Validation Policy

Policy Statement

Meerilinga Training College (MTC) recognises the value and importance of training and assessment that meets standards that result in gaining nationally recognised qualifications or statement of attainments. We have a strong commitment to ensuring we offer training and assessment that meets or exceeds industry standards, complies with regulations, and produces desired results for our learners.

As a part of our commitment to quality and compliance, systematic validation is conducted of all training products on MTC's scope of registration to ensure that assessment practices are reflective of industry practices and ensure that learners achieve the relevant skills and knowledge to succeed in the workplace.

Policy Purpose

This policy provides guidance and outlines the planning and management of the systematic validation of assessments to ensure quality assessment is conducted in relation to assessment tools and processes at MTC.

Our validation system ensures that all training and assessment products comply with the requirements of the relevant training package and the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) 2015* which state:

Standard 1. The RTO's training and assessment strategies and practices are responsive to industry and learner needs and meet the requirements of training packages and VET accredited courses.

Assessment

1.8 The RTO 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.*

1.9. The RTO implements a plan for ongoing systematic validation of assessment practices and judgements that includes for each training product on the RTO's scope of registration:

- *a) when assessment validation will occur.*
- *b) which training products will be the focus of the validation.*
- *c) who will lead and participate in validation activities, and*
- *d) how the outcomes of these activities will be documented and acted upon.*

*1.10 For the purposes of Clause **Error! Reference source not found.**, each training p roduct is validated at least once every five years, with at least 50% of products validated within the first three years of each five year cycle, taking into account the relative risks of all of the training products on the RTO's scope of registration, including those risks identified by the VET Regulator.*

1.11 For the purposes of Clause 1.9, systematic validation of an RTO's assessment practices and judgements is undertaken by one or more persons who are not directly involved in the particular instance of delivery and assessment of the training product being validated, and who collectively have:

- *(i) vocational competencies and current industry skills relevant to the assessment being validated.*
- *(ii) current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning, and*
- *(iii) the training and assessment credential specified in Item 2, or Item 5 of Schedule 1.*

Industry experts may be involved in validation to ensure there is the combination of expertise set out above.

Scope

This policy applies to all nationally recognised qualifications on Meerilinga's scope of delivery and assessment.

Exclusions

Policy Review

Biennially or from time to time the organisation may make changes to this policy to improve the effectiveness of its operation and customer service.

Policy Reviewed	**4 April 2024**	**By**	**Advisor Policy and Compliance**
Approved By	**Chief Executive Officer**		
Previous Review	**30 January 2024**		

Implementation

Assessment validation is undertaken across all stages of the assessment process of design, the application of evidence-gathering tools, and the assessment judgement.

The validity of the assessment system design process is addressed under Clause 1.8 and applies to all assessment resources. Validation of the application of the assessment system is addressed through Clauses 1.9 - 1.11 and is conducted with a sample of assessments.

The overall outcome of assessment validation is to ensure:

- Assessments are valid and meet the training package or accredited course requirements.
- The principles of **fairness, flexibility, validity and reliability** are met.
- The evidence used to make a decision about competence is **valid, sufficient, authentic and current.**
- Assessors are familiar with the outcomes being assessed.
- Assessors reach accurate and consistent decisions that inform assessment outcomes, and
- Potential improvements to assessment practices are identified and acted upon.

In the final analysis, assessment validation should answer the question:
'Do the assessment practices meet the requirements of the training package and the Standards for RTOs and are assessment judgements being consistently applied so that certification issued is accurate and credible?'

In order to achieve the above, MTC implements two main processes:

1. **Pre-assessment validation** with the purpose to:
   - Ensure that the designed assessment tools meet all the relevant standards and unit of competency requirements
   - Ensure the Principles of Assessment (Clause 1.8) are built into the design and development process and be pre-planned and prepared by the assessor
   - Meet all the rules of evidence
   - Provide clear instructions for evidence gatherers and candidates, and
   - Provide transparent and defensible information to MTC trainers and assessors in relation to our competency decisions and awarding of nationally recognised qualifications and/or statements of attainment

2. **Post-assessment validation** with the purpose to ensure:
   - The actual gathering of assessment evidence occurred according to the Rules of Evidence (Clause 1.8) and
   - Assessment judgements are consistently applied and adhere to the Principles of Assessment (Clause 1.8).

MTC will ensure that each assessment item for each unit of competency is validated at least once in each five (5) year cycle. Moreover, MTC will ensure that at least 50% of the units of competency offered in its training products will be validated in the first three (3) years of that five (5) year cycle outlined in Standard 1.10.

Any new assessment tools that are developed internally or purchased externally, due to either Training Package updates or continuous improvement processes, must be validated prior to being used for the first time and after the first assessments have taken place.

In order to meet these goals, MTC has developed the following **principles and processes to govern the pre-assessment and post assessment validation of its training products and assessment tools.**

1. The validation process can be undertaken by a team or individual approach.
    a. If a team approach is used, the assessors who are directly involved in the assessments being validated may participate in the process, however they cannot contribute to meeting the team requirements of Clause 1.11.
    b. If an individual approach is used, validation must be undertaken by a person or persons other than the assessors directly involved in the particular instance of delivery and assessment being validated.
    c. In both the team and individual cases, the validator/s has/have to hold or collectively have:
        - Vocational competencies and current industry skills relevant to the assessment being validated;
        - Current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning; and
        - A Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE40110/TAE40116), or the Assessor Skill Set (TAESS00001 or its successor).
    d. Industry experts may be involved in validation to ensure there is the combination of the above expertise.

2. An assessment validation plan and schedule is developed and maintained.

    In determining the actual number and timing of units and assessment tools to be validated, MTC uses:

    I. A risk analysis approach considering the complexity of the qualification, the introduction of new training packages and the risks associated with each units of competency. If the risk analysis highlights the presence of a number of risk factors that may compromise the quality of the assessment, or validations indicate that assessment processes are not valid then more units will be validated; and

    II. A sampling approach which should consider the following key factors in deciding on a validation sample:
        - Student enrolment numbers in each training product
        - Scope of delivery
        - Feedback from clients, trainers and students
        - Complaints received – formal or informal
        - Completion rates
        - Risk level of a training product
        - Assessment mode (Simulation, workplace, RPL)
        - Introduction of new assessment activities/ tools
        - Introduction of new training products
        - New assessors
        - Third party arrangements, and
        - Previous issues or problems identified from validations.

3. A mapping document (part of the Training & Assessment Plan) where assessment tools are mapped to the specific requirements of the unit of competency will always be used as key evidence that the pre-assessment validity of the assessment tools were checked.

4. Accountabilities and Responsibilities:
    1. The CEO is overall accountable for the compliance to standards and the validation policy as well as transfer of best practices.
    2. The Advisor MTC is overall accountable for the validation plan and schedule of the college and also fulfills an internal auditor role of the validation processes.
    3. The Advisor MTC is also responsible to ensure the following:
        I. The schedule of validations,
        II. Managing the validation process of all units within the courses, and
        III. Adherence to this policy and best practices.
    4. Advisor MTC/appointed validation team leads are responsible for:
        I. Organising the date, time, team members and venue for a specific validation session.
        II. Facilitate the validation process according to best practices and internal procedures.
        III. Keep record of the validation meeting's findings and recommendations on the relevant form (Pre or Post-Assessment Validation Meeting Record) and ensure all signatures are obtained.
        IV. Follow up to ensure all identified actions or changes to training/assessment documents are made.
    5. Trainers/developers of assessment tools or assessors are responsible for:
        I. Preparing all relevant training and assessment material to be submitted to the Head of Department/Validation team lead at least 3 working days prior to the targeted date of validation activity.
        II. Updating any changes to training material/assessment tools based on the feedback from the minutes of validation meeting.

The monitoring of the validity of the application of assessment tools should be ongoing through the assessment process, not just at the end. Indications of problems may be through learner feedback, appeals and complaints. This allows modifications to the evidence-gathering process before final assessment judgements are made. Identifying problems at an early stage will also allow support or training to be provided to evidence-gatherers.