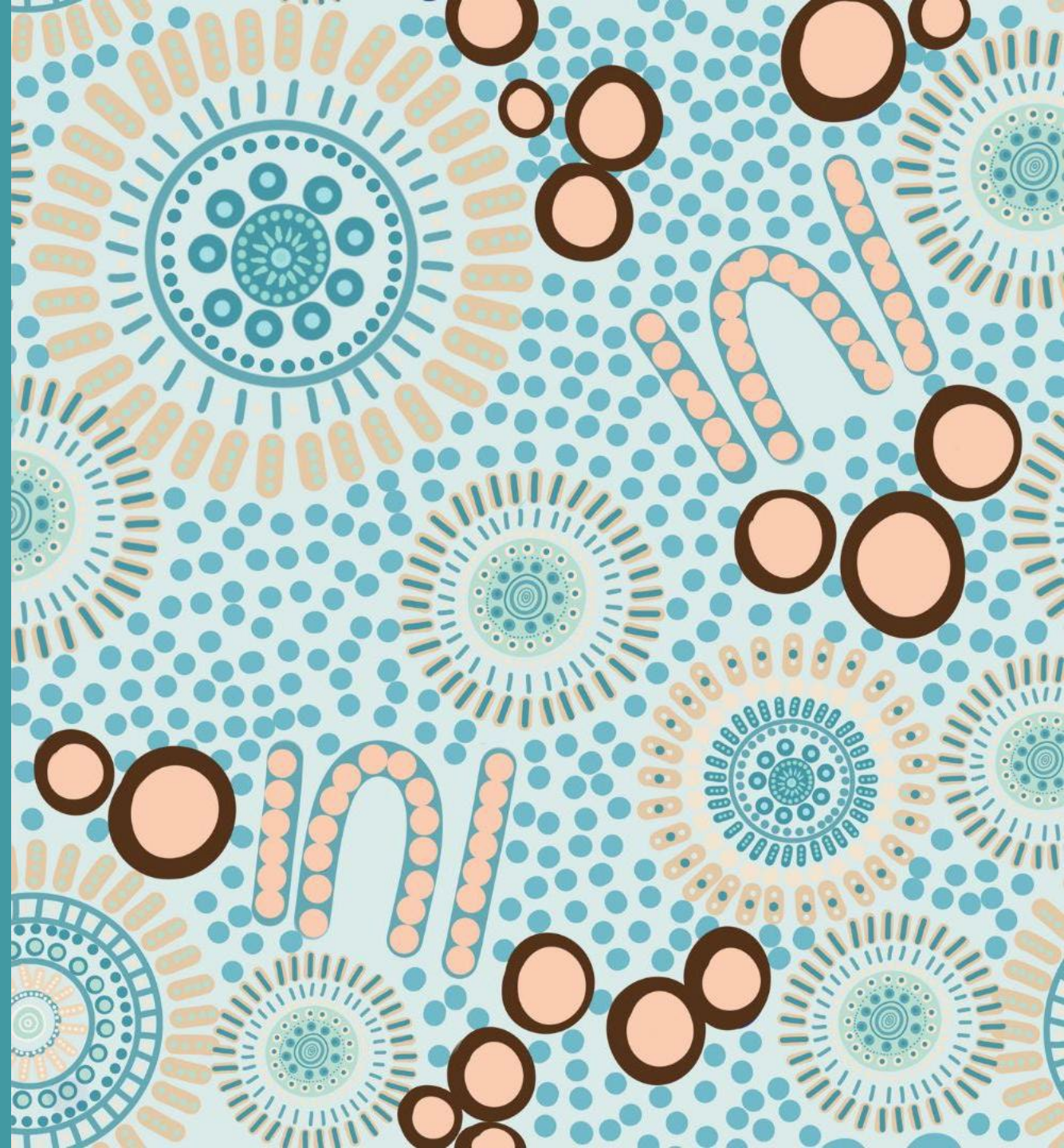# Assessment

Dr Russell Docking

We wish to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands we meet on today, 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 peoples.

artwork by Bigi Nagala

What will be discussed

- The importance of high-quality assessment

- Pre-validation and mapping of assessment tools

- Authenticity of assessment evidence

- Assessment validation practices

- Recognition of Prior Learning

Questions through Menti:
Menti.com | Code **1928 6511**

The importance of high-quality assessment

Decisions made by VET assessors leading to VET certification are of profound significance for:

- The students and their future careers;
- The future employers of these students;
- The productivity and safety of their workplaces;
- The quality of products for consumers and community;
- The reputation of the assessors and their RTOs; and
- The credibility of the VET sector.

Competency-based assessment

- The core business of all RTOs is the certification of industry-relevant **competencies** of individual candidates.

- This certification must be based on a judgement of competency made by a **qualified assessor**.

- This **judgement** must be **valid, reliable, fair and flexible**.

- This judgement must be based upon **evidence gathered through assessment tools** that are **valid, sufficient, current and authentic**.

- The RTO and the assessor are accountable for the accuracy of these judgements … any of the above might be challenged in an appeal … and all of the above are the subject of validation.

Quality criteria for assessment

1. Consistent with the training product (1.3)
2. Suitable and sufficient resources and time (1.1, 1.8)
3. Relevant to industry (1.2)
4. Responsive to individual needs (1.4)
5. Comply with the Principles of Assessment (1.4)
6. Comply with the Rules of evidence (1.4)
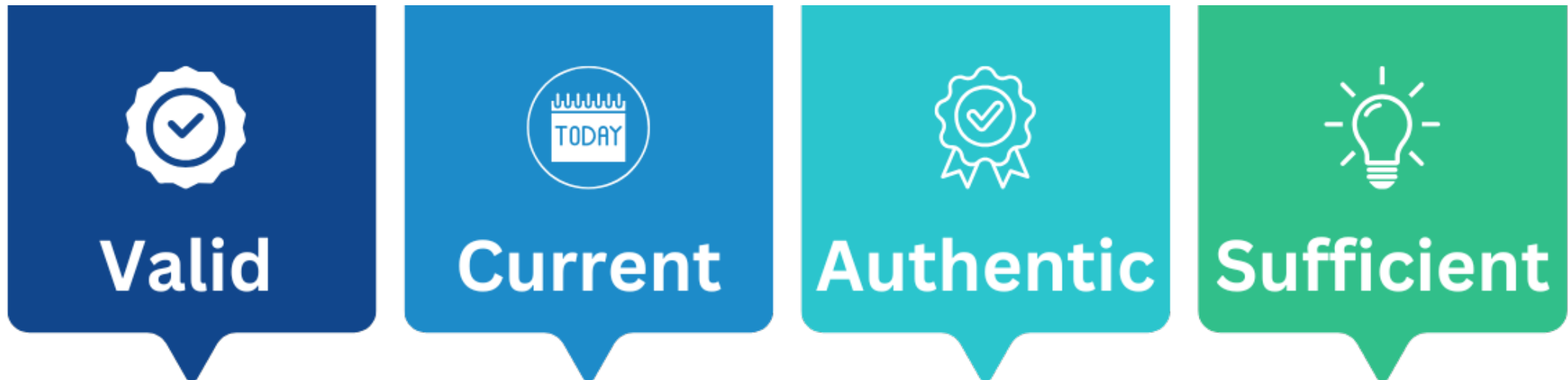7. Administered by credentialled assessors (3.2)

Quality criteria for the assessment judgement

The Principles of Assessment (1.4)

Quality criteria for evidence used in the assessment judgement

The Rules of Evidence (1.4)

Application of the quality criteria to each of our topics in this webinar…

- **Mapping:** assists with the development or purchase of assessment tools that meet the quality requirements;

- **Pre-validation:** is used to verify that the quality requirements are met by the assessment tools before they are used;

- **Authenticity:** is one of the quality requirements;

- **Validation:** is used to verify that the quality requirements are met when the assessment tools are used; and

- **Recognition of Prior Learning:** must meet all these quality requirements.

Pre-validation: what the Standards say ...

1.3 The assessment system is fit-for-purpose and consistent with the training product.

> *(a) the assessment [process for collecting evidence] is consistent with the requirements of the unit of competency.*

> *(b) the assessment tools are reviewed prior to use to ensure that the assessment [process for collecting evidence] is consistent with the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence.*

> *(c) the outcomes of the review inform changes to the assessment tools.*

Applies to RTO–made and purchased assessment tools, and to RPL (1.6)

A mapping matrix table: design and validation

Unit requirement	Knowledge test	Observation 1	Observation 2	Validation
Element 1				
PC 1.1		Obs 1	Obs 1	
PC 1.2	Q6			
PC 1.4		Obs 3		
Foundation skills				
FS 1		Obs 3 & 6	Obs 3 & 6	
Performance Evidence				
PE 1		Obs 7	Obs 10	
Knowledge Evidence				
KE 1	Q1 & Q2			
KE 2	Q3		Obs 6	

Quality checks for mapping

1. All unit requirements are correctly listed in the LH column.

2. All knowledge evidence requirements are evidenced by one or more questions.

3. The knowledge test is not used to assess performance or skills

4. All knowledge questions are mapped to knowledge evidence items.

5. The knowledge questions and answers actually relate to the knowledge evidence item.

6. All performance requirements are evidenced by one or more observations.

Quality checks for mapping

7. Observations are not used to infer knowledge.
8. All observations are mapped to performance requirements.
9. The observation items and tasks actually reflect the performance requirements.
10. The number and variety of observations meet performance evidence requirements.
11. Foundation skills are assessed at last once.
12. All Performance Evidence requirements are met.
13. All assessment conditions are met.

Mapping to support pre-validation

Unit requirement	Knowledge test	Observation 1	Observation 2	Validation
Element 1				
PC 1.1		Obs 1	Obs 1	✔
PC 1.2	Q6			✘
PC 1.4		Obs 3		✘
Foundation skills				
FS 1		Obs 3 & 6	Obs 3 & 6	?
Performance Evidence				
PE 1		Obs 7	Obs 10	?
Knowledge Evidence				
KE 1	Q1 & Q2			✔
KE 2	Q3		Obs 6	✘

Mapping to support pre-validation

Unit requirement	Knowledge test	Observation 1	Observation 2	Validation
Element 1				
PC 1.1		Obs 1	Obs 1	✔
PC 1.2		Obs 2	Obs 2	✔
PC 1.3		Obs 3	Obs 3	✔
Foundation skills				
FS 1		Obs 3 & 6		✔
Performance Evidence				
PE 1		Obs 7	Obs 10	✔
Knowledge Evidence				
KE 1	Q1 & Q2			✔
KE 2	Q3			✔

More criteria for pre-validation …

14. The clarity of instructions for students.

15. The clarity of instructions for evidence-gatherers.

16. The provision of marking guide(s).

17. The clarity of instructions for judgement.

18. The relevance of tasks and knowledge to industry practices.

19. The strength of authentication measures.

20. Responsiveness to student needs.

21. The credential requirements set for assessors.

A mapping matrix table: a student's record

Unit requirement	Knowledge test	Observation 1	Observation 2	
Element 1				
PC 1.1		Obs 1 ✓	Obs 1 ✓	
PC 1.2		Obs 2 ✓	Obs 2 ✓	
PC 1.3		Obs 3 ✓	Obs 3 ✓	
Foundation skills				
FS 1		Obs 3 ✓ & 6 ✗	*Obs 3 ✓ & 6 ✓*	
Performance Evidence				
PE 1		Obs 7 ✓	Obs 10 ✗	
Knowledge Evidence				
KE 1	Q1 ✓ & Q2 ✓			
KE 2	Q3 ✓			

A mapping matrix table: competency judgement

Unit requirement	Knowledge test	Observation 1	Observation 2	Judgment
Element 1				✓
PC 1.1		Obs 1 ✓	Obs 1 ✓	✓
PC 1.2		Obs 2 ✓	Obs 2 ✓	✓
PC 1.3		Obs 3 ✓	Obs 3 ✓	✓
Foundation skills				
FS 1		Obs 3 ✓ & 6 ✗	*Obs 3 ✓ & 6 ✓*	✓
Performance Evidence				
PE 1		Obs 7 ✓	Obs 10 ✗	✗
Knowledge Evidence				
KE 1	Q1 ✓ & Q2 ✓			✓
KE 2	Q3 ✓			✓

Bonus Offer!   Added value for mapping ...

- Targeting supplementary learning and assessment **Outcome Standard 1.1**

- Incorporating serendipitous evidence (fairness and flexibility)

- Incorporating evidence gathered through work placements **Outcome Standard 1.1**

- Enabling a unit-based assessment judgement for each unit assessed in a cluster (validity, fairness, flexibility, reliability)

- Meeting assessment record requirements **Compliance Requirement 10**

- Assisting with assessment appeals **Outcome Standard 2.8**

- Mapping learning resources **Outcome Standard 1.1**

- Mapping evidence gathered for RPL **Outcome Standard 1.6**

- Making valid changes for reasonable adjustments **Outcome Standard 2.4**

- Mapping evidence for trainer/assessor equivalence **Outcome Standard 3.3**

Authenticity: Is this the student's own work?

1.4 authenticity – the assessor is assured that a VET student's assessment evidence is the original and genuine work of that VET student.

Examples of assessment fraud include:

- Plagiarism
- Collusion
- Masquerade
- Surrogacy
- Fabrication
- Cheat sheets

Authenticity: Is this the student's own work?

Assessment strategies that are a risk to authenticity include:

- Unsupervised assessment tasks
- On-line assessment tasks
- Video and/or audio observation
- Group activities
- Shared answers
- Purchased assignments
- Access to Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Open book assessments

Authenticity: How can you detect fraud?

There are a number of clues that a student's work may be fraudulent, such as:

- Inconsistency of performance on similar units
- Different writing style and 'voice'
- Variability of performance within a unit over a period of time
- Discrepancy between knowledge and skills performance
- Discrepancy between training venues and workplace performan
- Digital detection systems (monitoring and matching)

Prevention is better than detection

Authenticity: Is this the student's own work?

Some common approaches to support authenticity include:

- Supervised assessment tasks with identity check
- Observed assessment tasks
- Warnings and penalties for assessment fraud
- Digital detection systems (monitoring and matching)
- Warnings against assessment fraud
- Student signed declaration

Authenticity: Is this the student's own work?

Key strategies to ensure authenticity are:

- Control the assessment environment and observe assessment tasks

  or

- Authenticate student work by re-assessing a sample by observing assessment tasks in a controlled assessment environment.

These observers can be trusted persons who are confirming authenticity but are not necessarily judging performance.

Assessment validation

1.5 The assessment system is quality assured by appropriately skilled and credentialled persons through a regular process of validating assessment practices and judgements.
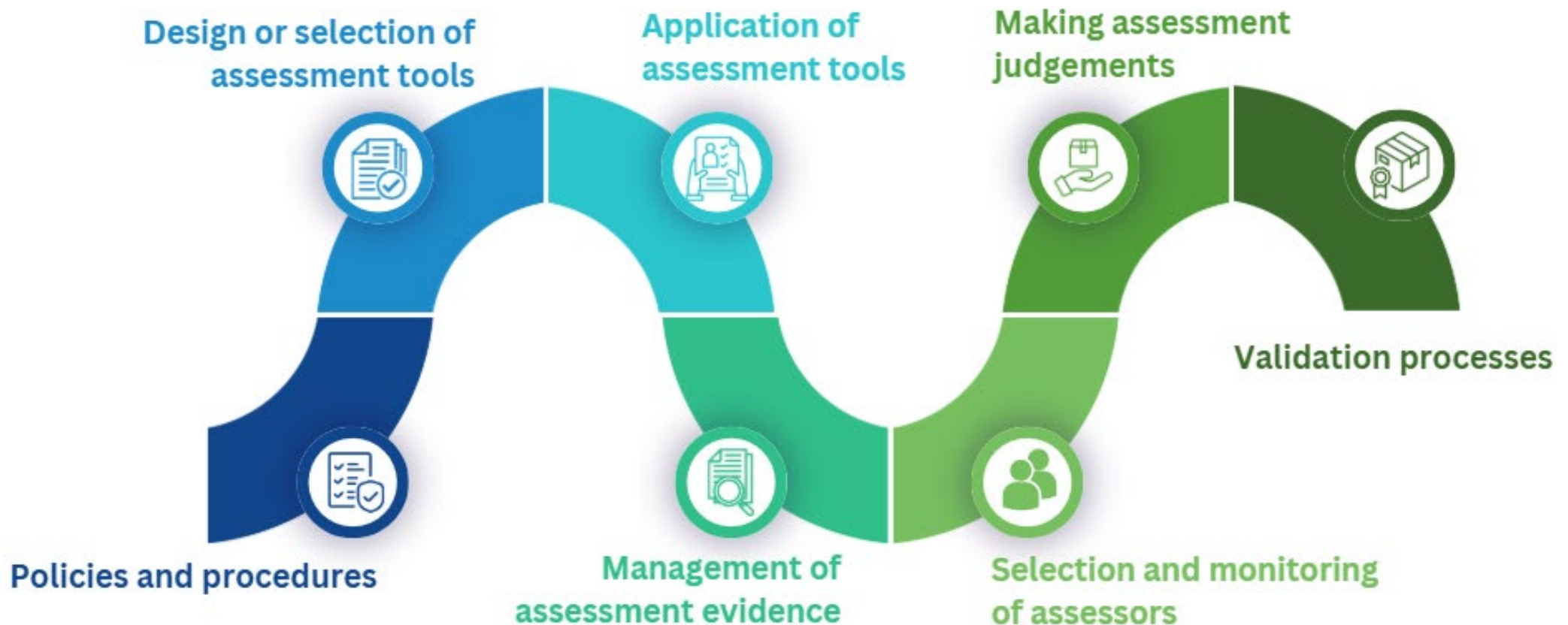
Assessment validation

Assessment validation should address the seven criteria listed earlier:

1. Consistency with the training product
2. Meet the Principles of Assessment
3. Meet the Rules of evidence
4. Sufficient resources and time
5. Relevant to industry
6. Responsive to individual needs
7. Credentialled assessors

Assessment validation protocols

- Criteria for validation
- Training products to be validated
- Frequency of validation
- Risk and sample size:
  - product (intrinsic risk, assessable)
  - assessment mode, (accessibility, authenticity)
  - feedback (students, trainers, assessors, industry, audits)
- Personnel to be involved in the validation
- Outcomes and action

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning means an assessment process … to determine the extent to which the individual meets requirements specified in the training product.

Outcome 1.6 explains that the RTO must be able to demonstrate decisions relating to recognition of prior learning are…

- *based on evidence of prior skills, learning and experience, and are undertaken in accordance with the organisation's assessment system*

- *documented and decided in a way that is fair, transparent, consistent amongst VET students, and maintains the integrity of the training product.*

RPL assessments must meet the same standards as other assessments.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

RPL assessment processes must be fit for purpose and consistent with the training product and are reviewed prior to use (1.3)

RPL assessment processes must be conducted in a way that is fair and appropriate and enables accurate assessment judgement of VET student competency including the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence (1.4)

RPL assessment processes must be quality assured through a regular process of validating RPL assessment practices and judgements (1.5)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Authenticity | **Currency** | **Validity of evidence** | **Sufficiency** | **Reliability** | **Validity of judgement**

All of these must be met by the RPL assessment process

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Pre-assess the evidence — 1

Conduct the knowledge assessment — 2

Conduct a skills assessment — 3

Use the evidence from past learning and experience — 4

References and Resources

- The Registration Standards 2025

- Online Guidance Hub

Questions

Feedback

TAC Education Program - Assessment - 8 September 2025

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