Training and Assessment Policy

INTRODUCTION

Surf Life Saving WA Inc. (SLSWA) 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 are 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.

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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) **Formal learning** refers to 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 a person's 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 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:

- 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 policies and procedures using appropriate documentation and aXcelerate management system.
- Assessment outcomes will be recorded and securely maintained in a manual and/or electronic system.
- Feedback is provided to learners and includes the assessment outcome and guidance for 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 not 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).

Table 1.8-1: Principles of assessment

Fairness	The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner's needs. 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.
Flexibility	Assessment is flexible to the individual 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 of competency and associated assessment requirements, and the individual.
Validity	Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner. Validity requires: • 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	Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.

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).

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 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 learning, 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 Complaints 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.

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 Complaints and Appeals Policy).

ACCESS AND EQUITY

Candidates have fair and equal rights assessment. (See Access and Equity Policy).

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

All assessment outcomes will be recorded and kept for a period of 30 years. (see Management of Personal Information Policy).

All assessment practices are monitored by SLSWA and areas for improvement identified and acted upon (see Continuos Improvement Policy).

ASSESSMENT VALIDATION

SLSWA ensures that it reviews, compares and evaluates its assessment procedures, tools and evidence on a regular basis to achieve standardisation so that the training outcomes are consistent and that assessment is valid, reliable, fair and flexible and where necessary SLSWA will redefine, clarify and modify its existing assessment practice.

SLSWA will conduct regular validation meetings according to the schedule. Validation of assessments will also occur whenever there are changes in the assessment as the result of changes to the Training Package or feedback from trainers or employers.

To ensure that the validation process will be accurate and reliable, an external consultant will be engaged to chair and conduct the meeting.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, all participants will be supplied with copies of the assessment tools to be validated and copies of the related units of competency and a copy of the assessment validation form. This form will be filled out by all participants and later used to assist in the outcomes report of the validation meeting.

The validation process will include a sufficient number of trainer and assessors who have participated in the delivery and assessment of the particular qualification to enable informed judgments to be made.

Other trainers and assessor who have not been involved in the delivery of training and assessment within this qualification may also attend this meeting to provide outside validation of the assessment process.

In addition, feedback on assessment tasks will be sought regularly from the industry. SLSWA has a wide network of industry partners, including many who provide work placement for students.

The validation process shall determine whether the assessment procedures and materials currently in use are, valid, reliable, fair and flexible in their application and whether they are considered suitable in light of all possible circumstances including reasonable adjustment requirements.

All opportunities for improvement that are identified from within the validation process will be documented. In a situation where it is further considered that an assessment activity may pose a potential risk against the Standards for RTO's 2015 requirements for assessment, will action improvement to eliminate the potential risk as defined under the risk management process, the risk matrix will be updated accordingly.

Trainer/Assessors who participate in the validation process will have it count towards their professional development requalification trainer requirements.

See the Validation Schedule and Validation Process (located in validation file).

TRAINER AND ASSESSOR ACCESS

SLSWA will ensure that all education agents that are under agreement have access to the most up to date and accurate information. The below information is presented at an annual induction including:

- Copies of the SLSWA Code of Practice
- Course information, including content and vocational outcomes

- Student selection, entry requirements, enrolment and induction/orientation procedures
- Requirements for students to achieve the qualification
- Teaching methods used (including work experience requirements)
- Policies on assessment, including methods, resubmission of work etc.
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) arrangements
- Complaints and appeals processes
- Students' rights and responsibilities, student behavior expectations policy
- RTO's rights and responsibilities
- Information about the grounds by which the student's enrolment may be deferred, suspended or cancelled(see Refund of Course Registration Fees Policy)
- General description of:
  - Venue (venue checklist)
  - Equipment
  - Resources
- Course and Assessment requirements

TRAINING & ASSESSMENT QUALITY

SLSWA commits to meeting the high quality standards expected by our customers in delivering training and assessment services.

Our quality is managed through the associated operational forms and is based on the requirements of the VET Quality Framework that comprises:

- The Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations
- The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
- The Data Provision Requirements
- The Fit and Proper Person Requirements, and
- The Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements

Our primary quality objectives are:

- To provide quality training and assessment services within our scope of registration
- To utilise aXcelerate (Quality Management System) as described within the policies as the primary tool in achieving best practice outcomes across our entire operation
- To ensure continuous improvement of our training and assessment systems and customer service requirements
- To fully comply with all relevant Commonwealth and State Legislative and Regulatory requirements for the operation of Registered Training Organisation's

Our quality management system provides us with mechanisms for the detection of system shortfalls and for stimulating continuous improvements.

Our stakeholders are Western Australians who are in need of training be they individuals, businesses or community groups, we will train them.

TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY POLICY

SLSWA identify, negotiate, plans and implements the appropriate training and assessment strategies to meet the needs of each of its clients for all unit(s) of competency currently on its scope of registration.

Each training and assessment strategy will be required to identify the proposed target groups, learning and assessment modes and strategies, the assessment validation processes to be utilised and the pathways available for further training options. They will be developed in full consultation with the relevant enterprises and industries.

SLSWA will review, compare and evaluate its current assessment processes, tools and evidence that are contributing to judgments by way of validation meetings with a range of assessors who are delivering the same competency standards.

SLSWA will document any action taken to improve the quality and consistency of the assessment and the relevant assessment tools.

SLSWA will ensure that whilst developing, adapting or delivering training and or assessment products and services:

- All methods used to identify learning needs, and methods for designing training and assessment materials are fully documented;
- The requirements of the relevant National Training Package or accredited course curriculum are met;
- Steps are taken to manage the transition to reviewed Training Packages within **12 months** of their publication;
- Core and elective units, as appropriate, are identified;
- Customisation meets the requirements specified in the relevant Training Package or, for non-accredited courses, meets SLSWA requirements;
- Language, literacy and numeracy requirements develop the learning capacity of the individual and are consistent with the essential requirements for workplace performance specified in the relevant units of competency or outcomes of accredited courses;
- Delivery modes and training and assessment materials which meet the needs of a diverse range of clients are identified;

SLSWA will ensure that it has access to the staff, facilities, equipment, training and assessment materials required 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.

RECOGNISED PRIOR LEARNING/NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is an "assessment" only pathway utilising the skills, knowledge and experience gained through study, training, work and life experience to gain a formal qualification.

This option is discussed with an SLSWA Trainer prior to enrolling in a course to determine if the requirements are met. If you are unable to meet all of the requirements during the RPL process gap training may be provided.

A credit transfer is mutual recognition of a unit of competency or qualification that has been issued by another RTO. It is necessary to draw a distinction between the Training Package Competencies and a SLSWA certificate.

A SLSWA certificate does not by itself equate to the achievement of competency from the Training Package. Where an individual holds a SLSWA Certificate, it will be necessary for them to provide additional evidence to support their claim for Recognition of Prior Learning.

It may also be necessary for them to undertake additional training or assessment activities to cover areas where the SLSWA Certificate does not completely match the training package competencies.

Recognised Prior Learning (RPL)

Candidates will be provided with a candidate information RPL guide for their perusal. RPL fees do apply and additional fees may be required for gap training.

The individual candidate will be assessed against skill areas that industry has decided are essential to work within it. Every qualification is made up of a number of skilled areas and these are referred to as units of competency.

Units of competency are statements that describe what industry expects a person to be able to do in their workplace. This includes the required skills, knowledge and equipment you need to complete a job.

The candidate will also be required to upload identification documents along with other relevant documents that must be certified. This guide will explain the requirements and procedures such as certification, to make the transition to RPL easy to understand. For further information on the RPL process please contact SLSWA.

Credit Transfer

SLSWA will provide individuals upon request with the opportunity to apply for a credit transfer. A Statement of Attainment will be issued once a copy of the unit of competency has been received and verified.

The statement of attainment must show the exact title and unit code for the credit transfer to be approved.

If the title and unit code has been superseded and deemed not equivalent, gap training may be provided.

ISSUING OF QUALIFICATIONS

SLSWA issues all qualifications and statements of attainment as prescribed in the Australian Qualifications Framework 2011 (AQF), Second Edition January 2013 and the requirements of the Standards for RTO's 2015.

SLSWA will endeavour to issue AQF qualifications and Statements of Attainment within 10 days of course completion (provided relevant documentation has been supplied in a timely manner). All qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by SLSWA will comply with the standards outlined in the AQF Australian Qualifications Framework 2013. SLSWA will only issue AQF qualifications and Statements of Attainment within its scope of registration that certifies the achievements of qualifications or industry/enterprise competency standards from nationally endorsed Training Packages or units of competency from accredited vocational courses.

Procedure

- SLSWA issues nationally recognised qualifications or Statements of Attainment in accordance with the AQF, for qualifications that are on our scope of registration with TAC. Qualifications and statements of attainment include the National Training Package title and code, clearly identify the units of competency achieved (including codes), identify SLSWA by its national training provider identification number, and include our address.
- AQF and Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) logos appear on the certificates and NRT logo on Statements of Attainment and are used in accordance with the guidelines for the use of these logos.
- Qualifications and statements of attainment are issued in accordance with the guidelines and rules defined within each Training Package and the Standards for RTO's 2015.
- Evidence of achievement of competency must be held for each student in order to issue the qualification. Evidence can be obtained through delivery and assessment, recognition of prior training and/or credit transfer.

In order to ensure that all qualifications and statements of attainment issued are verified and checked, the following process is applied:

- Completion of units is recorded on the assessment sheet and entered into the student management database.
- Upon completion of their course (or withdrawal of enrolment), their file is reviewed by the RTO Compliance Officer.

- All evidence is held for all of the required units; a qualification or Statement of Attainment is printed and issued by Surf Life Saving Western Australia.
- All student results/records are kept for 30 years.