

TAAASS404A

Unit Descriptor

Application of the Unit

Participate in assessment validation

This unit specifies the competence required to participate in an assessment validation process.

Validation is a process involving assessors working in collaboration to review, compare and evaluate their assessment process and their assessment outcomes in relation to the same unit/s of competency. This includes validating assessment methods/tools, the evidence that was collected using these assessment methods/tools and the interpretation of that evidence to make a judgement of competence.

- Validation forms part of the quality systems of the *training/and/or assessment organisation* (refer to definition in the Range Statement) and is undertaken to improve the quality of the assessment process.
- Validation may be undertaken prior to and post the assessment of candidates and includes validation of formative and summative assessment activities (the latter includes assessment for recognition purposes).
- Validation may be an internal process involving assessors from the same training and/or assessment organisation, or it may occur as an external exercise involving assessors from different organisations.
- This unit focuses on the skills and knowledge needed to participate in assessment validation. It does not address the competence of leading the validation process - that function is addressed in *TAAASS501A Lead and coordinate assessment systems and services*.
- The achievement of this unit includes interpretation of competency standards (where competency standards are used as the benchmarks for assessment). *TAADES401A Use Training Packages to meet client needs* addresses this skill in depth.
- Achievement of this unit requires competence in conducting assessment. Therefore *TAAASS402A Assess competence* is a prerequisite/co-requisite unit.
- Interpretation of the effectiveness of the assessment plan and selected/modified assessment tools also forms part of this unit of competency. Therefore, competence in the following units is also highly recommended.
 - *TAAASS401A Plan and organise assessment*
 - *TAAASS403A Develop assessment tools*
- The competence specified in this unit is typically required by assessors, lead assessors, training and/or assessment consultants.

Unit Sector

Assessment

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. Prepare for validation	1.1 The purpose, focus and context of validation is confirmed and discussed with relevant people 1.2 The approach to validation is discussed and confirmed in accordance with the defined purpose/s, context, relevant assessment system policies and procedures and organisational/ legal/ethical requirements 1.3 Relevant benchmarks for assessment are analysed and the evidence needed to demonstrate that competency is collectively agreed 1.4 Any related documentation relevant to validation proceedings is identified and collectively agreed 1.5 Material/s to be used in validation sessions are obtained, read and interpreted and validation activities collectively agreed
2. Contribute to validation process	2.1 Active participation in validation sessions and activities is demonstrated using appropriate communications skills 2.2 Participation in validation sessions and activities, includes the review, comparison and evaluation of: 2.2.1 the overall <i>assessment process</i> 2.2.2 assessment plans 2.2.3 interpretation of competency standards or other benchmarks for assessment 2.2.4 selection and application of <i>assessment methods</i> 2.2.5 selection and use of <i>assessment tools</i> 2.2.6 the collected evidence 2.2.7 assessment decisions including the exercise of judgement 2.3 The review, comparison and evaluation is undertaken in accordance with the principles of assessment and rules of evidence 2.4 All documents used in the validation process are checked for accuracy and version control
3. Contribute to validation outcomes	3.1 Validation findings are collectively discussed, analysed and agreed to support improvements in the quality of assessment 3.2 Recommendations to improve assessment practice are discussed, agreed and recorded 3.3 Changes to own assessment practice, arising from validation and appropriate to assessment role and responsibilities, are implemented

KEY COMPETENCIES

Key Competency	Example of Application	Performance Level
Communicating ideas and information	actively contributing to validation sessions with assessors and other relevant people recommending improvements to future processes	2
Collecting analysing and organising information	using established processes to source and collate samples of evidence and assessment outcomes locating quality assurance procedures analysing competency standards to evaluate evidence requirements	3
Planning and organising activities	making time to participate in validation activities collecting and collating samples of evidence and tools	3
Working with others and in teams	listening to others and translating feedback into recommendations for assessment responsibilities participating in validation meetings/sessions to discuss and review assessment instruments and processes	2
Using mathematical ideas and techniques	preparing and presenting validation findings within agreed timeframe	2
Solving problems	systematically analysing relevant assessment documents to identify strengths and/or weaknesses monitoring own assessment activities to promptly address any concerns suggesting recommendations and improvements to assessment tools	2
Using technology	communicating, sourcing, reviewing and documenting information formatting reports	2

RANGE STATEMENT

The Range Statement adds definition to the unit by elaborating critical or significant aspects of the performance requirements of the unit. The Range Statement establishes the range of indicative meanings or applications of these requirements in different operating contexts and conditions. The specific aspects which require elaboration are identified by the use of italics in the Performance Criteria.

Training and/or assessment organisation refers to:

- a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), i.e. an organisation registered to provide recognised training and assessment services; includes TAFE institutes, private commercial colleges/companies, enterprises, community organisations, group training companies and schools
- an organisation working in a partnership arrangement with an RTO to provide recognised training and assessment services
- an organisation that provides non-recognised training and assessment services

Purpose and focus of validation may include:

- as part of organisational quality assurance processes
- to address an identified area of risk in assessment practice and quality
- to demonstrate compliance with the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)
- to ensure assessments meet the evidence requirements of the competency standards or other assessment benchmarks
- to provide evidence for external audit
- to provide evidence for internal audit
- to improve assessment practices
- to evaluate the quality of assessment tools
- to provide professional development
- to increase assessor confidence
- to determine whether different assessors using the same tools collect the same types and levels of evidence
- to determine whether different assessors interpret the same evidence similarly
- to determine whether assessment decisions reflect the principles of assessment and rules of evidence

Context of validation may include:

- internal to the organisation, e.g. same site or across sites
- external to the organisation, e.g. in a industry, region, city, state, assessor network
- through licensing or similar body
- with co-assessors
- with peers/colleagues from other training and/or assessment organisations

Relevant people must include:

- other assessor/s involved in the validation exercise

Relevant people may include:

- lead assessors
- managers, supervisors
- technical and subject experts, including occupational health and safety (OHS) experts and language, literacy and numeracy specialists
- personnel or partners with responsibilities for input into the quality assurance system
- training and/or assessment coordinators
- industry clients
- industry regulators
- employee and employer representatives
- members of professional associations
- personnel from a state or territory registering body
- independent validators

Approach to validation may include:

- assessment panels
- moderation meetings
- collectively developing/reviewing banks of assessment tools and exemplars
- benchmarking
- field testing, trialling and piloting assessment tools
- peer review
- team assessment
- internal audit process
- client feedback mechanisms
- mentoring of less experienced by more experienced assessors
- use of independent assessment validator to review validation processes

Assessment system policies and procedures may include:

- candidate selection
- rationale and purpose of competency-based assessment
- assessment records/data management/information management
- recognition of current competency/recognition of prior learning/credit arrangements
- assessors - needs, qualifications, maintaining currency
- assessment reporting procedures
- assessment appeals
- candidate grievances/complaints
- validation
- evaluation/internal audit
- costs/resourcing
- access and equity/reasonable adjustment
- partnership arrangements
- links with human resource or industrial relations systems
- links with overall quality management system

Organisational/legal/ethical requirements may include:

- legal and ethical responsibilities of assessors
- assessment system policies and procedures
- reporting, recording and retrieval systems for assessment, including documenting the agreed approach to validation
- licensing/legal ramifications of assessing competence
- requirements of training and/or assessment organisations relating to assessment and validation
- quality assurance systems
- business and performance plans
- access and equity policies and procedures
- collaborative/partnership arrangements
- policies, procedures and programs
- defined resource parameters
- mutual recognition arrangements
- industrial relations systems and processes, awards/enterprise agreements
- AQTF Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), in particular Standard 8, RTO assessment
- registration scope
- human resource policies/procedures and legal requirements including anti-discrimination, equal employment, job role/responsibilities/conditions
- relevant industry codes of practice
- confidentiality and privacy requirements of information relating to completed assessments
- OHS considerations, including:
 - ensuring OHS requirements are adhered to during the assessment process
 - identifying and reporting OHS hazards and concerns to relevant personnel

Benchmark/s for assessment refers to:

- the criterion against which the candidate is assessed which, may be a competency standard/unit of competency, assessment criteria of course curricula, performance specifications, product specifications

Evidence:

- is material collected which, when matched against the specifications in the competency standards, provides proof of competency achievement

Related documentation may include:

- the Assessment Guidelines of the relevant Training Package/s
- information from the competency standards about the resources required for assessment, the assessment context, appropriate assessment methods
- assessment activities identified in accredited modules derived from the relevant competency standards
- assessment activities in Support Materials related to the relevant competency standards
- any requirements of OHS, legislation, codes of practice, standards and guidelines
- indicators and levels of competence of the National Reporting System
- organisational requirements for demonstration of work performance
- product specifications

Material/s may include:

- assessment tools
- samples of collected evidence
- documentation outlining the basis of assessment decisions
- reports/records of assessment decisions
- validation templates
- validation checklists
- assessment exemplars and competency standards
- sampling techniques
- banks of assessment tools
- survey proformas

Validation activities may include:

- analysing and reviewing assessment tools
- analysing and reviewing collected evidence
- analysing and reviewing assessment decisions/records of assessment outcomes
- examining assessment records
- examining assessment systems
- discussing the assessment process, issues, difficulties in interpretation
- holding interviews with each other or with management, trainers/facilitators, candidates
- analysing client feedback
- observing assessment conduct
- using validation tools
- reviewing and interpreting Assessment Guidelines
- examining assessor qualifications
- analysing appeals processes
- recording evidence of validation processes and outcomes

Assessment process is defined as:

- key steps involved in the assessment cycle

Assessment plan is the overall planning document for the assessment process and may include:

- the purpose and aims of the assessment
- the context of assessment
- relevant competency standards to be used as the benchmarks for assessment
- other assessment information/documentation identified as relevant
- identified personnel
- identified assessment methods and assessment tools
- possibilities for clustering units of competency for assessment purposes
- identified OHS hazards, including assessed risks and control strategies
- material and/or physical resources required
- organisational arrangements for conducting assessment
- OHS reporting requirements
- any special assessment needs, e.g. personal protective equipment requirements
- outline of assessment milestones, time lines and target dates
- candidate self-assessment procedures
- connections to relevant organisational plans, policies and procedures

Assessment methods are the particular techniques used to gather evidence and may include:

- direct observation, for example:
- real work/real time activities at the workplace
- work activities in a simulated workplace environment
- structured activities, for example:
- simulation exercises/role-plays
- projects
- presentations
- activity sheets
- questioning, for example:
- written questions, for example, on a computer
- interviews
- self-assessment
- verbal questioning
- questionnaires
- oral or written examinations (applicable at higher AQF levels)
- portfolios, for example:
- collections of work samples compiled by the candidate
- product with supporting documentation
- historical evidence
- journal/log book
- information about life experience
- review of products, for example:
- products as a result of a project
- work samples/products
- third party feedback, for example:
- testimonials/reports from employers/supervisors
- evidence of training
- authenticated prior achievements
- interview with employer, supervisor, peer

Assessment tools contain:

- the instruments to be used for gathering evidence such as:
- a profile of acceptable performance measures
- templates/proformas
- specific questions or activities
- evidence/observation checklists
- checklists for the evaluation of work samples
- candidate self-assessment materials
- the procedures, information and instructions for the assessor/candidate relating to the use of assessment instruments and the conditions for assessment

Judgement is a two-step process and means:

- the decision made by the assessor on whether the evidence provided meets the principles of assessment and rules of evidence
- the decision made by the assessor, based on the evidence provided and evaluated, on whether the candidate is competent/not yet competent

Principles of assessment are:

- validity
- reliability
- flexibility
- fairness

Rule of evidence are:

- validity
- sufficiency
- currency
- authenticity

Recommendations for improvement may include:

- ongoing professional development strategies for assessors
- changes to assessment system policies and procedures
- changes to assessment strategies
- changes to assessment plans
- changes to selected assessment methods
- changes/development of new assessment tools
- improved records management
- changes to assessment resources
- instigation of/changes to partnership arrangements
- improvements to evidence collection
- provision of additional information for assessors/candidates
- greater advice/support/supervision of assessors
- exemplars
- liaison with technical experts/specialist support

EVIDENCE GUIDE

The Evidence Guide provides advice to inform and support appropriate assessment of this unit. It contains an overview of assessment followed by identification of specific aspects of evidence that will need to be addressed in determining competence. The Evidence Guide is an integral part of the unit and should be read and interpreted in conjunction with the other components of competency.

Assessment must reflect the endorsed Assessment Guidelines of the TAA04 Training and Assessment Training Package.

To demonstrate competence against this unit candidates must be able to provide evidence that they have actively participated in and have contributed to a minimum of two validation sessions, using different validation approaches and validation activities.

The evidence provided must: explain the validation purpose and context and the legal and ethical responsibilities of assessors; include the collation of documentation to be submitted to the validation process; demonstrate access and interpretation of the competency standard and evidence requirements; demonstrate communication and liaison with relevant people and participation in providing feedback and interpreting documentation in validation sessions; demonstrate how the critical aspects of validation were addressed; show involvement in reviewing findings/outcomes, including, where relevant, contributing to the finalised validation documentation.

Required knowledge includes:

- what is competency-based assessment including
- vocational education and training as a competency-based system
- assessment is criterion referenced/distinction to norm referenced assessment
- criterion used in national VET is endorsed or accredited competency standards defining specifications for performance of work/work functions and skills/knowledge
- reporting of competency-based assessment
- competency standards as the basis of qualifications
- the principles of competency-based assessment
- the structure and application of competency standards
- how to interpret competency standards and other related assessment information to determine the evidence needed to demonstrate competency including:
- the components of competency
- assessment of Key Competencies, dimensions of competency and OHS requirements
- Training Package Assessment Guidelines
- the qualification level of units
- Australian Qualifications Framework Guidelines including characteristics of AQF levels
- different assessment methods and which methods may be appropriate and relevant to different units/ different parts of individual units
- different types of assessment tools, what tools work for what types of evidence, what are well constructed assessment tools and why
- what are the principles of assessment and how they guide assessment and validation processes
- what are the rules of evidence, why are they important, particularly in a validation context
- the various reasons for carrying out validation and the

different approaches to validation that may be appropriate:

- before assessment
- during assessment
- after assessment
- the critical aspects of validation, including validation of:
 - assessment processes
 - methods and tools
 - the collected evidence leading to assessment decisions
 - assessment decisions
- different aspects of quality systems such as:
 - local/relevant strategies to meet the AQTF
 - continuous improvement systems
 - quality assurance policies and processes
 - Assessment system policies and procedures
 - records management systems
- relevant policy, legislation, codes of practice and national standards including national Commonwealth and state/territory legislation for example:
 - Training Packages/competency standards/other assessment benchmarks
 - licensing requirements
 - providing accurate information
 - meeting environmental standards
 - industry/workplace requirements
 - duty of care under common law
 - recording information and confidentiality requirements
 - anti-discrimination
 - workplace relations
 - industrial awards/enterprise agreements
- relevant OHS legislation, codes of practice, standards and guidelines, impacting on assessment

Required skills and attributes include:

- research skills to:
- access and analyse relevant documents for validation
- use a range of source documents to access information for validation
- evaluation/revision skills to:
- determine evidence requirements from competency standards
- review assessment process
- review assessment methods and tools
- review collected evidence
- literacy skills to:
- read and understand the documents relevant to validation
- observation skills to:
- evaluate and compare assessment planning, organisation, methods, tools, and evidence documentation leading to assessment judgements
- identify where improvements to the assessment process can be made
- communications and interpersonal skills to:
- effectively participate and contribute to validation activities and sessions
- collaborate with colleagues
- seek and receive feedback on assessment practice
- share sensitive information
- maintain confidentiality of sensitive information
- gain and maintain trust of colleagues
- provide advice and support to colleagues
- planning skills to:
- participate within agreed timeframes
- problem solving skills to:
- identify information that is inconsistent, ambiguous or contradictory
- suggest/confirm recommendations for improvements in assessment

Products that could be used as evidence include:

- recommendations as a result of reviewing assessments, and why
- evaluations of the quality of assessment tools against the identified competency standards
- evaluations of the evidence collected against identified competency standards, and whether it meets the rules of evidence
- suggested recommendations discussed for modification

Processes that could be used as evidence include:

- how competency standards and other documents were interpreted and evidence requirements identified
- how assessment decisions were evaluated
- how assessment feedback was collated and evaluated
- what contribution was made to validation activities

Resource implications for assessment include:

- access to competency standards and other related assessment documentation
- access to completed assessment tools
- access to assessment reports/records
- access to suitable assessment validation venue/equipment
- access to a validation group
- access to relevant workplace documentation
- cost/time considerations
- meeting personnel requirements retime management

The collection of quality evidence requires that:

- assessment must address the scope of this unit and reflect all components of the unit i.e. the Elements, Performance Criteria, Range Statement, Evidence Requirements and Key Competencies
- a range of appropriate assessment methods/evidence gathering techniques is used to determine competency
- evidence must be gathered in the workplace whenever possible. Where no workplace is available, a simulated workplace must be provided
- the evidence collected must relate to a number of performances assessed at different points in time and in a learning and assessment pathway these must be separated by further learning and practice
- assessment meets the rules of evidence
- a judgement of competence should only be made when the assessor is confident that the required outcomes of the unit have been achieved and that consistent performance has been demonstrated

Specific evidence requirements must include:

- active participation in a minimum of two validation sessions/meetings which, in combination, address the critical aspects of validation using different validation approaches and activities
- clear explanations of the purposes of validation and the legal and ethical responsibilities of assessors
- collation of all documentation relating to the validation process in a logical manner
- demonstration of communications and liaison with relevant people
- provision of feedback and interpretation of documentation in validation sessions
- record of contribution to validation findings

Integrated assessment means that:

- this unit can be assessed alone or as part of an integrated assessment activity involving relevant units in the TAA04 Training and Assessment Training Package.