

# ASSESSMENT POLICY

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## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ensure that all trainers and all students and potential students are provided with information about the assessment process.
- set out the principles that underpin the approach to assessment.
- provides a framework for the application and management of effective assessment practices. Under the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Quality Framework, assessments are competency based and designed to determine whether a student can demonstrate the targeted competencies that result in the judgement of a competent result.
- provides a framework for reviewing the assessment process and ensuring the suitability and effectiveness of assessment tools.
- provides a framework for reviewing the quality and efficacy of assessment decisions based on a statistically calculated sample.
- ensure that employees, facilities, equipment, and training and assessment resources/materials align with the requirements set forth in the training package and the assessment criteria outlined in the pertinent Training and Assessment Strategy.

## Scope

The policy applies to all students enrolled in, and all staff involved in, the delivery of VET accredited qualifications and units offered by the College.

## Policy

Assessment within each Learning Unit encompasses a diverse array of methods aimed at gathering evidence to determine whether a student can meet the workplace standards outlined in a Training Package or Accredited Course.

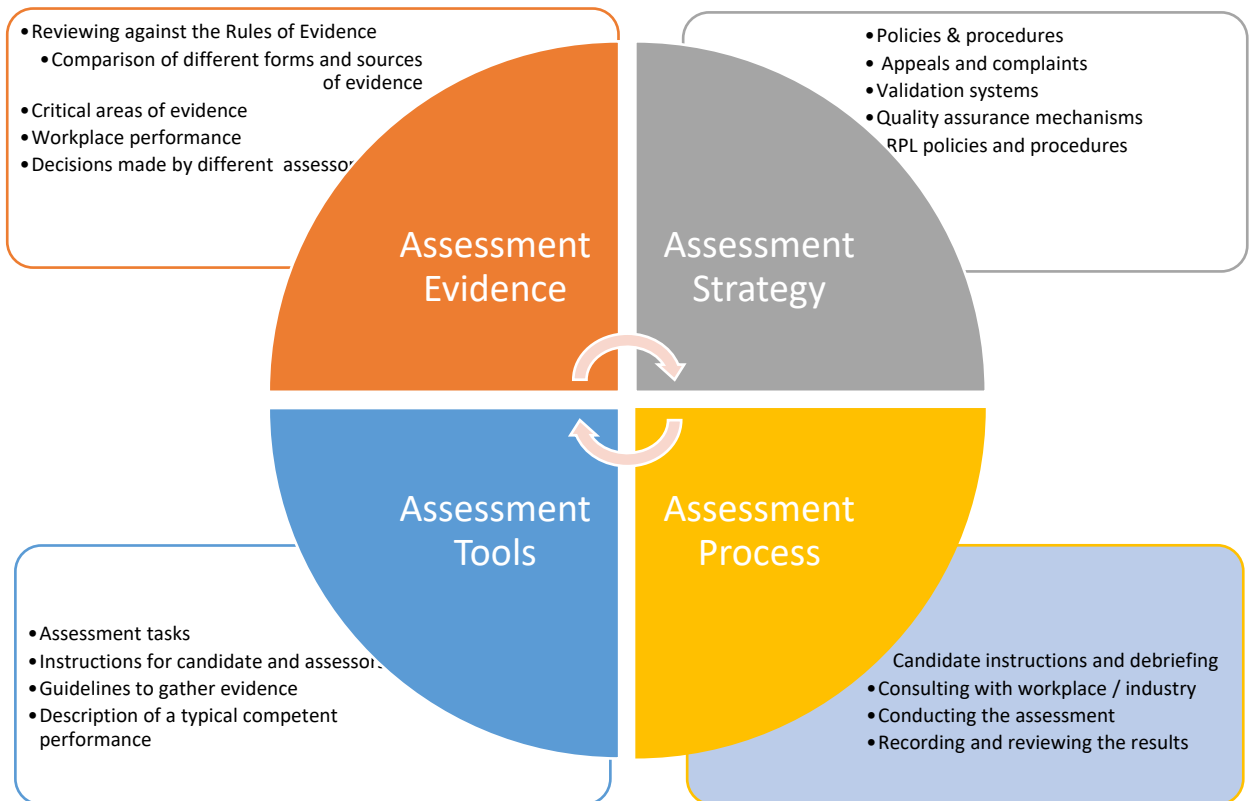
These methods may encompass practical demonstrations, direct questioning, oral and/or written reports, assignments, role plays, case study analysis, integrated activities, written tests/quizzes, and submission of a portfolio of work. The selection of assessment methods aligns with the qualification and complies with the stipulations set forth in the relevant Training Package or Accredited Course.

Upon the commencement of each Learning Unit, students receive a comprehensive outline detailing the embedded units of competency, topics to be covered, and the assessment requirements and methods.

To attain a Certificate or Diploma, students must satisfactorily fulfill all requirements outlined in the training product. Those who complete fewer than all the required units within a qualification will receive a Statement of Attainment, documenting their achievements during their enrolment.

## The College's Quality Assessment System

An overview of the Kiama Community College's (KCC's) Quality Assessment System is represented in the figure below.



Overview of KCC's Quality Assessment system

### The Assessment Strategy

The Assessment Strategy in KCC is the controlled and ordered process designed to ensure assessment decisions are valid, reliable, flexible and fair. This may include:

- Policy, procedures e.g. assessor recruitment, partnership arrangements, RPL, appeals
- Relevant forms, resources, recording systems
- And review mechanisms such as validation

### The Assessment Process

The Assessment Process are steps in the planning, conduct and review of the assessment, and may include:

- Employer / supervisor involvement
- Flexibility of the process
- Location of assessments
- Methods to gather and type of evidence
- Roles and responsibilities within the process

- Recording and reporting processes
- Appeals process

### The Assessment Tools

The Assessment Tools are used in the planning, conducting and reviewing of assessments and include such things as:

- Resources used by the candidate
- Resources used by the assessor
- Resources used by a third party

### The Assessment Evidence

The Assessment Evidence – it is critical to make consistent judgement that contributes to the final assessment outcome and the Rules of Evidence are key to this process.

Critical to the quality of the assessment system are the assessors. Their qualifications, experience, and currency are vital to this process.

### The Assessment Standards

Assessment tools and instruments are crafted and developed to ensure alignment with the principles of assessment, including fairness, flexibility, validity, and reliability.

#### Principles of Assessment

Fairness:

- a. KCC offers Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and acknowledges credit for previously acquired units before or during training commencement.
- b. Necessary reasonable adjustments are implemented in the Training and Assessment delivery to accommodate learners' needs.
- c. Consideration of learners' needs is integrated into the assessment process with appropriate adjustments made, ensuring the integrity of the assessment process.
- d. Full disclosure of the assessment process, including instructions and performance expectations, is provided to learners before assessment.
- e. If a learner cannot complete required tasks at the specified level, the Trainer/Assessor evaluates whether additional training is needed before reassessment.
- f. Course Coordinators ensure a robust enrolment process, identifying learners' needs through a pre-training review to prevent enrolment in a qualification beyond their capabilities.
- g. KCC has an outlined appeals process, enabling students to challenge assessment decisions through process outlined in the Assessment Appeals policy document and to have it reviewed objectively.

Flexibility:

- a. RPL and recognition of credit for previously attained units are made available to learners during enrolment or before training commencement.

- b. Recognition that learners may have already demonstrated certain aspects of a unit through alternative means, exempting them from reassessment in those areas if skills or knowledge remain current.
- c. KCC employs a variety of assessment methods to ensure validity and recognises that learners can demonstrate competence in diverse ways.

Validity:

- a. Assessment requires learners to demonstrate skills and knowledge across various relevant contexts and environments.
- b. Assessment methods are diverse to demonstrate practical application of skills and knowledge.
- c. KCC ensures alignment between assessment instruments/tasks and requirements, making modifications as needed.

Reliability:

- a. KCC conducts assessment moderation to maintain consistent decisions across learners and assessors in identical units/modules.
- b. Validation procedures ensure uniform decisions for evidence presented to different assessors or by different learners.
- c. Contextualized assessments and benchmark answers are used to maintain consistent judgments of competence.

Evidence Guidelines & Rules of Evidence:

All KCC assessment tools and instruments are designed to ensure they meet the Rules of evidence and ensures the effectiveness of its assessment tools, emphasising validity, sufficiency, authenticity, and currency in alignment with industry standards.

Validity:

- a. Trainers/Assessors verify that all evidence collected directly corresponds to the competency under assessment.
- b. Assessment instruments and learner activities are closely aligned with the evidence presented and the assessment criteria for the Unit of Competency.

Sufficiency:

- a. Learners must accumulate adequate evidence to showcase competence, enabling the Trainer/Assessor to make a reliable judgment.
- b. KCC recognises that the quantity of evidence may vary among learners, and some may need more time or additional tasks to demonstrate competence.
- c. If learners are unable to achieve competence after repeated attempts (3x), KCC provides feedback, alternative pathways, and support.
- d. In cases where competence cannot be attained, KCC reviews pre-enrolment suitability, including Language Literacy and Numeracy assessments, for continuous improvement in the enrolment process and additional support services.
- e. Assessment tools are systematically mapped to each unit of competence, ensuring comprehensive coverage of elements and performance criteria.

Authenticity:

- a. KCC ensures that evidence collected from a learner is authentic and pertains specifically to the assessed individual.
- b. Processes are in place to confirm the identity of the learner, including a learner declaration, privacy consent, and verification through the Unique Student Identifier number.

Currency:

- a. KCC Trainer/Assessors evaluate the validity of a learner's evidence based on the time elapsed since its generation. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.
- b. Rigorous processes are in place for assessing Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) applications, emphasizing the need for up-to-date evidence reflecting the learner's current competency.

## Assessment Approach

The assessment strategy involves collecting evidence over time through multiple assessments rather than a single occasion.

- Various assessment methods are employed to accommodate differences in learner performance.
- Holistic performance on tasks is evaluated, rather than focusing solely on isolated performance.
- Evidence is derived from the learner's performance in either a real or simulated environment.
- KCC's competency-based assessment tools consist of multiple instruments, each classified as satisfactory or not yet satisfactory.
- A 'competent' outcome for a Unit of Competency is granted when a learner successfully completes all assessment instruments.
- Sufficiency is ensured by covering all relevant environments and contexts in the assessment process.
- Prerequisite requirements for each unit are detailed in the Training and Assessment Strategy.
- Mapping is conducted to verify that assessment instruments align with the requirements of each unit.
- Ensuring consistent judgment that contributes to the final assessment outcome relies heavily on adhering to the Rules of Evidence. These rules are paramount in guiding this process.
- Central to the effectiveness of the assessment system are the assessors themselves. Their qualifications, experience, and ongoing relevance are crucial factors in this process.

KCC delineates its adherence to these principles in the following manner and is controlled and ordered to ensure the assessment decisions include:

## Assessment Methods

KCC engages various assessment methods, tailored and mapped to the Unit of Competency, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of knowledge and skills for competence. These methods include theory assessments, structured activities, verbal and/or written questioning, portfolios of evidence, Recognition of Prior Learning pathways, and projects.

## Assessment Procedures

- Assessment must adhere to the assessment requirements stipulated in the relevant training package.
- Implementation of a diverse range of assessment practices that are comprehensive and rigorous, yet equitable in evaluating student performance.
- Designing assessments in alignment with the Principles of Assessment and incorporating judgments consistent with the Rules of Evidence.
- Adjustment of assessments, where necessary, to accommodate individual candidate needs without compromising assessment integrity.
- Provision of constructive and timely feedback to foster and reinforce learning.
- Learners will be informed about the assessment return and feedback schedule before or during the training delivery.
- KCC ensures the use of validated assessment tools by Trainer/Assessors.
- Theory assessments may be completed in either hard copy format or through KCCs Learning Management System (Matrix).
- For Learning Units that entail written assignments, students are required to complete and submit them by the designated due date, adhering to their respective study mode. Each student receives detailed instructions regarding the formatting requirements for their assignments.
- Final assessments, including written and verbal explanations and feedback, are completed by Trainer/Assessors.
- To mitigate the risk of inadvertent loss of assignments, students are required to retain a copy of each assignment, either in digital format (on a computer) or as a hard copy (printed document). Should loss occur, students must submit a new copy of the affected assignment.
- Assessment judgments on learner competence are based on evidence meeting the rules of evidence, competency dimensions, employability skills, AQF level, and Principles of Assessment.
- A learner must receive a 'satisfactory' on all assessment instruments for the unit result to be deemed 'competent.'
- KCC's Trainer/Assessors documents unit results on the applicable Unit sign-off sheet (roll), adding the learner's signature and date.
- In cases of 'Not Satisfactory' assessments, learners are offered an option for reassessment.
- A maximum of three (3) assessment re-attempts are provided to a learner to achieve competency.
- If a learner is unable to attain competency for a unit, the Trainer/Assessor provides comprehensive feedback throughout re-attempts, including additional learning if necessary.

- An overall 'Not Yet Competent' outcome applies when a learner is deemed 'Not Satisfactory' in one or more assessment instruments within a unit, after the specified number of assessment re-attempts. If a student is deemed Not Yet Competent after three (3) submissions they are to discuss their options with the KCC Course Coordinator. These options may involve additional cost and may include:
  - a) Re-sit the assessment task a third time at a cost (refer to the Fees & Refunds Policy); or
  - b) Re-enrol in the course or Unit of Competency at the normal enrolment fee; or
  - c) Undertake Additional private tuition; or
  - d) Undertake career planning with Student Support Officer; or
  - e) Review your study options and discuss with trainer/co-ordinator/Student Support Officer; or
  - f) Withdraw from the course.
- Comprehensive documentation of any instances of academic misconduct will be archived within the Student Management System (aXcelerate) of the College. This archival encompasses duplicates of all pertinent paperwork, alongside documentation detailing the recipient and the date of information submission.
- Course Coordinators review assessment documentation, including outcomes, on unit sign-off sheets.
- Compliant assessment outcomes are entered into the Student Management System by Course Coordinators.
- All assessments and evidence are saved by Course Coordinators in the associated folder for the specific course, ensuring alignment with the aXcelerate course number.
- KCC's Trainers/Assessors and Course Coordinators manage assessment records in accordance with the RTO Assessment record-keeping process, covering both hard and soft copies.

## Assessment Mapping

KCC's assessment tools and instruments are meticulously mapped to the elements, performance criteria, and assessment requirements of each Unit of Competency.

Mapping factors include:

- Assessment instruments including tasks and activities.
- The process of assessment the Trainer / Assessor used to make the assessment judgement.
- Resources used by Trainer / Assessor

## Formal Assessments

- Depending on the specific Learning Unit, students may encounter written tests designed to evaluate the knowledge necessary for the embedded unit/s of competency. Students will receive advance notice of these formal assessment requirements,



including details regarding the date, time, and location. It is the responsibility of students to ensure they have the necessary writing equipment and calculators.

- For assessments involving calculators, programmable calculators must undergo a memory clearance and inspection by the supervisor before use. Electronic translators, USB memory sticks, and mobile phones are strictly prohibited within assessment rooms unless explicitly approved by the supervisor. Paper-based dictionaries for translation from English to foreign languages must also undergo inspection by the supervisor prior to the commencement of the assessment.
- Upon completion of the assessment task, students are permitted to leave the room. However, they must return the assessment question paper, answer paper, any scribble paper, and electronic storage devices (if applicable) to the supervisor.

### Failure to Arrive for Formal Assessment

- Any student who fails to attend a supervised assessment activity without presenting evidence of special circumstances to the Course Coordinator must complete that assessment within 10 working days or at a time arranged with the Assessor. Failure to do so will result in the student being assessed as 'Not Yet Competent' for that Learning Unit, with the details recorded in their student records.
- If the student does not demonstrate competency during the delayed assessment attempt, they may be required to retake the Learning Unit, and additional fees may apply. Subsequent failure to demonstrate competency may prompt academic counselling. Continued enrolment is contingent upon the student meeting the College's requirements.

### Assessment Validation

KCC ensures a thorough validation process for assessment tools, emphasising their validity, reliability, sufficiency, currency, and ability to provide authentic evidence.

This approach facilitates constructive discussions on reasonable adjustments and includes revisions and recommendations for continuous improvement in assessment tools, associated processes, and outcomes.

KCC's Validation Schedule outlines KCC's comprehensive validation approach, covering areas such as:

- a. ensuring each qualification undergoes validation at least once in a five-year period, with 50% validation within the first 3 years.
- b. Ensuring learners who complete a qualification with KCC possess industry-required skills and knowledge as per the relevant training package.

Assessment tool validation occurs before assessments, ensuring alignment with the Rules of Evidence and Principles of Assessment.

Post-assessment validation systematically reviews assessment judgments, randomly selecting samples of assessment evidence for validation, comparing results to assess sound assessment practices, consideration of evidence, and adherence to the Rules of Evidence.

Refer to KCC's Validation Policy

## Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- RPL assesses an individual's formal or informal learning and experience to determine eligibility for a Certificate & record of results (full completion) or a Statement of Attainment (partial completion).
- RPL acknowledges skills and knowledge regardless of how they were acquired, meeting training package requirements, principles of assessment, and rules of evidence, along with workplace and regulatory requirements.
- Applicants can seek RPL for qualifications on the RTO's scope of registration.
- In cases where a unit is not superseded but not equivalent to the current unit, recognition can be requested, and a gap assessment completed.
- Mixed recognition situations allow RPL to supplement credit transfer, reported as a separate RPL outcome.

Please note, recognition of prior learning assessments are prohibited for *CPCWHS1001 Prepare to Work Safely in the construction industry* in New South Wales.

Refer to KCC's RPL Policy.

## Credit Transfer

- Credit transfer is determined when a unit is equivalent to those listed in the offered qualification or program.
- KCC grants credit transfer under various circumstances, including automatic credit for equivalent units from other Registered Training Organisations, units with the same code and title, and units reviewed resulting in minor changes.
- KCC's credit transfer process, outlined in the RTO credit transfer process, provides a detailed approach to credit transfer including any relevant forms to be completed.

Refer to KCC Credit Transfer Policy.

## Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism and cheating represent forms of academic dishonesty that are strictly prohibited at KCC. Plagiarism entails the use of another person's words or work without proper attribution, while cheating encompasses actions such as providing or receiving unauthorized assistance from other students.

In addition to plagiarism and cheating, any other forms of misconduct, including theft, property damage, equipment misuse, threatening behaviour, harassment, or abuse directed towards staff or students, will also be met with zero tolerance.

Such acts of misconduct are subject to disciplinary measures, which may include exclusion from training programs.

## Code of Practice for Assessors

The role of a KCC Assessor holds significant importance, as their decisions directly impact the expected quality of work by individuals.

A KCC College trainer ensures the following:

- Identification and sensitive handling of varying needs and requirements of candidates, employers, or industries.
- Identification and appropriate management of potential conflicts of interest in the assessment process or outcomes.
- Prevention of all forms of harassment throughout the assessment process and in the review and reporting of assessment outcomes.
- Protection of candidates' rights during and after the assessment process.
- Awareness provision to candidates regarding their rights and appeal processes.
- Assurance that personal or interpersonal factors irrelevant to competence assessment do not influence outcomes.
- Verification of evidence against established rules of evidence.
- Assessment decisions based on evidence that can be produced and verified by another assessor.
- Conduct of assessments within the boundaries of assessment system policies and procedures.
- Consistency of assessment systems and tools with equal opportunity legislation.
- Pre-assessment communication of all assessment reporting processes and known potential consequences of assessment decisions to candidates.
- Maintenance of confidentiality regarding assessment decisions/outcomes, with release of individual assessment outcome records containing personal details only with candidate/s' written permission.
- Utilisation of assessment outcomes consistently with the explained purposes to candidates.
- Facilitation and maintenance of networking opportunities among assessors.
- Provision of technical assistance in planning, conducting, and reviewing assessment practices, and participation in validation processes.

## Vocational Placement

Students enrolled in specific qualifications may be required to participate in a specialised workplace setting to engage in supervised hands-on practice with real clients, known as a 'Vocational Placement'. Upon admission, students will be informed whether this requirement applies to their course.

The Vocational Placement Supervisor will collaborate with the student to gather evidence of competency and ensure ample opportunities for real and simulated practice cases to fulfill the required Placement Assessment Tasks. Subsequently, the KCC's Trainer/Assessor will evaluate the student's Vocational Placement to confirm the attainment of related units of competency up to industry standards.

## Reasonable Adjustment

In compliance with the Disability Standards for Education 2005, individuals with disabilities or specific medical conditions that could affect their assessment are encouraged to communicate their adjustment needs to the College. If necessary, the College will seek guidance from

relevant government agencies, support organisations, or medical professionals to determine appropriate accommodations or verify eligibility for reasonable adjustments.

Assessors may provide reasonable adjustment for candidates with language or literacy issues provided those adjustments meet the standards outlined in the unit of competency, and the Conditions.

Regarding assessment, reasonable adjustments may involve:

- Provision of specialised equipment such as specialized computer software, keyboards, or large screen monitors.
- Assistance from interpreters for candidates with hearing impairments.
- Adaptation of assessment methods, ensuring the validity of competency attainment. This could include allowances for extra time, variations in question and response techniques (such as oral questioning instead of written, or submission of audio/video recordings instead of written responses).

It is important to note that 'reasonable' adjustments are implemented in the assessment process to accommodate individual needs without compromising assessment integrity. In some cases, applicants may be required to provide third-party evidence of their condition to qualify for reasonable adjustments.

Refer KCC's Reasonable Adjustment Policy.

## Special Considerations

Students who are unable to submit or attend an assessment due to sickness or unforeseen circumstances beyond their control may be eligible for special consideration. However, consideration will not be granted if the condition or event does not directly affect the student's performance in the assessment component, or if it is deemed not serious.

Circumstances that may prevent a student from completing their Learning Unit assessment include:

- Medical issues, such as unexpected illness, recurrence of a chronic illness, or accident.
- Compassionate situations, such as the death or severe illness of a close family member, significant disruption to domestic arrangements, or being a victim of crime.
- Other special circumstances, including formal legal commitments, military service, or involvement in a recognized emergency management service.

To apply for special consideration, students must submit a completed Special Consideration Form, along with verifiable evidence, to the Course Coordinator within 14 working days after the assessment due date.

When assessing the special consideration application, the KCC's Course Coordinator or their delegate may consider factors such as the student's performance in other assessment tasks within the Learning Unit and the nature and severity of the circumstances.

Possible outcomes of a special consideration application include:

- No action being taken.

- Allowing additional or supplementary assessment, which may differ from the original assessment.
- Extending the assessment deadline.
- Permitting the student to withdraw from the Learning Unit without being designated as 'Not Yet Competent', although this is unlikely after formal or final assessment has occurred.

The student will receive written notification of the final decision regarding their special consideration application within 10 working days of submission.

## Appealing the Assessment Decision

- Student assessment results are recorded and posted under each student's unique ID number. The date of posting, indicated on each result sheet, serves as the official starting point for calculating the Appeal Time.
- Students may appeal against their results by submitting an application to the KCC's Course Coordinator; this may take the form of a verbal or written request

Further details regarding the Assessment Appeals Policy can be found in the policy section of the College's website.

## White Card Assessment Requirements

Specific requirements apply to the training and assessment of CPCWHS1001 *Prepare to Work Safely in the construction industry*. RPL is prohibited for this unit in NSW. Previous reference in this policy to having 3 attempts to pass the assessment do not apply. If a student is deemed not competent on the day of the training, they are required to re-enrol and complete the course and resit the assessment.

## Glossary of Terms

- **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 ensures assessments are consistent and are based on the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence (see below).
- **Learning Unit** - a required subject into which is embedded one or more unit/s of competency or part/s thereof.
- **Training Product** – means AQF qualification, skill set, unit of competency, accredited short course and module.

## Related Policies & Documents

- Student Handbook
- Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
- Student Complaints Policy
- Assessment Appeals Policy

- Validation Policy
- Record Retention & Reporting Policy
- Disability Service Standards
- Reasonable Adjustment Policy
- VET Declaration

## Publication

- This policy will be made available to students and prospective students by publication on the College's websites. It is also outlined in the Student Handout.

## Version Information

Document Name	Version	Author	Date of next review
Assessment Policy	1.0, June 2016	Training Services Manager	June 2018
Assessment Policy	1.1 Dec, 2016	Training Services Manager Amendment – feedback from external validation	June 2018
Assessment Policy	1.2 Oct 2022	Compliance, Admin & Risk Manager	Oct 2024
Assessment Policy	1.3 May 2024	TSM & CAR Manager	Feb 2026