback to students to facilitate and support the learning process. Students struggling to meet the course progress requirements, are involved in an intervention strategy to define a plan to achieve the desired outcomes. (Refer to the course progress policy or student support policy for more information).

RESPONSIBILITY

CEO/Delegate – for approval authority.

Trainers – for implementation

Administration – for record keeping.