

POL-TRA-03 Assessment Policy

GOVERNANCE

SRTO 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 contained in Table 1.8-1 and the Rules of Evidence contained in Table 1.8-2.

Principles of assessment - Table 1.8-1

Fairness - *The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process.*

Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to consider the individual learner's needs.

Flexibility - *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. Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by:*

- a) reflecting the learner's needs
- b) assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired
- c) 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.

Validity - *Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner. Validity requires:*

- a) 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
- b) assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application
- c) assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations
- d) 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.*

Rules of evidence Table 1.8-2:

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.

SRTO Standard 1 Clause 1.9

The RTO implements a plan for ongoing systematic validation of assessment practices and judgements that includes for each training product on the RTO's scope of registration:

- a) when assessment validation will occur
- b) which training products will be the focus of the validation
- c) who will lead and participate in validation activities?
- d) how the outcomes of these activities will be documented and acted upon.

SRTO Standard 1 Clause 1.10

For the purposes of clause 1.9, each training product is validated 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, considering the relative risks of all of the training products on the RTO's scope of registration, including those risks identified by the VET regulator.

SRTO Standard 1 Clause 1.11

For the purposes of clause 1.9, systematic validation of an RTO's assessment practices and judgements is 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:

- a) on or prior to 31 March 2019:
 - i. vocational competencies and current industry skills relevant to the assessment being validated
 - ii. current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning
 - iii. the training and assessment credential specified in Item 1, or Item 2, or Item 4, or Item 5 of [Schedule 1](#).
- b) on or after 1 April 2019:
- c) vocational competencies and current industry skills relevant to the assessment being validated
 - i. current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning
 - ii. the training and assessment credential specified in Item 2 or Item 5 of [Schedule 1](#).

Industry experts may be involved in validation to ensure there is the combination of expertise set out in a) or b) above.

SRTO Standard 1 Clause 1.12

The RTO offers recognition of prior learning to individual learners.

SRTO Standard 1 Clause 1.13

In addition to the requirements specified in clause 1.14 and clause 1.15, the RTO's training and assessment is delivered only by persons who have:

- a) vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered and assessed
- b) current industry skills directly relevant to the training and assessment being provided
- c) current knowledge and skills in vocational training and learning that informs their training and assessment.

Industry experts may also be involved in the assessment judgement, working alongside the trainer and/or assessor to conduct the assessment.

SRTO Standard 1 Clause 1.14

The RTO's training and assessment:

- a) if delivered on or prior to 30 June 2019, is delivered only by persons who have the training and assessment credential specified in Item 1 or Item 2 or Item 3 of [Schedule 1](#).
- b) if delivered on or after 1 July 2019, 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:

- a) on or prior to 30 June 2019, the person has the training and assessment credential specified in Item 1, or Item 2, or Item 3, or Item 4, or Item 5 of [Schedule 1](#); or
- b) on or after 1 July 2019, 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

The following words and expressions are defined as per SRTO's:

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, as specified in a training package or VET accredited course.

Assessment system is a coordinated set of documented policies and procedures (including assessment materials and tools) that ensure assessments are consistent and are based on the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence

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.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) 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 courses.

Formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction and is linked to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, a certificate, diploma, or university degree).

non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction, but does not lead to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, inhouse professional development programs conducted by a business); and

Informal learning refers to learning that results through experience of work-related, social, family, hobby, or leisure activities (for example the acquisition of interpersonal skills developed through several years in a public contact role).

POLICY STATEMENT

- a) 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.
- b) Ironwood ensures that all assessment practices follow the principles of assessment as per SRTOs: fairness, flexibility, validity, and reliability.
- c) Ironwood Institute assessment practices are consistent with the rules of evidence as per SRTOs validity, sufficiency, authenticity, and currency.
- d) Ironwood Institute follows a scheduled plan for the validation of assessment practices for each training product under its scope of registration.
- e) This policy is publicly available from the Ironwood website.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

- a) 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.
- b) All appointed and authorised Trainers and Assessors possess and maintain relevant qualifications and vocational competency in accordance with those requirements specified in the SRTOs.
- c) Trainers and Assessors incorporate the principles of assessment including validity, reliability, flexibility, and fairness when conducting assessments.
- d) Trainers and Assessors apply the rules of evidence including validity, sufficiency, currency, and authenticity when conducting assessments.
- e) Assessment practices offer the option of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

- f) Different assessment modes may be used, these include, but are not limited to:
- i. On-the-job
 - ii. As part of training
 - iii. Off-the-job
 - iv. Completion and submission of assignments, and
 - v. Recognition of Prior learning (RPL).
- g) Evidence gathering methods commonly used by Ironwood as part of its assessment practices include, but are not limited to:
- i. Projects
 - ii. Written Assignments
 - iii. Workplace assignments
 - iv. Demonstration/observation
 - v. Question and Answer
 - vi. Role plays
 - vii. Business Simulations
 - viii. Oral presentations
 - ix. Written/oral tests
 - x. Portfolio/journals, and
 - xi. Third party reports.
- h) Assessment practices are to be conducted in an ethical and professional manner.
- i) Students are to be provided with information on the assessment process prior to assessments being conducted including information on RPL and RCC.
- j) Due dates for all work to be submitted by students are clearly communicated, and extensions granted by the trainer and assessor when deemed necessary.
- k) Special considerations and reasonable adjustments are applied to assessments when necessary (e.g., students with special needs).
- l) The authenticity of submitted work is assessed by the Trainer and Assessor and if any work is submitted that is not the original work of the student, penalties will be enforced for academic misconduct.
- m) In all the assessment outcomes that Ironwood follows, a competency-based approach and an assessment model is adopted (outlined in fig. 1). 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 not yet competent (NYC). The training is focused and allows for greater participation of the student in the assessment process.
- n) All assessment tools and outcomes will be recorded and maintained at Ironwood Institute.
- o) Feedback is provided to students to inform them on their assessment progress and results.
- p) Re-submission of full assessments or assessment pieces is available when necessary.
- q) Appeal processes are in place for students who disagree with assessment outcomes.

- r) Awards of qualifications are in accordance with Ironwood Institute Scope of Registration as listed by TG (www.training.gov.au).
- s) Ironwood has an internal monitoring and validation system for all assessment practices for quality control purposes.

Principles of Assessment

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

Fairness

The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process. Where appropriate reasonable adjustments are applied by Ironwood to consider the individual learner's needs. Ironwood 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:

- a) Reflecting the learner's needs.
- b) Assessing competencies held by the Learner no matter how or where they have been acquired, and
- c) 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.

Validity

- a) Any assessment decision of Ironwood is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner.
- b) Assessment against the unit/s of competency and the associated assessment requirement covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance.
- c) Assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application.
- d) Assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and
- e) Judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessments requirements.

Reliability

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

Rules of Evidence

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

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.

Assessment Resources

- a) Assessment resources sourced from reputable Resource Development Entities which consult with industry.
- b) 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.
- c) Assessment tools are crucial for the accurate and consistent assessment of students against competency standards.
- d) Assessment tools are required as evidence of assessment and must be retained on record as proof that a person was assessed as C or NYC, for a minimum period after completion, as follows:
 - i. six (6) months for domestic students and
 - ii. two (2) years for overseas students
- e) Assessment tools consist of:
 - i. Instructions for learners
 - ii. Summary session plan
 - iii. Marking sheets
 - iv. Recommended readings, videos, and links
 - v. Assessment instruments
 - vi. Assessment guidelines and disclaimer
 - vii. Cover sheet, and
 - viii. Assessment outcome Summary.

Assessor Requirements

All assessments are undertaken by suitable qualified Trainers and Assessors who have both, academic, and vocational competencies at least to the level being assessed, and as prescribed in SRTOs.

Trainers and Assessors Working on Behalf of Ironwood

Trainers and Assessors conducting assessment on behalf of Ironwood Institute will:

- a) Ensure they assess and judge a student's skills and knowledge of competence against set standards, principles of assessment and rules of evidence.
- b) Ensure that safety of the personnel involved in the assessment is always maintained.

- c) 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.
- d) 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.
- e) Interpret and understand the performance criteria and evidence requirements.
- f) Select appropriate assessment methods and materials.
- g) Make fair and objective judgements.
- h) Provide all relevant paperwork to administration for processing in a timely manner.

Assessment Validation

Ironwood Institute assessment policies, practices, resources, and outcomes are validated regularly in line with SRTO's. Such validations will be conducted for all assessment practices, all training products and be undertaken by an independent validator (See Validation Policy)

Recognition of Prior Learning

- a) All students are offered access to RPL upon enrolment. (See RPL Policy).
- b) If an application for RPL by an international student is successful, and a reduction in their course duration and/or course fees is applied, Ironwood is required to notify this on PRISMS and reflect this reduction in the student's records. Students are advised to contact DOHA for further information.

Special Considerations

- a) Students who experience compelling circumstances or have special needs that affect their performance in an assessment, may be eligible to apply for consideration and reasonable adjustment to assessment.
- b) Consideration may apply to students who during training or assessment experience one of the following circumstances:
 - i. Serious illness or psychological conditions for example, hospital admission, serious injury, severe anxiety or depression (requires doctor's certificate).
 - ii. Bereavement.
 - iii. Hardship/Trauma for example, victim of crime, sudden unemployment.
 - iv. Other exceptional circumstances (to be assessed on application).
- c) Students wishing to apply for consideration in the above circumstances may do so by discussing their circumstances with their respective Trainer and Assessor.
- d) Approved applications for consideration may be subject to one of the following outcomes:
 - i. Extension of submission date.
 - ii. Deferred Assessment.
 - iii. Additional assessment.
 - iv. No action.
 - v. Withdrawal from course without penalty.
 - vi. Resubmit/reassessment; or

- vii. Opportunity to recommence course, dependent on availability on another date.
- e) Students will be advised of the outcome of their request for consideration in writing. A record of the consideration will be documented and kept in the student file.
- f) Where a student appeals the decision, the Director of Academics will reassess the request for consideration and make a final decision. If the student deems the outcome to be unfair, they can appeal to a relevant independent body. (See Complaints and Appeals policy).
- g) All information and supporting statements provided as part of an application for consideration in assessment will remain confidential.

Reasonable Adjustments to Assessment

- a) Students have the right to apply for and receive adjustment to assessment activities to accommodate individual/special needs.
- b) Adjustments to assessment cannot compromise the integrity of assessment, elements, and performance criteria of the unit of competency.
- c) Adjustments to assessment will not provide an unfair advantage/disadvantage to students.
- d) Reasonable adjustment in an assessment may include, but are not limited to:
 - i. extra reading time
 - ii. extra writing time
 - iii. break times during an examination
 - iv. a reader
 - v. a writer
 - vi. an interpreter for deaf and hearing-impaired students Ironwood Institute
 - vii. adaptive technology equipment for paper-based assessment, questions on audio/video, Braille, or CD, enlarged text or re-writes to provide reasonable adjustment to language
 - viii. access to an unannotated bilingual dictionary
- e) Any reasonable adjustments to assessment during the period of training must be communicated to students in writing by their Trainer. A record of the reasonable adjustment must be documented, and a copy kept in the student file.
- f) Where a student appeals the decision, the Director of Academics will reassess the request for reasonable adjustments and make a final decision. If the student deems the outcome to be unfair, they can appeal to a relevant independent body. (See Complaints and Appeals policy).
- g) All information and supporting statements provided as part of an application for reasonable

Plagiarism, Cheating and Collusion in Assessment

- a) Plagiarism, cheating and collusion in assessment are expressly prohibited.
- b) Students cannot submit any piece of work for assessment that is not entirely their own work.
- c) Students cannot assist other Ironwood Institute students with assessed work.
- d) Students cannot accept assistance from other Ironwood Institute students with assessed work.
- e) Students cannot submit the same piece of work for assessment, as another student/student of Ironwood.

- f) All cases of plagiarism, cheating and collusion are treated as a serious matter and will be reviewed and treated on a case-by-case basis.
- g) Depending on severity and circumstances, penalties of plagiarism, cheating and collusion may include one or more of the following (i.e., sanctions may not be discrete):
 - i. Completion and resubmission of a new assessment task; and/or
 - ii. All parties receiving a “Not Yet Satisfactory” result for the assessment task; and/or
 - iii. Verbal or written warning; and/or
 - iv. Suspension or expulsion from the course.
- h) Student records will be noted with all investigated and proven incidents.
- i) All incidents will be reviewed by the CEO of Ironwood Institute.
- j) Where a student appeals the decision, the Director of Academics will reassess the request for reasonable adjustments and make a final decision. If the student deems the outcome to be unfair, they can appeal to a relevant independent body. Please refer to Ironwood complaints and appeals policy.
- k) All information and supporting statements provided as part of an application for reasonable adjustments in assessment will remain confidential.

Conducting Assessment Practices Ethically

- a) 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:
 - i. Assessing a family member, relative or close friend.
 - ii. 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.
 - iii. Assessing another Ironwood Institute staff member, particularly where a supervisor/subordinate relationship exists.
 - iv. Assessing oneself.
- b) If a real or perceived conflict of interest is identified, it is the responsibility of the assessor to discuss the situation with the Director of Academics at the earliest convenience. The Director 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.

Specifying Due Dates and Approving Extensions

- a) Students will be informed of due dates for assessments at the beginning of the component of study or unit of competency.
- b) Assessment due date refers to the date for submission of any material or attendance at a scheduled activity to satisfy assessment requirements.
- c) It is the student’s responsibility to submit required material or attend and participate in scheduled assessments. If the student is unable to meet an assessment due date, the student may request an extension.
- d) A request for extension must be documented and received and granted by the Trainer and Assessor prior to the assessment due date. A response from the Trainer and Assessor to a student’s request for extension will be made in writing. This written advice will include a clear timeframe for the extension and the assessment activities that the extension relates to.

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 Submission

- a) At the end of the unit, all pieces of assessments submitted must be collated in a package and should have a completed cover sheet, for student identification and disclaimer purposes.
- b) Individual assessment tasks must be submitted by students within the time allocated by the appointed Trainer.
- c) Students who are unable to submit the work in the nominated time are required to contact the trainer and assessor in advance to negotiate an alternative arrangement for submission.
- d) Students will be marked Satisfactory (S) or Not Satisfactory (NS) for each individual task, with an outcome of C or NYC when all the individual tasks have been collated.
- e) Students who are marked NS, will be given two (2) free resubmissions.
- f) If a student fails to avail the free resubmission, and is marked NYC because of this, a penalty of \$100 may apply for that unit. Then, Ironwood will arrange a suitable date for the reassessment of the unit which will be no more than 6 months from the time of initial assessment.
- g) If the student is marked as NYC with re-enrolment, a penalty of full unit fee will be incurred to the student. At such a time, Ironwood will arrange a suitable date for the re-enrolment in the same unit or an alternative unit that satisfies the training package packaging rules.

Allowing Resubmissions of Assessment is dependent on:

- a) The submission of an assessment piece after a Trainer and Assessor has reviewed it and deemed not satisfactory and provided feedback to the student.
- b) Participation again in an assessment event because the original did not demonstrate that the assessment requirements were met.
- c) Re-assessment practices applying to summative assessments and practicals.
- d) Students having a right to two resubmissions per assessment piece/event if the criterion for an assessment has not been met.
- e) Further resubmissions being permitted by the lecturer on a case-by-case basis. This is usually due to special circumstances where a student can provide justification for their request; such circumstances include, but are not limited to: compassionate grounds, sickness supported by a doctor's certificate, employment obligations supported by the employer.
- f) In all cases the due date for re-submission and remarking being negotiated between the Trainer/Assessor and student and based on reasonable time frames.

Assessment Marking

- a) Assessments are not graded.
- b) Assessments are assessed/graded in order of submission date.
- c) When marking assessments, Trainers and Assessors will make comments and provide genuine feedback for the entire assessment and will use marking sheets when possible.
- d) Students are notified of assessment outcomes.

Assessment Decisions and Outcomes

- a) Assessment outcomes are recorded as one of the following:
 - i. **Competent (C)** - Students are deemed 'competent' when they have consistently demonstrated their skills and knowledge to the standard as per the Unit of Competency and Assessment Criteria guidelines.
 - ii. **Not Yet Competent (NYC)** – Students are deemed 'Not Yet Competent' when they are unable/have not demonstrated satisfactory levels of competence in accordance with the minimum performance standards for a full unit.
- b) Students assessed as 'Not Yet competent' shall receive feedback and guidance from the Trainer and may be required to resubmit and in some cases undergo further training before re-assessment.

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. Please refer to the course progress policy or student support policy for more information.

APPEALS

Students have the right to appeal an assessment decision. (See Appeals Policy)

ACCESS AND EQUITY

Students have fair and equal rights to assessment. (See Access and Equity Policy)

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

All completed assessment items for all students will be kept by Ironwood Institute for a minimum of six (6) months for domestic students and two (2) years for overseas students. All assessment outcomes will be recorded and kept for a period of 30 years. All documentation from Assessment practices is maintained in accordance with Records Management Policy. (See Records Management Policy)

Monitoring and Improvement

All Assessment practices are monitored by the Director of Academics at Ironwood Institute and areas for improvement identified and acted upon. (See Continuous Improvement Policy).

RESPONSIBILITY

CEO/Delegate – for approval authority.
Trainers – for implementation

Assessment Process

