

DRUGBEAT OF SA
**DESIGN AND CONDUCT OF ASSESSMENT
POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Purpose

This procedure describes the processes undertaken by DRUGBEAT OF SA to ensure that its services in training and assessment of training packages and accredited courses on its scope of registration are planned, designed and implemented in a valid, fair, reliable and flexible manner.

Related AQTF standards

Standard 8: RTO assessments

Scope

This procedure applies to all lecturers (trainers/assessors) and Heads of Department employed by or contracted to DRUGBEAT OF SA for the delivery of training and assessment services.

Responsible parties

The relevant Heads of Department are responsible for the control and implementation of this procedure.

Definitions

Competency-based assessment is concerned with the demonstration of knowledge and skills to industry standards. The purpose of assessment is to confirm that an individual can perform to those standards expected in the workplace as expressed in the relevant endorsed industry/enterprise competency standards. The assessment process involves the collection of evidence and making judgments as to whether competency has been achieved.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is the process of determining whether an individual's prior learning, including formal learning and life experience, has provided for the development of competencies. DRUGBEAT OF SA may only consider applications for prior learning relevant to competencies tied to the organisation's scope of registration.

Learning and assessment strategies identify the proposed target groups, delivery and assessment modes, assessment validation processes and learning pathways for each training package qualification or accredited course.

Learning and assessment strategies are to be developed for each course the DRUGBEAT OF SA scope of registration of for courses subject to application for registration or extension to scope of registration.

POLICY STATEMENT

DrugBeat of SA is committed to ensuring that the requirements for all training package and accredited courses on its scope of registration are met through the use of appropriate assessment processes and instruments.

The RTO will put in place and implement procedures to ensure that:

- assessment guidelines are interpreted, communicated and applied by assessors in all accredited programs
- assessments will lead to the attainment of an AQF award (certificate or statement)
- assessment principles (fairness, flexibility, validity and reliability) will underpin all assessment processes (design and conduct)
- students are informed of the assessment processes, will be offered assessment feedback, and an opportunity to appeal against an assessment outcome and request re-assessment
- cultural diversity is considered in the design and delivery of assessments, and where necessary “adjustments” may be applied.
- judgments of competence are based on the evaluation of sufficient evidence of performance collected over time
- the design and development of assessment instruments are tested and validated by industry peers prior to implementation, and reviewed or moderated regularly to maintain currency and relevance to target needs and industry standards.
- students and prospective students understand the assessment pathways offered by RTOs including, Mutual Recognition, Recognition of Prior Learning and Recognition of Current Competence, Assessment Only pathways and Training and Assessment pathways.

PROCEDURES

Assessment Design

Assessments are to be designed by staff qualified and skilled in the analysis of training package requirements or accredited course guidelines, have an appropriate level of qualifications as an assessor and have the vocational expertise in the area under assessment. Assessment design must include consideration of:

- target group, diversity of cultural experience, language, literacy and numeracy skill levels underpinning the course of study
- the application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance prescribed within the assessment curriculum guidelines
- the workplace aspect of performance including task skills, management skills, contingency management skills and job role environment skills
- each principle of assessment; fairness, flexibility, reliability and validity across the assessment environment (ie clinic, classroom)
- the range of instruments to be used to collect evidence of competence

Assessment products are to be developed for each unit in each AQF qualification appearing on the RTOs scope of registration. While assessments may be integrated, in basic terms the assessment products for each qualification should include

- assessment strategy (how the program is to be assessed)
- assessment instruments (what modes/pathways of assessment are to be offered)
- assessment tools (the actual assessment to be implemented)
- assessment solution/benchmark (standard of performance a student is measured against)

Each component of assessment must be mapped to the AQF qualification and be recorded in summary format in an Assessment Matrix.

The design must be tested and verified as meeting all principles of assessment. This is to be performed prior to implementation, and again at least annually, using formal validation processes.

Assessment Validation

Assessments can be validated using several methods. DRUGBEAT OF SA incorporates a range of strategies to ensure the design, conduct and review of assessments provides for feedback and analysis of currency, consistency, fairness and flexibility. These inform the continuous improvement targets for the RTO in assessment and training services.

Assessment validation is to be implemented by:

- reviewing assessment outcomes for each assessor of each unit/module is to be compared by the relevant Head of Department to determine any apparent variations in judgments formed.
- seeking feedback from supervisors on student's performance in areas where DRUGBEAT OF SA assessors have judged the student to be competent.
- Seeking feedback from students in relation to use of language, literacy and cultural references, both within classes and across classes under assessment.
- reviewing assessments internally, on a semester by semester basis on matters of validity, reliability, flexibility and fairness
- gaining external validation of assessments on design and implementation, as a means to ensure reliability, validity and currency. This may be achieved using parties who are contracted by DrugBeat but who are also conducting professional practice outside of the organisation.

All validation activities are to be documented and monitored by HODs and changes to activities are to be reported to the Operations Manager as opportunities for improvement or corrective action. The Operations Manager is to ensure change activities are recorded for consideration at audit against the appropriate AQTF Standard.

Conduct of Assessment

The conduct of assessment requires consideration of the role of the assessor and the environment in which the assessment event occurs/is offered. DRUGBEAT OF SA is required to ensure that all assessors are familiar with their obligations under the AQTF Standards for RTOs and their responsibility to ensure that all students have a fair and equitable chance to successfully undertake the assessment and demonstrate their skills and knowledge.

DRUGBEAT OF SA therefore requires that:

- all staff implementing assessments meet the minimum qualification requirements for assessors or are supervised by the HOD.
- all assessors have participated in an induction program at DRUGBEAT. As such assessors are familiar with relevant policies and procedures, forms and processes.
- all assessors have access to the current assessment tools in use at DRUGBEAT OF SA and are able to distinguish version control information
- all assessors have access to training package or accredited course guidelines and have ready access to implementation guidelines for assessments designed by DRUGBEAT
- all assessors participate in the moderation of assessment activities as part of their own professional development activity and to ensure the reliability of assessments.
- assessors provide opportunities for assessment in a variety of environments, over a period of time, and collect sufficient evidence to make judgment as to a student's competence.
- assessors provide students with feedback following assessment and provide opportunities for re-assessment where warranted under appeal or failure to meet competency standards. (supplementary assessments)
- assessors collect and record evidence of competence for each student, and maintain such evidence until unit requirements are met. On completion of units, evidence is to be forwarded to the Administration Manager for filing and eventual archive. Evidence may include examination papers, assignments, clinic reports, and log books. Records of feedback may be kept where assessment materials are returned to students.
- disciplinary actions for breaches in assessment rules (see student diary) will be dealt with under the broader regulations of the DRUGBEAT.
- assessment appeals be dealt with using the DRUGBEAT OF SA Complaints and Appeals process.

Skills Recognition

DrugBeat of SA is required to provide students with a means for determining competence. This can be achieved through training and assessment pathways, but also through the demonstration of competence gained through assessment with another RTO gained through previous experience from life, work or formal training, or gained through current and consistent work tasks/functions. All applications are to be kept on file, in confidence, and made available to auditors to determine the fairness of process and validity of judgment.

Mutual Recognition

- Prior to enrolment, prospective students are to be made aware of their right to present AQF qualifications from another RTO and expect credit standing in the same units offered under the scope of registration at DRUGBEAT OF SA
- This obligation is to be made clear in course brochures, web-based materials, student diaries, course information sessions, at course enquiry and at course selection interviews.
- Applicants under Mutual Recognition are to present the original qualification for verification by the Administration Manager. The Manager must take a copy of the qualification, signing and dating the copy as "Original Sighted". The original is to be returned to the client. The copy is to be placed on the student's file and entitlements recorded on the enrolment form.
- The outcome of the application for Mutual Recognition must be provided in writing to the applicant on enrolment or within seven days of application.

Current Competence

- Prior to enrolment, prospective students are to be made aware of their right to apply for recognition of current competence against an AQF qualification/unit and the opportunity to apply for exemption in the same qualification/unit offered under the scope of registration at DRUGBEAT OF SA
- Student's presenting with industry-based certificates may be considered for credit standing in units that require certificates of currency – ie First Aid.
- Applicants are to present the original qualification for verification by the Administration Manager. The Manager must take a copy of the qualification, signing and dating the copy as "Original Sighted". The original is to be returned to the client. The copy is to be placed on the student's file and entitlements recorded on the enrolment form.
- Applications are to be forwarded to the relevant HOD for approval. HODs are to verify the relevance of the content and verify the currency of competence against the unit of study offered under the scope of registration at DRUGBEAT.
- The outcome of the application for Current Competence must be provided in writing to the applicant on enrolment or within seven days of application.

- The result of the application may be appealed. Appeals must be stated in writing and forwarded to the Operations Manager. The Operations Manager shall consult with the appropriate Industry agency (ie AMTA) to determine entitlement based on currency of skill, and will consult with the relevant CCM or external Curriculum Advisor regarding entitlement under equivalence.
- The appeal outcome will be provided in writing

Prior Learning

- Prior to enrolment, prospective students are to be made aware of their right to apply for recognition of prior learning against an AQF qualification/unit and the opportunity of exemption in the same qualification/units offered under the scope of registration at DRUGBEAT OF SA
- Applications for RPL are to be made on the appropriate form and submitted to the Administration Manager together with all relevant supporting information. The Manager will review the content of the application and advise the applicant if further evidence is likely to be called for, or provide guidance if the applicant is unsure of the application requirements and processes.
- The Administration Manager will refer completed applications to the relevant HOD to assess. Each application will be reviewed against the requirements of the Training Package or accredited course, and a decision will be based on the evidence provided.
- The HOD will provide in writing, the outcome of the application, and will remind the applicant that if necessary, appeal processes are available. If the decision cannot be reached conclusively, the HOD may request the applicant to provide more information, eg more details, verification of experience, etc.
- The applicant may be invited to attend an interview with an RPL assessor and/or course expert and may be accompanied by an advocate.
- The applicant may be invited to undertake a challenge assessment.
- An initial assessment and/or a request for further information is to be made within 21 days of the receipt of the application.
- An applicant may appeal in writing against a decision in accordance with the grievance, complaints, and appeals procedure. .

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION:

- Complaints Policy
- Validation reports/minutes of meeting
- Stakeholder evaluation of assessment instruments
- Student evaluation/feedback on assessment process
- Assessment Instruments for each module/unit in each qualification registered
- Learning and Assessment Strategies for each qualification registered
- Continuous Improvement Register
- Resource and Equipment Register
- RPL Application and Appeals Form