Assessments Policy

Policy

This policy and associated procedures ensures that Dalton College develops assessment tools and conducts assessments in accordance with the principles and rules of assessment and complies with the relevant Training Package competency standards and VET accredited courses.

Relevant Standards for Registered Training Organisations

Assessment

1.8. Dalton College implements an assessment system that ensures that assessment (including recognition of prior learning):

   a) complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package or VET accredited course; and

   b) is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment contained in Table 1.8-1 and the Rules of Evidence contained in Table 1.8-2.

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 Dalton College to take into account the individual learner's needs.
	Dalton College 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; and
	• 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 Dalton College 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; and
	• 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.

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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.

1.12. Dalton College offers recognition of prior learning to individual learners.

Definitions

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.

Assessors are persons who assess a learner's competence in accordance with *Policy and Procedure – Trainer/Assessor Qualifications and development*

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.

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);

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 a business); and

informal learning refers to learning that results through 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).

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Procedure - Assessments

The Academic Manager is responsible for ensuring that all assessment tools developed and conducted are fair, valid, flexible and reliable.

Assessors are responsible for ensuring that evidence of assessment collected from learners is authentic, valid, sufficient and current.

The Academic Manager will conduct a training needs analysis to identify skills and knowledge and recommend the most appropriate training program and mode of training required.

Information to the prospective learner will be provided as per the procedure for recognition of prior learning below.

Assessment System

Dalton College will provide a transparent, accountable and consistent process for the assessment of learner competency:

- Using the principles of competency based assessment undertaken only by personnel who are suitably qualified and approved by the Academic Manager.
- That meets the assessment requirements of the endorsed components of relevant Training Packages/accredited training programs.
- In accordance with Dalton College prescribed process of assessment as detailed in this policy and as advised at the commencement of training by the Academic Manager.
- Only using approved Dalton College assessment tools. Approved assessment tools are those which have been identified as 'compliant' by internal or external audit. Those yet to be audited will be approved by the CEO.

Development of Assessment Instruments

Dalton College will ensure that assessment instruments are available for each and every unit included in the Scope of Registration for the RTO. The Academic Manager is required to ensure that assessment instruments are developed/purchased for each unit and that these assessment instruments meet the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence as described above. In developing assessment materials, Dalton College will ensure that:

- The standards, assessment processes and all associated information are straight forward and understandable;
- Learners are fully informed of the assessment processes and the requirements to be judged as competent in each unit

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In addition, Dalton College ensures the sufficiency of evidence by means of the following:

- Assessment tasks are developed in accordance with the requirements of each unit of competency and are mapped to each unit
- Marking Guides have been developed to ensure that assessors know what level of response is required of the learner
- Assessor checklist have been developed as a criteria against which student assessment work is assessed.
- Validation of assessments is conducted in accordance with Dalton College's Validation Procedure.

Conduct of Assessments

Assessors assess learners in a variety of modes and locations using a variety of assessment methods as per the current approved training and assessment strategies. Assessment strategies may include but are not limited to:

- Observation and demonstration of skills
- Workplace based activities
- Questioning
- Role plays and case studies
- Integrated assessments of a number of related competencies
- Skills Recognition assessment

Assessment tools are completed by the learner for each unit to record the skills and knowledge of each element and their related performance criteria. Each course contains a mapping guide for each assessment tool explaining how each assessment maps against the respective components of each competency standard.

Assessors:

a) Must have a sound knowledge of, and be skilled in, the relevant industry area, and meet the assessor requirements as per Policy and Procedure *Trainers and Assessors*
b) Collect the outcomes of completed assessments directly from learners
c) Make a judgement as to whether the evidence collected is sufficient
d) Completes the Assessment Cover Sheets and Assessment Outcome Form
e) Forward completed assessments, evidence of assessments and completed Assessment Outcome Form to the relevant Student Support Officer for uploading in Student Management System and recording in the learner's academic file.

Qualified Assessors

Dalton College ensures that all trainers/assessors meet the requirements of the Standards and therefore demonstrate that:

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a) They hold the relevant Training and Education (TAE) competencies or are working in collaboration with an assessor who does;
b) That they hold relevant vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered and assessed or are working in collaboration with an assessor who does;
c) They hold an industry currency directly relevant to the training/assessment being undertaken;
d) They are engaged in continuous development of their VET knowledge and skills as well as their industry currency and competence as an assessor.

Authenticity

Where the assessor believes that the evidence collected is not authentic, the assessor is required to check plagiarism online or using a software to authenticate work. If the work is found as not authentic, then Assessor refers the matter to the Academic Manager for further action.

Number of Assessment Attempts

If a learner is unable to provide sufficient evidence during their first attempt at an assessment, the assessor may:

a) Request further evidence from the learner
b) Undertake a second attempt at the assessment, or

If the learner fails to provide sufficient evidence of competency during the second attempt, the learner will be required to undergo additional training or re-enrol in the relevant unit. Only after completion of additional training will the learner be allowed to attempt further unit assessments.

A learner is entitled to appeal or complain about an assessment outcome in accordance with the *Policy and Procedure - Complaints and Appeals.*

Results

The recognised training and assessment approach in the VET sector is competency-based. This means there is an emphasis on what a person can do in the workplace as a result of completing a course of training. The following table identifies the results awarded for VET students at the College:

Result	Code	Description
Competent	C	Awarded to a student who has satisfactorily completed all the elements of the unit of competency to a desirable standard.
Not Yet Competent	NYC	Awarded to a student who has failed to satisfactorily complete all the elements of the unit of competency to a desirable standard.
Credit Transfer	CT	It is related to the credit received by a student for a unit of competency through recognition of their formal learning
Continuing Enrolment	CE	It is related to the ongoing enrolment of the student in the particular unit

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Recognition of Prior Learning	RPL	It is related to the credit received by a student for a unit of competency through recognition of their informal learning
Withdrawn	W	It relates when a student withdraws from ongoing unit of competency before the census date.

Notification of Results

Notification of results for individual assessment will be no longer than 10 working days from the final submission deadline for that assessment. Final results will be held pending only if any fee payments/fines being are yet to be settled by the learner.

Reasonable Adjustments

Assessment tasks may be subject to reasonable adjustment where a student has a specific disability or requires a special need. The reasonable adjustment is carried out in accordance with Dalton College's Access and Equity Policy. Any student who has special needs may be eligible for reasonable adjustment and should speak with the Student Support Officer to receive advice on available services and to complete the required documentation. Reasonable adjustments will only be considered if advised at the time of enrolment and/or if a student's situation changes mid-enrolment and they advise Student Support Officer prior to the assessment item due date.

Assessment Retention

The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) as the National VET Regulator requires all registered training organisations (RTO's) to securely retain all completed assessments for each student for a period of six months from the date on which the judgement of competence was made.

Where it is not possible to retain the student's actual work (i.e. practical assessments), an Assessor's completed marking guide, criteria and observation checklist for each student should be retained as evidence. In accordance with ASQA standards, Dalton College retains all completed assessment items for a period of SIX (6) months.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

This procedure provides a framework for the assessment and recognition of skill and knowledge obtained by an applicant through previous or current training, work experience and/or life experiences.

The underlying principle of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is that no applicant should be required to undertake a unit of study in a training session for which they are able to currently demonstrate satisfactory achievement of the required competency standard for entry into, and/or partial or total completion of a qualification.

General Information for Applicants

All prospective and enrolling applicants must be informed of the opportunity to apply for RPL. Applicants can apply for RPL for one or more Units of Competency during the time of enrolment or any time prior to the day of training commencing for the unit.

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The information provided to learners will include an RPL Application including information as to how to complete and submit an RPL application.

RPL is awarded for a total unit of competency (no partial RPL of a unit will be awarded), however this information will be forwarded to the relevant trainer/assessor who may modify the assessment tools in conjunction with the Academic Manager to enable recognition of partial competency.

RPL Application

If a potential or new learner wishes to apply for RPL they must complete the 'RPL Application Kit' document with the required information (such as detailed records of their experience, employment, training, etc., which may be relevant).

The 'RPL Application Kit' will specify the units to be completed and learners will be required to identify how they address the elements and performance criteria of each unit included in the RPL application. Each applicant will be required to obtain at least two industry referees (workplace reports) to certify that the applicant has current demonstrated competency.

Assessment Process

The Academic Manager ensures that all RPL assessments undertaken are completed and recorded appropriately by Assessors. RPL Application process consists of:

- Self-evaluation completed by applicant
- Interview with assessor
- Demonstration/observation of tasks
- Third Party Reports and Further Evidence

NB: All original documents such as certificates, workplace reports, etc., should be copied after being sighted by the Assessor/Academic Manager/Compliance Manager. The copy is signed with a date, signature, and printed name of the person sighted. Originals are returned to the applicant. The copies are scanned and filed electronically then archived for seven years after the duration of the qualification.

1) Self Evaluation

The self-evaluation provides an opportunity for the applicant to self-determine their level of experience and knowledge in the relevant industry. It also provides an overview of the level of the applicant's background experience to assist the Assessor to determine if the applicant is likely to be a successful applicant for RPL. It is also an important first step in identifying where the applicant may have gaps in training skills and knowledge.

2) Interview

If, according to the information provided by the self-evaluation, the applicant demonstrates potential for recognition of prior learning, the next stage involves undergoing further evidence gathering via an interview. The purpose of the interview step is to determine that the applicant is in fact entitled to skip

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the training process and is ready to be assessed. The interview outcomes are documented within the RPL Application by the nominated Assessor.

3) Demonstration

If the interview demonstrates the applicant's verbal and theoretical knowledge to a sufficient standard, the next stage is to observe and assess the applicant's performance in practice, through the observation of practical tasks performed either in the workplace or simulated workplace environment.

The RPL Application provides practical tasks for the applicant to demonstrate the application of skills and knowledge for each unit or combined units of competency. The RPL Application contains observation checklists for the Assessor to record the outcomes practical assessment.

4) Third Party Reports and Further Evidence

To complement the record of steps 1-3, the applicant provides further documentary evidence to support their competency profile as demonstrated in the prior stages of assessment. The types of documentary evidence that are required to further support the applicant's claim to competency include third-party verification reports.

The RPL Assessor may also require further evidence such as job logs, or photographs of work undertaken.

Assessment Outcome

The RPL Assessor forwards the completed RPL Application Kit to the Academic Manager and updates the applicant's enrolment details online by placing "RPL" against units of competency awarded.

The Academic Manager communicates the outcome of the assessment in writing to the applicant within 10 business days of the completion of the assessment. International students are also advised that receiving credit or RPL will reduce their study load and may affect their course duration. International students need to confirm that they wish to proceed with the credit or RPL before a new Certificate of Enrolment is issued.

Where RPL is 'Not Granted' for a unit of competency applicants are advised in writing of the reason for refusal (where applicable) and encouraged to enrol into the unit for the next training course. Applicants are advised of their right to appeal.

Appeals

Where the applicant disagrees with the outcome of the Application, they should first try to resolve the matter informally with the Assessor who is obligated to provide feedback on the skill and knowledge gap for the unit.

Where the outcome remains unresolved following informal discussions, the applicant may appeal by using the methods outlined in the *Policy and Procedure - Complaints and Appeals.*

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Version Control:

Version	Date	Superseded by (Date)	Comments
1.0	August 2015	Version 1.1 (June 2016)	Minor Changes
1.1	June 2016	Version 1.2 (November 2016)	Minor Changes
1.2	November 2016	Version 2.0 (March 2017)	Added principles of assessment, rules of evidence, Authenticity
2.0	March 2017	Version 2.1 (January 2018)	Minor Changes

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