

Assessment Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

Surf Life Saving WA Inc. is a Registered Training Organisation (#51104) and is committed to providing quality training and assessment in accordance with the standards for Registered Training Organisations (SRTOs 2015). As such, SLSWA is required to implement an assessment system that ensures assessments (including recognition of prior learning) comply with the assessment requirements of national training packages and VET accredited courses within its scope of registration.

This policy ensures SLSWA assessment practices comply with SRTO's, provides SLSWA with clear information on the assessment process and evidence requirements, and ensures that assessments are conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment and rules of evidence.

Policy Statement

SLSWA offers assessment opportunities to all enrolled candidates. SLSWA is committed to ensuring all assessment is conducted in a fair and equitable manner, meeting the requirements of the relevant training package, industry expectations and standards.

SLSWA ensures that:

- All assessment options and processes implemented are in compliance with the competency-based assessment and training package requirements;
- All assessment ensure the integrity of the VET system;
- Assessment complies with the principles of assessment (POAS) as prescribed in the Standard for RTOs 2015;
- Evidence submitted for assessment is assessed in accordance with the rules of evidence as prescribed in the standards for RTOs; and
- All assessments are conducted by trainers/assessors who meet the necessary requirements as noted in the standards for RTOs.

Definitions

The following words and expressions have the following specific meaning, as in the Standards for RTO's 2015.

Assessment means the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard required in the workplace, as specified in a training package or VET accredited course.

Assessment system is a coordinated set of documented policies and procedures (including assessment materials and tools) that ensure assessments are consistent and are based on the principles of assessment contained in table 1.8-1 and the rules of evidence contained in table 1.8-2 located in each of SLSWA's assessor guides.

Competency means the consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) means an assessment process that assesses the competency/s of an individual that may have been acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual meets the requirements specified in the training package or VET accredited courses.

- a) Form learning refers learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction and is linked to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, a certificate, diploma or university degree);
- b) Non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction, but does not lead to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, in-house professional development programs conducted by business); and
- c) Informal learning refers to learning that results through the experience of work-related, social, family, hobby or leisure activities (for example the acquisition of interpersonal skills developed through several years as a sales representative)

Policy Principles

Underpinning principles

Competency-based assessment is a system of collecting evidence, about a person's performance to a pre-set competency standard with emphasis placed on what a person can do (the outcome) rather than comparing person achievement to others.

There is no concept of a pass or fail, only competent (C) or not yet competent (NYC). The training is focused and allows for greater participation of the candidate in the assessment process.

Three levels of assessment:

Various levels of assessment may be used, including:

- a) Diagnostic also known as pre-assessment provides information about prior knowledge and skills. This baseline information may diagnose a problem or training requirement.
- b) Formative assessment assists and supports training by monitoring and advising candidates of their performance and rate of progress against the training outcomes, this provides feedback to the candidate supervisor and trainer on what development activities are needed to achieve the required competencies. Assessment accumulates
- c) Summative assessment evaluates of achievement of the training outcome. Often conducted in the workplace, summative assessment confirms the achievement of the competency requirements, Assessment culminated.

- d) Assessment modes may include:
- I. On the job
 - II. As part of the training
 - III. Off the job (scenario, simulation)
 - IV. Completion and submission of assignments
 - V. Recognition of prior learning

Evidence gathering methods commonly used by transforming training may include, but are not limited to:

- Projects, written assignments, workplace assignments, workplace performance, documentation demonstration, questioning, role play, simulation, oral presentations, written test, portfolio and third party reports.
- Assessment is carried out in accordance with the requirements of the relevant training package, on a consistent and timely basis to ensure that learning has taken place and that learners have acquired the knowledge and skills required to demonstrate competency.
- All assessments will be recorded in accordance with SLSWA policy and procedures using appropriated documentation and aXcelerate management system.
- Assessment outcomes will be recorded and securely maintained in a manual and electronic system.
- Feedback is provided to learners and includes the assessment outcome and guidance further learning and assessment (as appropriate).

Reasonable adjustments to assessments

- a) Candidates have the right to apply for and receive adjustments to assessment activities to accommodate individual;/special needs
- b) Adjustments to assessment cannot compromise the integrity of the assessment, elements and performance criteria of the unit of competency
- c) Adjustments to assessment will provide an unfair advantage/disadvantage to candidates.

Principles of Assessment

Assessments are conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment as prescribed in the standards for RTOs. Below is an excerpt from the standards 2015 (Table 1.8-1)

Fairness	<p>The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process.</p> <p>Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner's needs.</p> <p>The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process, and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.</p>
Flexibility	<p>Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 of competency and associated assessment requirements, and the individual.
Validity	<p>Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner.</p> <p>Validity requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ assessment against the unit/s of competency and the associated assessment requirements covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance ▪ assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application ▪ assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations ▪ judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Reliability	<p>Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.</p>

Assessments are conducted ensuring compliance with the rules of evidence (ROE) as prescribed in the standards for RTOs. Below is an excerpt from the standards for RTOs 2015.

Table 1.8-2: Rules of evidence

Validity	The assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Sufficiency	The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made of a learner's competency.
Authenticity	The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner's own work.
Currency	The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.

Assessor Requirements

All assessments are undertaken by suitably qualified assessors who have both assessor competencies and vocational competencies at least to the level being assessed, and as prescribed in standard 1 and schedule 1 of the standards for RTOs 2015.

Assessment Tools (Instruments)

- a) Assessment resources are developed in consultation with the industry
- b) Assessment instruments are the resources used by assessors to identify and record the skills and knowledge candidates must demonstrate to be deemed competent in a unit/module.
- c) Assessment instruments are crucial for the accurate and consistent assessment of candidates against competency standards
- d) Assessment instruments are required as evidence of assessment and must be retained on records as proof that a person was assessed as competent.

Assessment Validation

SLSWA assessment policies, processes, resources and outcomes are validation. (see validation schedule and validation process).

Assessment Marking

- a) Assessments are not graded
- b) Assessment are assessed at the time of the assessment or within 10 days for an RPL submission
- c) Candidates are notified of the assessment outcome at the time of the assessment or for RPL within two (2) weeks of submission.

Assessment Decisions and Outcomes

Assessment outcomes are recorded as one of the following;

Competent (C) candidates are deemed “competent” when they have consistently demonstrated their skills and knowledge to the standard required in the workplace, for a full unit/module.

Not Yet Competent (NYC) Candidates are deemed “Not Yet Competent” when they are unable. Have not demonstrated appropriate levels of competence in accordance with the minimum performance standards for a full unit/module.

Candidates assessed as “Not Yet Competent” shall receive feedback and guidance from the assessor. Candidates deemed “NYC” would be provided with a reassessment form to undergo a second assessment.

Assessor code of conduct

All Trainer and assessors will abide by the following code of conduct:

- I. Differing needs of candidates will be identified and handled with sensitivity.
- II. Conflict of interest In the assessment process will need to be referred to the RTO Compliance Officer when identified.
- III. All forms of harassment will be managed throughout the loaning, conduct, reviewing and reporting of the assessment outcomes as per the access and equity policy.
- IV. Rights of the candidates are protected during and after the assessment.
- V. Personal or interpersonal factors that are not relevant to the assessment of competency must not influence the assessment outcomes as per compliant and appeals policy.
- VI. The candidate is made aware of rights and appeal processes.
- VII. Evidence gathered during the assessment is verified for validity, reliability, authenticity,sufficiency and currency.
- VIII. Assessment decisions are based on available evidence that can be accessed and verified by another assessor.
- IX. The candidate signs the candidate declaration before the assessment commences.
- X. Prior to an assessment, the candidate is informed of all assessment reporting processes and all known potential consequences of decisions arising from the assessment
- XI. Professional development opportunities are provided to all SLSWA trainers and assessors in accordance with continuous improvement practices.
- XII. Inductions are held annually to create, maintain and open dialogue, discussion with trainers and assessors whilst meeting the RTO standards and SLSWA requirements.

Recognition of Prior Learning

All candidates are offered access to recognition of prior learning (RPL), recognition of current competency upon enrolment.

Assessors

Assessors conducting on behalf of SLSWA will:

- a) Ensure they assess and determine a candidates skills and knowledge of competence against set standards, principles of assessment and rules of evidence
- b) Ensure that the safety of the personnel involved in the assessment is maintained at all times
- c) Ensure that assessment focuses on the application of knowledge and skills to the standard of performance required in the workplace and covers all aspects of workplace performance.
- d) Ensure the assessment process is open, structured, consistent and comprehensive incorporating feedback to the candidate on the outlines of the assessment process, as well as information regarding the appeals procedure and guidance on other options.
- e) Interpret and understand the performance criteria and evidence requirements outlined in the assessor guide.
- f) Make fair and objective judgements
- g) Provide accurate and relevant paperwork for processing within the required time frames.

Appeals

Candidates have the right to appeal the assessment decision. (See appeals policy)

Access and Equity

Candidates have fair and equal rights assessment. (See access and equity policy)

Records Management

All assessment outcome will be recorded and kept for a period of 30 years. (see management and personal information policy)

All assessment practices are monitored by SLSWA and areas for improvement identified and acted upon (see continuums improvement policy)

National Recognition

Surf Life Saving Western Australia recognises qualifications and /or Statements of Attainment issued by another Registered Training Organisation (RTO) after verification.