

Transcript for Podcast: facilities, resources, and equipment

Mel: Welcome to TAC Talks. My name is Mel Hartley from the Training Accreditation Council or TAC, and today we're diving into the world of vocational education and training, specifically focusing on the facilities, resources, and equipment that make it all possible.

Joining me today is Russell Docking, an expert in vocational education and training. Welcome, Russell!

Russell: Thank you, Mel. It's great to be here.

Me: Before we go further, we wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands we are recording on, the Whadjuk Noongar people and recognise their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

Mel: Let's start with the Registration Standards 2025. These new Standards are designed to ensure high-quality outcomes for students and employers. Russell, can you tell us more about these Standards and their significance?

Russell: Absolutely, Mel. The 2025 Standards place a strong emphasis on quality outcomes, providing greater clarity and are designed to allow more flexibility and innovation in training delivery. The 2025 Standards are divided into three main components: the Outcome Standards, Compliance Standards, and the Credential Policy.

Mel: I understand that the 2025 Standards specifically mention facilities, resources, and equipment?

Russell: That's right, Outcome Standard 1.8, has a focus on ensuring that facilities, resources, and equipment for each training product are fit-for-purpose, safe, accessible, and sufficient. This Outcome Standard is crucial because it reminds us that we are responsible for the welfare of our students and that our students are immersed in an environment of our making, an environment consisting of resources, facilities and equipment that will enable them to learn and to achieve the industry standards set in the training product.

Mel: Why are facilities, resources, and equipment so crucial in vocational education and training?

Russell: In vocational education and training, or VET, the ultimate goal is to prepare students to function effectively in the workplace. This means that the facilities, resources, and equipment used in training must reflect real workplace conditions. They need to be fit-for-purpose, safe, accessible, and sufficient to ensure that students gain the competencies required by industry standards.

Mel: That makes sense. Can you explain what "fit-for-purpose" means in this context?

Russell: Absolutely. "Fit-for-purpose" means that the training program, learning resources, materials/tools and equipment are well suited to achieving the intended learning outcomes as relevant to the training product, and ensures that students are equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and competencies required to transition into the workplace. For example, if the training involves operating machinery, the equipment must be the same or

very similar to what is used in the industry. This ensures that students are learning in an environment that closely mirrors the real world of work.

Mel: Interesting. How do RTOs, ensure that their facilities, resources, and equipment meet the 2025 Standards?

Russell: Outcome Standard 1.8 has a set of requirements RTOs will need to demonstrate compliance with. First, RTOs will need demonstrate how they identify the necessary facilities, resources, and equipment required to deliver the training product. This will mean that RTOs will need to keep a close eye on the industries they serve, so that they can see what resources, facilities and equipment are used in the working world. Secondly, the RTO will need to determine which of these resources, facilities and equipment it can provide, and what will need to be provided by third parties. Thirdly, RTOs must demonstrate how they ensure that these facilities, resources, and equipment are suitable and safe for use by students and that students have access to everything they need for their training and assessment. Finally, RTOs must have documented strategies and processes in place to identify and manage risks associated with students using these facilities, resources, and equipment during work-integrated learning, work placements, or other community-based learning as part of their training.

Mel: Let's unpack this a bit. Are there any specific requirements for different units of competency?

Russell: Yes, each unit of competency has specific requirements which are listed in the associated Training Package and its Companion Volume. A unit of competency outlines the facilities, resources and equipment required for training to ensure learners can develop and demonstrate the necessary skills effectively. These requirements are specified in the Assessment Conditions section of the unit. RTOs must ensure that their facilities, resources, and equipment align with these requirements to provide effective training and assessment.

Mel: What about safety and accessibility? How do RTOs manage these aspects?

Russell: Safety and accessibility are paramount. RTOs must ensure that all facilities, resources, and equipment are safe for use and accessible to all students. They also need to have documented strategies to manage any risks associated with using these facilities and equipment, especially when students are off-site.

Mel: That's very thorough. Can you give us an example of how an RTO might ensure their equipment is fit-for-purpose?

Russell: Sure. Let's say an RTO is offering a course in automotive mechanics. They would need to ensure that their workshop has the same types of tools and diagnostic equipment that students will encounter in a real automotive workshop. This might involve regular consultations with industry partners to keep the equipment up-to-date and reflective of current industry standards.

Mel: What role do third parties play in providing facilities, resources, and equipment?

Russell: Third parties can provide additional facilities, resources, and equipment that the RTO might not have. However, the RTO is responsible for ensuring that these third-party provisions are fit-for-purpose, safe, accessible, and sufficient. This often involves using checklists and regular monitoring to maintain compliance.

Mel: It sounds like a collaborative effort. How do RTOs manage the risks associated with using third-party facilities and equipment?

Russell: RTOs need to have documented strategies in place to manage these risks. This includes ensuring third parties are meeting the 2025 Standards and are regularly monitoring their compliance. For example, if students are doing a work placement at a third-party site, the RTO must ensure that the site provides a safe and suitable learning environment.

Mel: Thank you Russell, for sharing your insights on this important topic. It's clear that a lot goes into ensuring that vocational education and training is effective and aligned with industry standards.

Russell: My pleasure, Mel. It's crucial work that ultimately benefits both students and the industries they will join.

Mel: Thank you for listening to this TAC Talk on facilities, resources, and equipment. Additional information on this topic is available in the Fact Sheet facilities, resources, and equipment and also under Outcome Standard 1.8 in the Online Guidance Hub. Both of these resources are available on the TAC website wa.gov.au/tac