ACAS

Australian Centre for Advanced Studies

Training and Assessment Strategies and Resources Policy

1. Purpose

ACAS is committed to developing training and assessment strategies and have a complete set of training and assessment resources for each qualification and unit of competency under its scope of registration, meeting compliance with National Training Packages and VET Accredited Courses and the Standards for Registered Training Organisations. In the development of such strategies and resources ACAS is required to ensure that industry consultation occurs to ensure relevance, currency, validity and reliability.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a process for identifying, negotiating, planning and implementing appropriate training and assessment strategies, practices and resources that are responsive to industry and client needs and comply with National standards.

2. Policy Statement

ACAS is committed to developing, implementing and reviewing training and assessment strategies (TAS) (Program Application Form) and resources, for qualifications within its scope of registration, which accommodate the needs of its clients and satisfy the requirements of the Training Packages and VET Accredited Courses.

ACAS will:
- Identify, negotiate, plan and implement appropriate training and assessment strategies to meet the needs of industry and its clients;
- Implement these strategies for each qualification and accredited course within its scope of registration. These strategies will include the identification of proposed target groups, delivery and assessment modes and strategies, assessment validation processes and pathways, and will be developed in consultation with enterprise/industry;
- validate assessment strategies by reviewing, comparing and evaluating the assessment processes, tools and evidence contributing to judgments, and by documenting any action taken to improve the quality and consistency of assessment;
- offer various training strategies and assessment methods including recognition, simulations, written and verbal assessment, to accommodate the needs of individuals (as applicable);
- ensure that training and/or assessment products and services are developed, adapted and/or delivered in line with the requirements in the Standards for RTOs;
- ensure all training and assessment activities are conducted using an open, supportive process which includes participants being made aware of the precise requirements of their training and assessment;
- ensure that ACAS and the member colleges have access to the relevant staff, facilities and equipment to provide the training and/or assessment services within its scope of registration and scale of operations, to accommodate client numbers, client needs, delivery methods and assessment requirements; and
- ensure that it has, or has access to, training and assessment materials for everything on its scope of registration and delivery profile.

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3. Definitions

3.1 The following words and expressions have the following specific meaning, as in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015.

Accredited short course means a course accredited by the VET Regulator in accordance with the Standards for VET Accredited Courses that leads to an AQF statement of attainment.

AQF qualification means an AQF qualification type endorsed in a training package or accredited in a VET accredited course.

Educational and support services may include, but are not limited to:
a)   pre-enrolment materials;
b)   study support and study skills programs;
c)   language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) programs or referrals to these programs;
d)   equipment, resources and/or programs to increase access for learners with disabilities and other learners in accordance with access and equity;
e)   learning resource centres;
f)   mediation services or referrals to these services;
g)   flexible scheduling and delivery of training and assessment;
h)   counselling services or referrals to these services;
i)   information and communications technology (ICT) support;
j)   learning materials in alternative formats, for example, in large print;
k)   learning and assessment programs contextualised to the workplace; and
l)   any other services that the RTO considers necessary to support learners to achieve competency.

Industry means the bodies that have a stake in the services provided by RTOs. These can include, but are not limited to:
a) enterprise/industry clients, e.g. employers;
b)   group training organisations;
c)   industry organisations;
d)   industry regulators;
e)   industry skills councils or similar bodies;
f)   industry training advisory bodies; and
g)   unions.

Industry engagement, for the purposes of Clauses 1.5 & 1.6, may include, but is not limited to, strategies such as:
a)   partnering with local employers, regional/national businesses, relevant industry bodies and/or enterprise RTOs;
b)   involving employer nominees in industry advisory committees and/or reference groups;
c)   embedding staff within enterprises;
d)   networking in an ongoing way with industry networks, peak bodies and/or employers;
e)   developing networks of relevant employers and industry representatives to participate in assessment validation; and
f)   exchanging knowledge, staff, and/or resources with employers, networks and industry bodies.

g) Work directly with industry when providing training so that training takes place in the work context. When we train within the work context then all training material and assessment tools will need to be checked that they are workplace appropriate and context appropriate. Practical skills will be learned and practiced in active workplace environments. Industry employees must be involved in all aspects of trainer to ensure training remains industry current.

Mode of delivery means the method adopted to deliver training and assessment, including online, distance, or blended methods.

Module means a group of learning outcomes in a VET accredited course where it can be established that it is not possible to develop an appropriate unit of competency.

Operations of an RTO include training, assessment and administration and support services related to its registration, including those delivered across jurisdictions and offshore.

Scope of registration means the training products for which an RTO is registered to issue AQF certification documentation. It allows the RTO to:
a) both provide training delivery and assessment resulting in the issuance of AQF certification documentation by the RTO; or
b) provide assessment resulting in the issuance of AQF certification documentation by the RTO.

Skill set means a single unit of competency or a combination of units of competency from a training package which link to a licensing or regulatory requirement, or a defined industry need.

Training and assessment strategies (TAS) and practices are the approach of, and method adopted by, an RTO with respect to training and assessment designed to enable learners to meet the requirements of the training package or accredited course.

Training Package means the components of a training package endorsed by the Industry and Skills Council or its delegate in accordance with the Standards for Training Packages. The endorsed components of a Training Package are: units of competency; assessment requirements (associated with each unit of competency); qualifications; and credit arrangements. The endorsed components form part of the requirements that an RTO must meet under these Standards. A training package also consists of a non-endorsed, quality assured companion volume/s which contains industry advice to RTOs on different aspects of implementation.

Unit of competency means the specification of the standards of performance required in the workplace as defined in a training package.

Validation is the quality review of the assessment process. Validation involves checking that the assessment tool/s produce/s valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence to enable reasonable judgements to be made as to whether the requirements of the training package or VET accredited courses are met. It includes reviewing a statistically valid sample of the assessments and making recommendations for future improvements to the assessment tool, process and/or outcomes and acting upon such recommendations.

Volume of learning – The AQF provides a guide to the volume of learning (see table below), which describes how long a learner who does not hold any of the competencies identified in the relevant

units of competency or modules would take to develop all the required skills and knowledge. The volume of learning includes all teaching and learning activities such as guided learning (classes, lectures, tutorials, online or self-paced study), individual study, research, learning activities in the workplace and assessment activities. The amount of training provided by your RTO is part of the overall volume of learning and relates primarily to formal activities including classes and other activities as well as workplace learning.

Certificate I	Certificate II	Certificate III	Certificate IV	Diploma
0.5 – 1 year	0.5 – 1 year	1 – 2 year	0.5 – 2 years	1.5 – 2 years
600 – 1200 hours	600 – 1200 hours	1200 – 1400 hours	600 – 2400 hours	1200 – 2400 hours

** Table is an Excerpt from AQF.

4. Policy Principles

4.1 Underpinning Principles

a) ACAS will work with the member colleges to document it's Training and Assessment strategies and resources, in consultation with clients and stakeholders, taking account of factors such as :
  i. industry/enterprise needs;
  ii. the commercial environment;
  iii. cost;
  iv. the requirement of the Training Packages or VET Accredited courses; and
  v. educational support services required to accommodate the specific client needs (eg their language, literacy and numeracy needs).

b) The training and assessment strategies are developed and documented by the Academic Dean of ACAS on application for registration / extension of scope and reviewed and customised for client implementation, for each qualification, skill set, cluster or individual unit/ module for delivery.

c) Through the development of training and assessment strategies ACAS will ensure appropriate access to the trainers and assessors, facilities, equipment, training and assessment materials required to provide the training and assessment services, to accommodate client numbers, client needs, delivery methods and relevant assessment requirements (including distance learning and on-line).

d) All training and assessment strategies are clearly articulated to comply with the requirements of Training Packages, VET Accredited courses and AQF (with particular regard to "Volume of Learning") and based on data collected regarding industry/client requirements and learning needs through effective consultation.

e) Further information will be researched during the development training and assessment strategies including:
  i. via the internet;
  ii. Industry and government documentation / information;
  iii. Training publications.

f) Information gathered may include:
  i. Regulations or laws governing the industry;
  ii. Standard operating procedures;
  iii. Manufacturer's instructions;

      iv. Information regarding the work environment (eg work schedules, seasonal factors and fluctuations, shift rosters etc);

      v. Preferences regarding training delivery; and

      vi. Characteristics of the target group.

g) Industry / client involvement may include representatives from the following bodies:

      i. Industry skills councils;

      ii. industry training bodies;

      iii. industry organisations/enterprises;

      iv. clients;

      v. Licensing bodies/ regulators;

      vi. Trade Unions.

h) Training and assessment strategies must meet the client needs and support the characteristics of the target group. Client needs may include:

      i. Learning styles;

      ii. Physical or intellectual abilities;

      iii. Relevant prior learning or experience;

      iv. Language, literacy and numeracy abilities;

      v. Location of training an assessment;

      vi. Cultural or ethnic background and learning approaches;

      vii. Socio-economic factors.

i) Validation - Reviewing, comparing and evaluating the assessment processes, tools and evidence contributing to judgements made by a range of assessors against the same competency standards is to occur at least annually and any action to improve the quality and consistency of assessment is to be documented. (See Validation Policy)

4.2 Training and Assessment Strategies (TAS)

a) ACAS has a Training and Assessment Strategy (TAS), Program Application Form template which is to be used for each qualification or VET accredited course under the scope of registration. The full completion of this template and accompanying forms ensures that all the requirements of a TAS, are met.

b) Information contained in the TAS includes (but is not limited to):

      i. Full code and title of the training product

      ii. How the units of competency are packaged to meet the requirements of the qualification

      iii. How pre-requisite and co-requisite units are accommodated

      iv. Amount of training

      v. Duration and scheduling

      vi. Entry level requirements

      vii. Modes of delivery

      viii. Assessment resources, methods and timing

      ix. Human resources

      x. Physical resources

      xi. Learning resources.

      xii. Learning approaches that can be used to accommodate client needs

      xiii. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) processes

      xiv. Advice to trainers and assessors on how training is to be delivered and assessment conducted

4.3 Client Tailored Programs

a) If a member college engages ACAS in the development of specific delivery and assessment, the learning and assessments strategy will identify client requirements and partnering arrangements (as applicable).

4.4 Training and Assessment Resource Register

a) ACAS will research the VET landscape for appropriate free or licensed learning and assessment resources suitable for implementation for ACAS services. These resources will be checked and /or mapping for compliance against competencies and client's needs before being used for client services.

4.5 Training and Assessment Resources

a) All resources needed for the delivery of the training program are identified in the Training and Assessment Strategy (TAS).
b) Documented Training and Assessment Resources may include :
   i. Trainer Resources:
   - Trainer information regarding the unit of competency
   - Lesson plans
   - Handouts (as applicable)
   - Relevant training program specific forms
   - Audio/Visual presentations
   - Videos/DVDs
   ii. Learner Resources:
   - Learner manual
   - Text book (as relevant)
   - Training Journal
   iii. Assessment Resources:
   - Assessment tools
     - information regarding the unit of competency
     - Assessor instructions
     - Client instructions
     - Assessment instruments
     - Assessment forms/templates
   - Assessment marking guides
   - Recognition Tool
   iv. Mapping Documentation – identifying how the training and assessment materials map for compliance against the unit of competency
c) Other Resources may include:
   i. Premises, equipment and facilities required
   ii. Industry placement arrangements
   iii. Simulated environments required
   iv. Support staff or resources required to meet learner needs
   v. Language, literacy and numeracy support
   vi. Agreements for the use of resources, equipment, machinery, facilities

4.6 Copyright of Resources

a) All printed training and assessment resources produced by or on behalf of ACAS and the member colleges are Copyright to ACS under the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968. ACAS training and assessment resources may not be reproduced, without the copyright owner's permission or in the situation of a member college all rights will also be inferred cooperatively with the member college. Neither party can give written permission for a third party to use any material unless both parties agree in writing. ACAS uses the following copyright information.

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5. ACAS Responsibilities

The Academic Dean of ACAS is responsible for the identification/development, trial, ongoing review and modification of all training and assessment resources, which complement the learning and assessment strategies.

6. Legislation

Legislation applicable to this policy include:
- Copyright

7. Records Management

All documentation from development of training and assessment strategies and resources processes are maintained in accordance with Records Management Policy. (See Records Management Policy)

8. Monitoring and Improvement

All development of training and assessment strategies and resources practices are monitored by the Principal of ACAS and areas for improvement identified and acted upon. (See Continuous Improvement Policy)