
Assessment, Validation and Student Progress Policy

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1.0 Purpose

This policy provides a framework for assessment across EIT's Vocational Education & Training (VET) courses.

Student assessment is integral to the quality of student learning. Assessment tasks and the decisions made on assessment need to be guided via clear policies and procedures. Therefore the management of assessment processes is essential to ensure consistency in the setting of criteria and decisions on assessment.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all students and staff undertaking training and assessment in EIT's VET courses. It is related to other policies and procedures associated with assessment of student progress at EIT.

3.0 Objectives

Assessment at EIT aims to determine whether its students are achieving the requirements of the courses and the underlying modules/units for which they are enrolled. To achieve this, there are a range of assessment methods which are used to assess students such as written, oral and practical.

EIT is committed to ensuring that assessment at every level is based on clearly articulated criteria. Results will be awarded based on the attainment (or otherwise) of those criteria at stated performance standards. The following principles underpin this policy.

1. Foundation

EIT is committed to ensure that assessment is a foundation element of teaching and learning.

2. Design

EIT will ensure that assessment is well designed. The key areas taken into account are to:

- Comply with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package or VET accredited course
- Design assessment in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence
- Provide feedback to students on their progress
- Guide the development of meaningful learning
- Provide information for staff regarding the progress of students and the effectiveness of their teaching
- Ensure academic quality and standards and maintained, and to monitor and minimise plagiarism
- Utilise data on student progress and results to inform decisions on graduation and awards, and to refine the design of assessment.

3. Equity and fairness

EIT promotes equitable, fair and transparent assessment practices. Assessment will clearly articulate the assessment criteria for each assessment task so that there is transparency regarding the attainment of those criteria in accordance with the stated performance standards.

4.0 Implementation

4.1 Assessment

The principles outlined in Section 3.0 are to be implemented for all VET courses offered by EIT and the associated modules/units. The development of assessment is to incorporate the criteria listed below and demonstrate that the underlying principles have been met.

Foundation

- There is a clear alignment between stated learning outcomes and the assessment tasks;
- There are clear explanations of the assessment tasks and the assessment criteria against which students will be assessed;
- Assessment tasks incorporate a range of types or modes, and are designed to assess stated graduate attributes as well as unit/module-specific assessment criteria;
- Assessment tasks promote critical thinking and analysis by assessing the capacity to understand, analyse and synthesise information and concepts; and not to merely recall information previously provided;
- Constructive feedback is provided to students in a timely manner, and allows students to benefit in the preparation of future assessment tasks.

Design

- Assessment is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment – i.e. assessment is fair, flexible valid and reliable
- The assessment process incorporates the Rules of Evidence where the assessor is assured that student assessment evidence is valid, sufficient, authentic and current.

- Assessment supports student learning and tests their achievement;
- Students understand their progress against stated learning outcomes, assessment criteria and performance standards;
- Assessment judgments are made against stated assessment criteria and performance standards to ensure consistency, and incorporate validation procedures.
- Assessment tasks are weighted to balance the developmental ('formative') and judgmental ('summative') roles of assessment.
- Plagiarism is minimised through careful design and education about academic integrity, and appropriate monitoring of academic honesty by academic staff.
- Students must take responsibility for academic honesty by ensuring that the assessment they submit is their own and that they acknowledge the work of others appropriately.

Equity and fairness

- Assessment criteria are made available to students for assessment tasks at the beginning of the course. Assessment tasks are clear and provide consistent information to all students that allow them to achieve the required outcomes.
- Scheduling and design of assessment tasks takes student workloads into consideration;
- Processes include ensuring anonymity of student work where possible;
- Penalties for late submission of assessment are consistently applied according to policies that are made available to students;
- Validation of assessment decisions is performed according to policies that are readily available to students;
- There are clear and published processes available to students for the review of results;
- Alternative assessment methods will be made available, where required, to ensure equitable assessment practices and processes for students with a disability.

4.2 Validation

Validation is a review of assessment judgments made by EIT and its Assessors. It is generally conducted after assessment is complete so EIT can consider the validity of both assessment practices and judgments.

Validation is used to confirm that EIT's assessment system:

- produces valid assessment judgements;
- ensures graduates have the skills and knowledge required by industry, as expressed in the training package or accredited course.

The Academic Board is responsible for oversight of validation of assessment. The Dean is responsible for ensuring that validation processes are implemented, but operational responsibility will generally devolve to the Learning Support Officers.

Validation activities will occur periodically for all EIT VET courses in accordance with EIT's 5 year validation schedule and '*EIT01.4 Conduct Effective Assessments Policy*'.

If concerns are identified during the delivery of a course, the Learning Support Officer is responsible for initiating validation discussions, in addition to scheduled validation activities, investigating any concerns. Where it has been identified that systemic issues exist for a particular unit/module, then the Dean and/or College Manager is responsible for devising a solution to the problem. The Dean and/or College Manager must be satisfied that the solution will minimise the likelihood of the issue being repeated. The Dean must determine whether, for example, this may require reassessment of all students' work for the unit/module.

4.3 Student Progress

The Dean and College Manager are responsible for managing student progress, but operational responsibility will generally devolve to the Learning Support Officers.

EIT is committed to monitoring student progress and administering early identification and support mechanisms for students not meeting academic progress requirements. The following mechanisms are used:

- Providing fair entry processes
- Advising students of progress requirements
- Identifying students at risk
- Communicating any concerns to students regarding progress requirements
- Providing support and assistance to students
- Monitoring progress
- Transparent decision-making

Students are responsible for committing to their own learning process and satisfactory academic progress. Students should utilise the assessment criteria and incorporate assessment feedback into their learning. Students should also participate in evaluation processes (e.g. surveys) to provide teaching staff with feedback to improve their teaching.

EIT will provide support to students and staff to enable the achievement of learning outcomes and satisfactory academic progress.

Unsatisfactory Progress

Processes for assessing and making decisions on unsatisfactory progress must be fair and equitable, and take into account the individual circumstances of the students. Student records and evidence outlining monitoring, communication and supports should be utilised. Additionally:

- Students must be involved in the process and provided with opportunities to present their case, and afforded natural justice.
- Students must be permitted to have student representatives with them at all meetings and stages of unsatisfactory progress proceedings.
- Review and appeal processes must be available to students.

5.0. Accountabilities

The Academic Board is responsible for review and approval of this policy.

Implementation is to be carried out by all academic staff under the leadership of the College Manager and relevant Learning Support Officers.

The policy is to be implemented via induction, regular biweekly staff meetings and training of staff, and distribution to students and EIT's community via the website and other publications.

EIT will regularly seek feedback from students, staff and stakeholders on the effectiveness of this policy via evaluations of courses, teaching staff and other supports.

Effectiveness of this policy can also be measured by:

- the extent of standards-based criterion-referenced assessment in units/modules;
- monitoring of student complaints with regard to assessment.

Performance will be monitored against the following:

- Student retention rates
- Course pass/fail rates

After the first cohort has graduated, consideration should be given in the future to other metrics such as:

- Student progression
- Student satisfaction
- Employer satisfaction

6.0 Definitions

Assessment: is a process used to determine student's achievement of expected learning outcomes and may include a range of written, oral and practical methods. It also includes gathering information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of educational experiences; and it culminates when assessment results are used to improve student learning.

Assessment criteria: Specific student learning outcomes that are expected to be demonstrated in any particular assessment task.

Course: A course or other set of units/modules, units of competency or other defined work requirements, the completion of which makes the student eligible for the granting of an Award or other formal record of achievement by the EIT.

Equivalence: the underlying principle for credit transfer and RPL is the assessment of equivalence with due regard to the similarity or difference of the education processes involved (including processes of delivery, teaching methodology and assessment).

Validation: a quality review process that confirms that an assessment system can consistently produce valid assessment judgements.

Natural Justice Principles: The principles of *natural justice* that decision makers under this policy must follow can be broadly summarized as follows:

- a. All parties to the matter(s) in dispute, including respondent(s), shall have a right to be heard before a decision is made, including the right to respond to any statements or evidence that may prejudice their case.
- b. All relevant submissions, information and evidence to be considered by the decision-maker should be disclosed, where requested, to all parties to the complaint prior to the hearing. Matters that are not relevant shall not be taken into account by the decision-maker.
- c. The decision maker/s shall not be biased or appear to be biased (by a reasonable and informed bystander) nor have a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter being considered.
- d. In addition to these principles of *natural justice*, there should be no undue delay in responding to complaints or appeals and all parties to such matters under this policy shall have the right to a representative of their choice, other than a currently practicing solicitor or barrister (except in extraordinary circumstances at a hearing with the prior leave of the Chair)

Performance Standard / Assessment Criteria: A clearly articulated description of the level of attainment that acts as a stable reference point or recognised measure for the purposes of reaching a decision on the quality of a student's work.

Unit / Module: A unit of study, unit of competency, module or other similar component of a *course* that has an allocated identification code and is given a result which appears in a student's record.

Unsatisfactory Progress: Where a student fails to meet defined required minimum standards for progression in a course or fails to comply with a valid conditional enrolment agreement or other requirement, progress may be deemed to be unsatisfactory. Information on minimum standards for progression in courses is contained in associated Procedures.

7.0 Related Documents

The following policies and procedures are related to this procedure:

- EIT01 Training & Assessment Policy
- Assessment, Validation and Student Progress Procedure.VET
- Admissions Policy.VET
- Teaching and Learning Policy.VET
- Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy.VET
- Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Procedure.VET
- Students at Risk Policy.VET
- Students at Risk Procedure.VET