Assessment (VET and Foundation) Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy outlines the framework for assessment of VET, Foundation and Senior Secondary programs undertaken by and on behalf of Melbourne Polytechnic (onshore and offshore). It also identifies responsibilities and accountabilities for effective implementation.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) The policy applies to all learners, staff, contractors and third parties associated with assessment (including Recognition of Prior Learning) of VET, Foundation and Senior Secondary programs being undertaken by or on behalf of Melbourne Polytechnic.

(3) The Policy does not apply to Institute Accredited Courses (IACs) or Higher Education programs.

Section 3 - Policy

Policy Statement

(4) Melbourne Polytechnic is committed to quality assessment practices that provide confidence to learners, industry and the community that its graduates have met the standards specified in the training products it delivers.

(5) All assessments are designed and conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence

(6) Learners will be supported through appropriate learning activities and provided with ongoing feedback to achieve these standards and to equip them to thrive in a rapidly changing environment.

(7) Melbourne Polytechnic is committed to providing:

a. recognition of existing skills, knowledge and experience
b. alternative pathways to achieving an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification, without any duplication of learning

Policy Principles

(8) Assessment will align with Melbourne Polytechnic's Vision and Education Plan, and will be guided by the following principles:

a. Assessment is valid, reliable, flexible and fair;
b. Assessment evidence is valid, sufficient, authentic and current;
c. Assessment is clearly connected with the knowledge and skills being evaluated;
d. Assessment supports continuous learning and is responsive to industry, community and learner needs;

e. Learning program is designed to support learners in developing the skills and knowledge required to successfully participate in and complete assessment;
f. Assessment strategies, processes and tools meet relevant regulatory, accreditation, registration and funding organisation requirements;
g. Assessment is culturally safe and respectful of learners' cultural backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, by ensuring flexibility in demonstrating competence and incorporating culturally appropriate assessment practices, where relevant.
h. Prospective and enrolling learners are informed of the opportunity to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) prior to enrolment.
i. Recognition of prior learning are only granted if the unit of competency is on Melbourne Polytechnic's Scope of Registration and where licensing and regulatory requirements allow this.
j. RPL complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package or VET accredited course and is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence stated in Standard 1.4, Clause 2 (a) and (b) of the Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations Instrument 2025

Policy Topics

Suitably qualified and competent assessors

(9) Assessments must be conducted by assessors who meet the qualification, registration and competence requirements set by the regulatory, accreditation, registration and funding organisations relevant to the unit/module they are assessing.

a. All assessors must hold the required assessor credentials, vocational competencies, and current industry and VET knowledge and skills that reflect the requirements of the unit/module being assessed as specified in the Standards for RTOs 2025.
b. Where assessment is conducted on Melbourne Polytechnic's behalf by a third party, the third party must demonstrate that their assessors meet the same requirements, and Melbourne Polytechnic remains responsible for verifying and monitoring their suitability. In the event a third party is unable to conduct the assessment, Melbourne Polytechnic must have appropriate and sufficient assessors to provide the assessment.
c. Melbourne Polytechnic may involve industry personnel or subject matter experts in the assessment process. They may contribute by observing performance, providing specialist feedback, or verifying industry standards, but must not make independent assessment judgements.

Assessment design and development

(10) Assessment tools across Melbourne Polytechnic must be developed in line with the Course Design and Development (VET, Foundation and IACs) Policy and related procedures including alignment with the Training and Assessment Strategy Review (VET and Foundation) Procedure.

Provision of accurate information and feedback

(11) Learners and employers of apprentices and trainees must be given clear and accurate information on assessment requirements and expectations. This includes providing:

a. A Unit/Module Outline to learners at the commencement of training of the unit, containing accurate and current information on its delivery and assessment;
b. Clear and accessible Assessment Task Instructions to learners prior to each assessment; Instructions must ensure that:
    i. Learners have every chance to understand what they are required to do
    ii. The conditions, requirements, and expectations are unambiguous

iii. Information is presented in a way that is accessible and inclusive of learner diversity.

c. Marking Criteria to learners prior to each assessment that indicate the standard required to achieve a satisfactory outcome;
d. An outline of the assessment requirements in the Training Plan for all learners at the commencement of training, in accordance with regulatory and contractual requirements
e. A Training Plan to employers of apprentices and trainees at the commencement of the training contract that highlights their role in training and assessment, such as any workplace performance confirmation where required (see ATTP Delivery Procedure.
f. Information on RPL for prospective and current learners, including how to apply and how fees are calculated. This will be provided on Melbourne Polytechnic's central Skills and Learning Recognition webpage. This site will also include information relating to potential visa and fee implications for international learners.
g. Individual course information webpages that note that skills and learning recognition is offered to eligible applicants and/or provide links to the central Skills and Learning Recognition webpage for further information.
h. Advise to prospective learners of the opportunity to apply for skills and learning recognition on enrolment; opportunities will continue to exist for current learners to apply throughout their learning program.

(12) Feedback must be provided:

a. Regularly to learners throughout the teaching and learning cycle to support their learning engagement and course progress;
b. Regularly to employers of apprentices and trainees to discuss the learner's progress against their Training Plan;

c. After each assessment to learners to enable them to understand their result and how their performance relates to unit/module requirements.

Continuous quality improvement

(13) Regular quality reviews of assessment strategies, processes and tools must be undertaken to ensure continuous quality improvement. This must include, but is not limited to:

a. Validation of VET training products as outlined in the Assessment Validation (VET and Foundation) Policy and Procedure;
b. Participation in the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority's (VCAA's) Quality Assurance processes for Senior Secondary programs;
c. Regular reviews of the assessment strategies, processes and tools being used by contractors and third parties undertaking assessment on behalf of Melbourne Polytechnic;
d. Regular review of assessments prior to implementation. Outcomes must be documented and, where applicable, used to inform improvements to assessment tools
e. Feedback from learners, employers of apprentices/trainees, industry representatives and community stakeholders must be actively and systematically collected and incorporated in relation to assessment clarity, fairness, relevance, and overall learner experience. This feedback must be analysed and used to inform improvements to assessment design, delivery methods, learning support resources, and Training and Assessment Strategies as part of Melbourne Polytechnic's continuous improvement processes.

Assessment integrity

(14) All assessors will act with integrity and exhibit fairness, impartiality, honesty and equity when undertaking assessment to ensure assessment processes remain valid, reliable, flexible and fair.

(15) All learners are expected to maintain integrity in the preparation and submission of work for assessment.

Learners must attach a declaration confirming the authenticity of their work when submitting any assessment.

(16) Activities such as deliberate plagiarism, collusion and cheating must be addressed under the Student Discipline Policy.

RPL Decisions

(17) RPL decisions will:

a. be evidence-based, equitable and transparent;
b. be applied consistently and fairly with decisions subject to appeal and review;
c. recognise that the learning is relevant and current and has a relationship to the learning outcomes or competencies of the qualification;
d. be academically defensible and take into account the learners' ability to meet the learning outcomes or competencies of the qualification successfully;
e. be decided in a timely way so that learners' access to qualifications is not unnecessarily inhibited;
f. allow for outcomes to be used to meet prerequisites or other specified requirements for entry into a program of study leading to a qualification or for the partial fulfillment of the requirements of a qualification; and
g. be formally documented for the learner including reasons for decisions and outcomes.

(18) An applicant will be assessed as achieving RPL when they can provide evidence demonstrating they have developed competency through formal, informal and/or non-formal learning, including training, workplace and/or life experience. All evidence submitted to support a recognition of prior learning application must be able to be authenticated. Applicants are required to provide their evidence in the format/s requested and any permissions requested to assist with authentication. Skills recognition will not be granted unless authentication is obtained. The Executive Director Educational Excellence may provide an exemption to this requirement in exceptional circumstances.

Marking and results

(19) Results must be entered into Melbourne Polytechnic's Student Management System (Strata) in a timely manner of the unit/module end date using the approved result codes detailed in the Assessment (VET and Foundation) Procedure.

(20) Units may only be graded if prior approval has been granted by the VET and Foundation Academic Board (VFAB).

Reasonable adjustments, extensions and special consideration

(21) Learners with a disability, long-term medical condition or other exceptional circumstance that impacts on their ability to perform in or undertake an assessment may request an alternative arrangement for their assessment. These alternative arrangements include:

a. Reasonable adjustments, such as changes to the method or process of conducting the assessment;
b. Extensions to the assessment due date for up to 10 days;
c. Special consideration.

(22) The eligibility for each of these arrangements and process for making a request is outlined in the Guidelines for Learners Requesting Reasonable Adjustment, Extension and/or Special Consideration for Assessment (See Appendix A).

(23) Regardless of the alternative arrangement granted, the standard required to be assessed as satisfactory must remain the same as for other learners to ensure consistency and fairness in assessment decisions.

Section 4 - Responsibility and Accountability

(24) Directors VET and Foundation are accountable for:

a. Ensuring the Assessment (VET and Foundation) Policy and Procedure are followed across all offerings.

(25) Educators are responsible for:

a. Contributing to training and assessment strategies;
b. Maintaining assessment tools and developing and maintaining unit/module outlines;
c. Providing assessment information to learners and employers of apprentices/trainees;
d. Training and assessing as per the training and assessment strategy;
e. Providing timely and meaningful feedback;
f. Marking and resulting;
g. Contributing to quality assurance and continuous improvement processes;
h. Addressing requests for re-assessment and extensions to due dates.
i. conducting RPL assessments in a manner that is valid, reliable, flexible and fair, ensuring the evidence assessed as satisfactory is valid, sufficient, current and authentic;
j. completing assessments in the timeframes outlined in the Assessment (VET & Foundation) Procedure, ensuring feedback is provided and decisions are adequately documented to be transparent, consistent and defensible. .

(26) Education Managers are responsible for:

a. Ensuring all assessors are suitably qualified and vocationally and educationally competent;
b. Developing and approving training and assessment strategies;
c. Addressing requests for re-assessment and special consideration;
d. Contributing to quality assurance and continuous improvement processes.

(27) Student Acquisition & Student Hub are responsible for providing information to prospective learners on RPL and how to obtain further information and/or apply.

(28) Department Managers are responsible for:

a. Leading quality assurance and continuous improvement processes.
b. Ensuring the Assessment (VET and Foundation) Policy and Procedure are followed across all offerings.

(29) The Director International Academic Operations is responsible for:

a. Ensuring all contracts with international partners clearly outline Melbourne Polytechnic’s requirements for quality assessment as outlined in this Policy and its associated Procedures;
b. Ensuring all relevant international programs and international partners follow the Assessment (VET and Foundation) Policy and Procedure.

(30) The Manager Academic Quality VET is responsible for:

a. Ensuring quality processes are in place for all VET and Foundation delivery;
b. Providing quality expertise regarding VET and Foundation assessment;
c. Contributing to continuous quality improvement processes.

(31) The Curriculum Unit is responsible for:

a. Setting the standard for assessment design and development across VET and Foundation Directorates;
b. Working collaboratively with teaching areas to develop quality assessment tools for identified and approved course design and development projects.
c. Contributing to continuous quality improvement processes.

(32) The Professional Teaching Practice Unit is responsible for:

a. Providing professional learning to build staff expertise in implementing quality assessment.
b. Contributing to continuous quality improvement processes.

(33) The Learning Environments is responsible for:

a. Contributing to continuous quality improvement processes

(34) The VET and Foundation Academic Board are responsible for:

a. Monitoring the quality, availability and application of suitably qualified and competent assessors;
b. Assuring there is evidence of training and assessment consistent with course and regulatory/accreditation and funding organisation requirements;
c. Initiating and overseeing progress and outcomes of quality improvement activities;
d. Reviewing the performance of this Policy and its associated Procedure in their area of operation;
e. Monitoring the process and outcomes of course development and reviews, including training and assessment strategies and assessment materials for relevant courses;
f. Receiving and reviewing reports regarding learner experience and outcomes arising from the impact of assessment design;
g. Approving units/modules for graded assessment.
h. Monitoring and reporting skills and learning recognition practices to the Education Quality Committee; assuring there is evidence of recognition assessment consistent with course and regulatory, accreditation and funding requirements;

(35) The Education Quality Committee is responsible for:

a. Adherence and monitoring of this Policy with escalations to the Executive Leadership Committee on improvements in assessment approaches and academic integrity;
b. Promoting innovation in assessment and sharing good practice and research on current trends across Melbourne Polytechnic.

Section 5 - Associated Procedure

(36) Assessment (VET and Foundation) Procedure

(37) For all other related Melbourne Polytechnic policies, procedures, templates, legislation, regulation and supporting documents, refer to the Associated Information tab of this Policy.

Section 6 - Definitions

(38) For the purpose of this Policy the following definitions apply:

a. Academic Integrity: Educators, assessors and learners acting with honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility;
b. Alternative arrangement/assessment: A different arrangement for assessment that has been approved as a result of the learner being granted reasonable adjustment, special consideration or an extension to the due date for their assessment.
c. Assessment: The process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether unit/module requirements been achieved;
d. Assessment strategies: The approach of, and method adopted by, an RTO with respect to assessment design to enable learners to meet the requirements of the training package or training product
e. Assessment Tool: The full set of assessment documents for a unit/module, including the assessment tasks, mapping, instructions for learners and assessors, and marking guides;
f. Assessor: A person who assesses whether the learner has met the requirements of the assessment task and/or unit/module;
g. Authentic evidence: The assessment evidence is the learner's own work;
h. Cheating: Behaviour by a learner, or another person on behalf of a learner, to provide that learner or group of learners with an academic advantage, such as completing work on behalf of a learner, copying another person's work or paying another person to prepare an assignment;
i. Collusion: An agreement between a learner and another person to act together secretly or without permission to achieve an unfair advantage, such as sharing answers with others or working together on an assignment that is supposed to be completed individually;
j. Competency: The consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments;
k. Current evidence: The assessment evidence is from the present or very recent past.
l. Extension: Additional time granted to complete an assessment;
m. Fair assessment: The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process;
n. Flexible assessment: Assessment is flexible to the learner by reflecting the learner's needs; assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired; drawing from a range of assessment methods; and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit/module, the associated assessment requirements and the individual;
o. Moderation: A quality control process aimed at ensuring assessment criteria are being consistently applied when more than one assessor is involved in assessing the same task across a cohort of learners. It is generally conducted before finalising learner results;
p. Plagiarism: The use of all or part of another person or entity's work without appropriate acknowledgment of the author or source;
q. Re-assessment: To review a piece of work and confirm or amend the result. This may arise where a learner believes the assessment result is inappropriate or unfair. It may also occur where there are circumstances identified or additional information provided that affected a learners' performance in the assessment;
r. Reasonable adjustment: A measure or action taken to assist a learner with a disability or long-term medical condition to take part in their education on the same basis as their peers without disability or long-term condition. Reasonable adjustments may include but are not limited to note taking support, extra time or extensions and alternative assessment tasks;
s. Reliable assessment: Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment;

t. Senior secondary programs: Year 11 and 12 courses of study accredited by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority;

u. Special consideration: Consideration provided to a learner who has provided independently verifiable evidence of having been hampered by illness or other cause during the teaching period or assessment that has affected their capacity to prepare, present or perform any component of an assessment;

v. Sufficient evidence: The quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made about whether the learner has met the requirements;

w. Third party: Any person or organisation that has a formal agreement with a training provider to deliver services on their behalf. This does not include the provider's own staff (employees), experts hired by the provider (such as consultants), or government departments and agencies that refer learners without receiving any payment. In this context Services includes training and assessment, support for training, and activities related to learner recruitment such as marketing, enrolments, learner induction, and collecting learner fees. Support for training does not include services such as counselling, mediation, or IT help.

x. Unit outline: Details delivery and assessment requirements for the unit/module;

y. Valid assessment: The assessment decision is justified based on the evidence of performance. This requires assessment against the unit/module outcomes, assessment of knowledge integrated with practical application, evidence that shows the learner could demonstrate their knowledge and skills in other similar situations, and that the judgement is based on evidence that is aligned to the unit/module assessment requirements;

z. Valid evidence: The evidence presented assures the assessor that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the unit/module and associated assessment requirements;

aa. Validation: A quality review of the assessment process for VET accredited training products. It involves checking that the assessment tool produces valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence to enable reasonable judgements to be made as to whether the requirements of the training product are met. It includes reviewing a statistically valid sample of the assessments and making and implementing recommendations for future improvements.

Status and Details

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Policy Owner	Marc Blanks Executive Director Educational Excellence
Policy Implementation Officer	Diane Lewis Director Curriculum Unit
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