
Training and Assessment Policy (G436-D)

Objective

To state the responsibilities for assessment policy and the principles of student assessment as employed at PTEP.

Scope

All PTEP academic staff, and all students enrolled in Competency Based Training courses.

Principles

The assessment strategy for each learning program will guide the choice of specific assessment activities.

Assessment should promote learning and improve student performance.

Assessment should be in a form that allows the determination of how well each student has achieved against stated student outcomes in the relevant unit outline, and, provides appropriate feedback. There are three main purposes of assessment:

The primary purpose is to assist students to learn. This occurs when Trainers use formative, diagnostic and developmental assessment practices. Assessment provides information to the student and also Training staff which helps to inform decision making to enhance further learning.

A second purpose of assessment is the reporting of student performance in relation to quality assurance benchmarks such as professional or industry standards. An external Assessment function can ensure that the academic standard for each award is at the appropriate level and that the assessment process measures student outcomes appropriately and fairly.

A third purpose of assessment is the use of achievement information for a selection process.

Typically the assessment strategies of PTEP learning programs will have a carefully balanced mix of these purposes.

The principles of meaningful assessment are: validity, reliability, fairness, comprehensiveness, and feasibility:

- Validity: assessment activities assess specified learning outcomes including student attributes.
- Reliability: results produced by assessment activities provide an accurate and consistent picture of what is measured. An assumption of reliable assessment is that the assessor is confident that the evidence

being assessed is attributable to the person being assessed and not to another person.

- Fairness: assessment methods and practices are equitable to all groups of learners.
- Comprehensiveness: a complete picture of student development and achievement requires the use of a number of assessment components.
- Feasibility: the choice of an assessment strategy should take into account the practicality of operationalising each assessment activity.

Competency for a unit should be based on assessable tasks that balance a number of considerations. These considerations include:

- Ensuring that assessment tasks are linked in a meaningful way to unit objectives, including the development of student attributes
- A reasonable student workload for the unit
- A reasonable staff workload for the unit

The means to authenticate, for at least one major task, that the student enrolled in that unit has therefore undertaken the work assessed for competency.

The requirements of this policy will be flexible to the extent that the policy will accommodate the demands of competency based assessment requirements for VET units offered by PTEP

Policy

1. Definitions

“Assessment” means a set of processes that measure the outcomes of students' learning, in terms of knowledge acquired, understanding developed, and skills gained.

“Authentic assessment” means assessment that is contextualised or problem-based in a way that encourages meaningful learning for students.

“Criterion-referenced assessment” means that a student's performance is compared to pre-determined criteria. The student is competent on the basis of his or her performance relative to criteria regardless of the performance of other students.

“Formative assessment” means assessment designed to provide learners with feedback on progress.

“Meaningful assessment” means assessment that promotes integration and authenticity of the assessment task.

“Norm-referenced assessment” means that a student’s performance is compared to that of a comparison group, usually other students in the class.

“Summative assessment” means an assessment that provides a measure of achievement of a learner’s performance in relation to the learning objectives of a unit.

“Unit outline” means a statement of the essential details of the unit and how it is taught.

“Unit Plan” means a supplement to the unit outline prepared by the Unit Coordinator that provides a clear statement with answers to frequently asked questions to both students and staff on how the unit is being offered and run in a given semester.

2. Responsibilities

a. PTEP

PTEP values effective learning and is responsible for “providing appropriate infrastructure and management processes to provide quality courses, learning and teaching”. It does this, in part, through its policies of fair and open practices on assessment, together with the exercise of fair and open assessment practices, and the provision for the ongoing review of units and courses.

b. Training Manager

The Training Manager has a responsibility for the assessment process for all units offered by PTEP but may be advised by individual trainers. The Training Manager shall ensure that the assessment of competency for a student is the result of each student’s assessed performance and is based on more than one assessment.

The Training Manager will ensure that:

- training staff are familiar with relevant PTEP policies including this Policy;
- training staff provide unit and course information that comply with PTEP policy and the provisions of this Policy;
- assessment methods and practices comply with PTEP policies and the provisions of this Policy;

- training staff carry out all assessment fairly, objectively, consistently and in a timely manner across the student group for the unit;
- group activities are assessed by means which will allow the real contribution of each member of the student group to be determined;
- all training staff whether full-time, contracted or casual are available to students to discuss assessment results;
- the PTEP administrative officer keeps a copy of every unit outline and unit plan distributed by training staff in each unit;

c. Training Staff

Training staff carry out their teaching responsibilities under the authority of the Training Manager.

Training staff have the following responsibilities:

- to advise the Training Manager that course and unit information comply with PTEP policy and the provisions of this Policy;
- to advise the Training Manager that assessment methods and practices comply with PTEP policies and the provisions of this Policy;
- to advise the Training Manager that there is a reasonable uniformity across modes of delivery;
- as required by the Training Manager to ensure that training staff carry out all assessment fairly, objectively, consistently and in a timely manner across the student group for the course;
- to identify the student outcomes of the unit clearly and in terms that enable the students to understand what skills and knowledge they are expected to achieve, and what values and attitudes will be fostered by satisfactorily completing the unit. These student outcomes must be included in the Unit Outline;
- to prepare and present unit material at an appropriate standard and within the resources available;
- to develop an assessment strategy based on three components, two of which shall be of a different type. Any variation requires approval of the Training Manager;
- to provide, where appropriate and possible, opportunities for students to participate in identifying their learning needs, planning their learning experiences and determining the ways in which they will be assessed;

- to inform students in either written or electronic form at the first major contact of the unit objectives, content, resources and assessment, or no later than the second major contact in cases where assessment methods and practices are to be finalised after consultation with enrolled students;
- to ensure that no change or changes are made to assessment methods and the content of assessment without reasonable consultation with students enrolled in the unit. The trainer must receive approval from the Training Manager of any proposed change and inform the students in writing or electronically;
- to maintain the confidentiality of personal student information including assessment results, except for legitimate PTEP purposes;
- to assess students' work fairly, objectively, consistently and in a timely manner and to provide adequate feedback about performance;
- to provide timely feedback on assessments during the session.
- to ensure for the regular semester that turnaround time for assessments is two weeks or less. Any increase in turnaround time for assessments requires the approval of the Training Manager and students must be advised of the increased turnaround period in advance;
- to be available at reasonable times, as approved by the Training Manager, so that all students, whether they are enrolled in on-line mode, external mode or face to face mode, may discuss aspects of the unit including learning issues and feedback from assessment. Staff will advise all students, having regard for their mode of study, of their availability for student consultation;
- to make reasonable accommodation within PTEP policy for students with a disability;
- to notify the Training Manager or the Manager of PTEP, as appropriate, of potential or actual conflicts of interest and the nature of such conflicts of interest;

d. Students

Students have a responsibility to:

- participate actively and positively in their teaching-learning environment and maintain steady progress in their studies;

- accept the jurisdiction and rights of the PTEP and accept the exercise of that jurisdiction and those rights in respect of assessment shall be subject to reasonableness and fairness;
- honour the Rules about cheating, plagiarism, fabrication or falsification of data, as well as the proper use of copyright material;
- respect the rights of fellow students and staff engaged in the teaching process.

3. Principles governing assessment practice

a. Good Practice in Unit Assessment

Where a unit is offered in different locations or via different modes of delivery, the standards for assessment outcomes will be comparable.

Weightings for each assessment component should take into account stated student outcomes and the required function of the assessment.

Feedback on performance should be provided before mid-session, in time for withdrawal without penalty.

Assessment should be based on more than one component and should require demonstration in a range of unit objectives.

As part of assessment in every unit, students should produce at least one piece of individual work from which the independent capability of each student can be assessed., or with prior approval from the Training Manager an alternative summative assessment approach that in a cost-effective way authenticates individual student effort. Such alternate assessments may be appropriate in the interests of student-centred learning and meaningful, authentic assessment. For example where a unit is based on the performance of an ensemble or where a unit is based on an individual's practice experience. Another example would be the documented iterative or incremental submission of draft work and the incorporation of instructor feedback into the final submission. The Training Manager must approve the alternative summative assessment approach and the process for authenticating individual effort. The assessment approach must be clearly stated in the unit outline.

Assessment methods should provide reasonable accommodation for students with a disability.

Students may request a review of any piece of assessable work. Such a review may involve a reassessment of the piece of work.

Group work should not constitute more than 50% of assessment without the prior approval of the Training Manager. Approval may be granted in cases where performance practice or ensemble work is the stated aim of the unit.

4. Assessment Processes

a. Assessments should:

- be appropriate to stated student outcomes of the unit;
- contain questions which are fair, non-trivial, matched to unit objectives as specified in the Unit Outline and answerable;
- contain instructions and questions which are clear, concise, unambiguous and free from error;
- use commonly accepted terminology and language appropriate to the unit;
- be of a duration appropriate to the demands of the tasks

b. Documentation of Assignment Receipt and Return

An Assignment Cover Sheet must be used to record the student's endorsement of the ownership of the submitted work, and, to record the submission of work against claims of non-receipt.

c. Oral Presentations

Staff who use oral presentation as a method of assessment, must set out the criteria for assessment in the unit plan or at the earliest opportunity or as otherwise feasible

Where competency is assessed for tutorial/class participation, staff should record at each session their comments on each student's participation. These comments form the basis for the student's participation mark and for reviewing the student's mark if requested.

d. Electronic Submission of Assignments

Where assignments are submitted via email the Trainer Manager will ensure that

- students have a guarantee of security at least equivalent to security for submitting hard copy.
- staff establish procedures for receipting and recording submission and include information on these procedures in the unit plan or at the earliest opportunity or as otherwise feasible

PTEP will:

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- ensure that as part of assessment procedure, instructions are provided to students as to the format for submission and the appropriate software;
 - set up the appropriate infrastructure for reception and assessment of assignments;
 - provide instructions in the unit outline about practical matters such as ensuring that the student's name and short titles are on every page of the emailed assignment.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

PTEP will ensure that all staff involved in assessment of students are competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities. Versions of the assessment policy document tailored to the interests of particular groups should be readily available to Training staff and students for reference.

PTEP will provide induction on assessment policy for new staff and a review session for current staff at appropriate intervals.