Assessment Policy – VET

1. Purpose:

a. This policy outlines the basic principles governing VET student progression through an enrolled course, training package, or an accredited course at TC.

b. More specific to the Diploma of Nursing program, the policy contributes to the College ensuring Standard 5 of Enrolled Nurse (EN) accreditation standards. Each learner is adequately informed and protected by Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, specifically Clause 5.2.e.ii, 'any requirements the RTO requires the learner to meet to enter and complete their chosen training product'.

2. Definition of "TC"

TrEd College trades as TrEd College; any reference in this policy relating to "TC" is TrEd College. For this policy, any reference to 'TC' should be considered a reference to TrEd College.

3. Scope:

- **All VET students**
- **All VET training and assessing Staff**
- **All Student Services staff**

4. Policy Statement:

a. Assessment is the process of gathering and analysing information to guide and make judgements about students' competency in learning goals.

b. Assessment items are an integral part of the learning process and, when well-designed, can enhance the overall learning experience and contribute to student achievement.

c. TC adheres to Standard 1, Clause 1.8 of the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015,* which requires that assessment is conducted in accordance with the *Principles of Assessment* and the *Rules of Evidence*.

d. Assessment items are designed in accordance with the Assessment Guidelines of the relevant Training Package. This policy focuses on assessments conducted as part of the day-to-day training delivered by TC.

5. Principles of Assessment

Principles of Assessment are required to ensure quality outcomes. They are defined in the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* (the Standards) as being fair, flexible, valid and reliable as below:

a. **Fair:** Fairness requires consideration of the individual student's needs and characteristics and any reasonable adjustments that need to be applied to account for these needs and characteristics:
    I.   it requires clear communication between the assessor and the student to ensure that the student is fully informed about the assessment,
    II.   understands what the assessment requires,
    III. can participate in the assessment process
    IV.   agrees that the process is appropriate,
    V.   it also includes an opportunity for the student being assessed to challenge the assessment result and be reassessed if necessary.

b. **Flexible:** To be flexible, assessments should reflect the student's needs; provide for recognition of competencies no matter how, where or when they have been acquired
    I.   draw on a range of appropriate assessment methods for the student, unit of competency, and its assessment requirements

c. **Valid:** Assessments are considered valid when a student's evidence is assessed against the broad range of skills and knowledge essential to competent performance and any other associated assessment requirements of a specific unit of competency.

d. Assessing must also include evidence that a student could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in similar circumstances and that skills and knowledge can be practically applied.

e. **Reliable:** Reliability is when the assessment is consistently interpreted, and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment item.

6. Rules of Evidence Rules

Rules of evidence are closely related to the Principles of Assessment and are also defined in the Standards. The rules guide the evidence collection to ensure that it is valid, sufficient, authentic and current.

a. **Valid**: see Principles of assessment.

b. **Sufficient:** Sufficiency relates to the quality and quantity of evidence assessed. It requires collecting enough appropriate evidence to ensure that all aspects of competency have been satisfied and that competency can be demonstrated repeatedly.

   - Supplementary sources of evidence may be necessary. The specific evidence requirements of each unit of competency provide advice on sufficiency.

c. **Authentic:** To accept evidence as authentic, an assessor must be assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the student's work.

d. **Current:** Currency relates to the age of the evidence students present to demonstrate that they are still competent. Competency requires demonstrating current performance, so the evidence must be from the present or the very recent past.

7. Qualified Assessors

TC ensures that its assessors meet the requirements of the standards and therefore demonstrate the following:

a. that they hold the relevant Training and Education (TAE) competencies

b. that they hold relevant vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered and assessed

c. industry currency directly relevant to the training/assessment being undertaken;

d. Continuous development of their VET knowledge, skills, industry currency, and competence as an assessor.

8. Results

The recognised training and assessment approach in the VET sector is competency-based. This means there is an emphasis on what a person can do in the workplace due to completing a training course. The following table identifies the results awarded to VET students at the College:

Satisfactory	S	Awarded to a student who has demonstrated competence to the specified standard against each assessed element.
Not Yet Satisfactory	NYS	Awarded to a student who failed to demonstrate competence to the specified standard against each assessed element.
Competent	C	Awarded to a student who has achieved all of the elements specified for a unit of competency to the specified standard.
Not Yet Competent	NYC	Awarded to a student who has failed to achieve all of the elements specified for that unit of competency to the specified standard
Withdrawn	W	Related to when a student withdraws from a unit of competency/unit of study before the census date.
Withdrawn Fail	WF	Related to when a student withdraws from a unit of competency/unit of study after the census date.
Credit Transfer	CT	Related to the credit a student receives for a unit of competency through recognition of their formal learning.
Recognition of Prior Learning	RPL	Related to the credit a student receives for a unit of competency through recognition of their informal learning.

a.   Students enrol on a Unit of Study. Each Unit of Study may contain one or more units of competency.

b.   Students will receive a result for each unit of competency.

c.   Students will be informed of the competencies to be assessed for each Unit of Study via the Unit of Study Outline (USO).

9. Assessment of Elements

Effective workplace performance requires more than an isolated instance of applying technical skills, knowledge and attitudes to a particular situation.

a.   Students are therefore considered competent when they can apply their knowledge and skills to complete activities in various situations and environments.

b.   As such, a unit of competency will likely assess some elements more than once across multiple assessment items.

c.   To achieve a result for an assessment item of Satisfactory, a student must demonstrate competence for every element assessed.

d.   Similarly, to achieve an overall result of Competent for a unit of competency, a student must receive a result of Satisfactory for each assessment item.

10.   Assessing Competence

Each assessment item will outline the specified standard that a student must achieve to receive a result of Satisfactory.

a.   This will vary between assessment items dependent on the most appropriate method of assessing skills and knowledge. For instance, a theory assessment may require a student to achieve an overall mark of 50. Still, a skills assessment requires demonstrating a technique that the assessor will assess against a set of steps/outcomes where the overall mark would be 100.

11.   Additional Assessment Criteria

In addition to each element being assessed as competent, some units of competency may require additional criteria to be met for a student to achieve a result of Competent.

a.   This additional criterion will be outlined in the Unit of Study Outline. They may include requirements for attendance, participation, dress code, submission of all assessment items and any other criteria documented.

12.   Notification of Results

Notification timeframes for individual assessment items will vary but will generally be no longer than 2-3 weeks from the final submission deadline for that assessment item. Students will generally receive the results of practical assessment items immediately upon completion, or it may take 2-3 weeks if further contemplation is required.

a.   *Final results will be held pending any fee payments/library fines being finalised.*

13.   Submission of Assessment Items

Excepting assessment items completed in class, all students must keep a copy of all submitted assessment items until they are marked and returned by the trainer/assessor for review.

14. Electronic Submission

All assessment items submitted electronically should be submitted online via TC's Learning Management System (LMS).

a. Students cannot submit their assessment item until they have read, understood and agreed to a set of terms about privacy, plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

b. Assessments must be submitted by the specified due date indicated in the Unit of Study Outline unless prior alternative arrangements have been made as below or via the Special Circumstances Policy – VET.

c. In the unusual event of a technical failure, if a student cannot submit their assessment item via the LMS, they are required to contact the LMS Support staff.

d. If a system error with the LMS won't be resolved until after the assessment due date, the LMS Support staff will advise the trainer that extensions are required for the entire class.

e. If the technical failure is a personalised problem for an individual student, the student must contact their trainer via the designated email address to request an extension.

f. No extensions will be granted for electronic submission unless a prior alternative arrangement has been made.

15. Number of Attempts

Students will generally be permitted a maximum of three attempts for all assessment items within a teaching period (initial attempt plus two resubmissions/resits) – also refer to the *Academic Progression Policy – VET.*

a. Students will be allowed two attempts (initial attempt plus one resubmission/resit). If a further attempt is required, the student will be required to meet with the Head of Discipline, and the Head of Discipline will review the student's class attendance and participation to evaluate the student's course commitment. For example, for a Diploma of Nursing student, a third attempt may not be allowed in clinical placement assessments based on patient safety concerns, and such a decision will be at the discretion of the Head of Nursing. Before a third attempt is granted the student will be asked to sign a "student learning contract". A fourth attempt will not be permitted for a Diploma of Nursing student, the student will be required to repeat the unit at additional cost and delay the course finishing date. The number of attempts is assessed and approved by the TC Academic Committee, given the safety of everyone involved in those skills. For example, medication management skills.

b. Some assessment items are divided into distinct activities. Therefore, if a student cannot achieve a Satisfactory result for one activity or more, it is at the trainer's discretion whether the student must resubmit the entire assessment item or only the activities where a Satisfactory result was not achieved.

c. Fees may apply for resits/resubmissions as determined by the qualification a student enrolls into (refer to Fees Policy - VET or Fees Policy – International)

16.   Timeliness

The student is responsible for managing their individual study and assessment workload to ensure they can attend all on-campus assessment items (i.e. practical examinations) and meet all relevant submission due dates.

a. Assessment must be submitted within the specified timeframes unless an extraordinary circumstance prevents the student from meeting the deadline.

b. The timeframes for all assessment items are advised to students up front on the commencement of a Unit of Study.

17.   Skills-Based Assessments

Where a student cannot attend a skill-based assessment at the scheduled time, they must advise their trainer as soon as they are aware of this so that an alternate time can be scheduled.

a.   Any missed practical examination time (whether the trainer is advised or otherwise) will count as an attempt and will result in a grade of NYS for that attempt.

b.   Any rescheduled skill-based assessment time will count as a resit. If a student receives a result of NYS for their first resit, they will be afforded one final resit (3 attempts in total).

c.   It is the student's responsibility to make themselves available when the trainer reschedules their SBA – rescheduling is not a negotiation process between trainer and student.

d.   A Student who cannot attend their SBA must provide a valid reason and be asked to submit evidence.

e.   If an SBA is scheduled towards the end of a teaching period, there will be limited time available to schedule one or more re-sits before the deadline for trainers to finalise results (results must be finalised two weeks after the end of a teaching period).

f.   As such, students may receive an interim result of 'Incomplete' for the Unit of Study until their assessment result can be finalised.

g.   Incomplete results will be either replaced with a result of C or NYC upon completion of the outstanding assessment item or before the census date for the following teaching period.

h.   If a student is aware of their unavailability before the census date, they should consider either withdrawing from the Unit of Study (see Application to Withdraw Form) without penalty or changing to another class time (refer to Deferral/Course Variation Request Form).

18.   Written Assessments

If a first attempt at a written assessment item is not submitted by the due date, the student will receive a result of NYS for that attempt unless prior arrangements have been made.

a. Any late submissions will be considered to be a resubmission. If a student fails to discuss a revised due date with their trainer, they will be given one week from the original due date to submit their first resubmission before resulting in an NYS against a second attempt.

b. If no assessment item is received after one week of the due date, the student will be given one additional week to make their final submission of the item (unless prior arrangements are made) before receiving an NYS result for their third attempt at that assessment item (and therefore a result of NYC for the unit of competency/unit of study overall).

19.   'At Risk' Students

If a student fails to submit the same assessment item more than once in a teaching period, this is an early warning signal to their trainer that they may be at risk of non-progression and non-completion following the Academic Progression Policy - VET or the Course Duration and Progress Policy – International.

a. The trainer is responsible for contacting the student to determine their reasons for non-submission and liaising with the Student Support Services team to assist with contact if necessary.

b. It may then be necessary to support the student's progress.

c. Any support mechanisms should be instigated on the advice of the Student Support Services team and be made following TC's Policies.

20. Academic integrity

Students are accountable to standards of professionalism and ethics throughout their course of study, and therefore TC takes a strong position on plagiarism and other instances of academic dishonesty.

a. All students should ensure that their assessment work is their own and that they have not obtained academic advantage for themselves or another student by dishonest or unfair means. Refer to *Academic Misconduct and plagiarism policy - VET for further details.*

21.   Information about Assessment Items

All necessary information about assessment items is listed in the unit outline of each unit. The trainer/assessor is responsible for ensuring the unit outline provided to students is correct.

a.   Unit assessments needing updates or changes must follow the TC assessment update process.

b. All minor changes to assessments, such as heading changes, instruction modifications, spelling changes, and assessment order in the unit, can be changed with the approval of the discipline head.

c. Assessment information can not be changed after the second week of the semester. However, in exceptional circumstances, such as incorrect information, the details may be changed with approval by the relevant head of the department, and all students must be notified of the change.

d. Any major changes to the assessments, such as assessment item change, learning outcome modification, marks redistribution, and changes that alter skill assessment patterns, must be submitted to TC academic board through the head of the discipline and approved before implementation.

22.   Feedback for Students

Students receive specific, timely, supportive, constructive and developmental feedback on their learning and performance.

a. Written feedback should be provided to students on all assessment items other than multiple-choice tests

b. Students are entitled to see their results for all assessment items within two weeks from the date they were marked.

c. Formative assessment does not require formal feedback from trainers, and alternative forms of providing feedback can be used, e.g. group and peer marking and self-marking from a supplied answer guide.

23.   Return of Assessment Items

All assessment items are graded within the Learning Management System (LMS).

a. Students will be able to review their results and the feedback within 2-3 weeks of the assessment item's due date.

b. Assessment items will not be returned to students for them to keep, only for review (refer to Assessment Retention for further information)

24.   Appealing a Result

TC acknowledges that students have the right to appeal an assessment decision based on valid grounds for appeal. TC has a provision for students to appeal against assessment decisions.

TC ensures students can access a fair and equitable process for appealing against an assessment decision.

Valid grounds for an appeal against an assessment decision (where the client feels the assessment decision is incorrect) could include the following:

a.   Marking as to whether competency has been achieved and demonstrated was made incorrectly;

b.   Marking was not made following the assessment plan;

c.   Alleged bias of the assessor;

d.   Alleged lack of competence of the assessor;

e.   Alleged wrong information from the assessor regarding the assessment process;

f.   Alleged inappropriate assessment process for the particular competency;

g.   Faulty or inappropriate equipment; and/or

h.   Inappropriate conditions

Students wishing to appeal a grade need to follow the appeals policy.
i.   To start the process, the student should write to their trainer/assessor about the concern. I
j.   f the student is still unsatisfied, or the trainer assessor's actions are the concern, the student can approach the head of the discipline via email.
k.   The student can seek help from the Student Support Officer for any advice regarding the appeal process Please refer to the *Students Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

An investigation into an appeal may result in one of the following outcomes:

l.   Appeal is upheld; in this event, the following options will be available:
   I. The original assessment will be reassessed, potentially by another assessor.

   II. Appropriate recognition will be granted.
   III. A new assessment shall be conducted/arranged.

m. Appeal is rejected/ not upheld; the student will be required to:
   I.   undertake further training or experience prior to further assessment; or

   II.   resubmit further evidence; or
   III.   submit/undertake a new assessment.

If a student receives a result for an assessment item they disagree with, they have the right to lodge a grievance following the *College's Grievance Policy - VET.*

25.   Special Circumstances

TC recognises that there may be times when a decision made upon applying this policy (or other related policies) may require reassessment due to exceptional circumstances.

a. TC must be satisfied that a student's circumstances are beyond their control (i.e., if a situation occurs that a reasonable person would consider is not due to the student's action or inaction, either direct or indirect, and for which the person is not responsible).

b. If a student feels after reviewing the Special Circumstances Policy - VET that their circumstances should be considered, they must apply before the due date for the assessment item.

c.   In rare situations where this is impossible for the student to apply earlier, the applications will be accepted three days after the scheduled due date at the discretion of the head of the discipline.

26.   Assessment Retention

As the National VET Regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) requires all registered training organisations (RTOs) to securely retain all completed student assessment items for each student for six months from the date on which the judgement of competence for the student was made.

a. Where it is not possible to retain the student's actual work (i.e., practical assessments), an assessor's completed marking guide, criteria and observation checklist for each student will be retained as evidence

b. In addition to the above requirement, TC retains all completed assessment items for 12 months to allow internal moderation processes to run their course.

27.   Validation and Moderation of Assessment

TC is committed to ensuring that regardless of the place of delivery, mode of delivery or trainer/assessor:

a.   Assessment items are developed to be fair, flexible, reliable, and valid based on current industry relevance and the requirements of the training Package; and
b.   Marking made by trainers/assessors on attempted assessment items is based on valid, sufficient, authentic, and current evidence.

The Validation and Moderation Policy - VET outlines the processes to ensure the high quality of assessment items and the consistency of marking by all trainers/assessors.

28.   Related Procedures:

Not Applicable

29.   Definitions:

a. **Assessment -** the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace, as expressed by the relevant endorsed industry/enterprise competency standards of a training Package or by the learning outcomes of a VET accredited course

b. **Competency –** the consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environment

c. **Elements –** essential outcomes required to demonstrate competency as detailed in each unit of competency.

d. **Formative assessment –** a form of assessment that does not count towards the final result for a unit of competency but is instead used as an informal strategy to gauge a student's level of understanding of skills and knowledge.

e. **Reasonable adjustment -** adjustments that can be made to how evidence of candidate performance can be collected. Whilst reasonable adjustments can be made, the evidence criteria for making competent/not yet competent decisions (and/or awarding grades) should not be altered in any way. The standards expected should be the same irrespective of the group and/or individual being assessed; otherwise, the comparability of standards will be compromised.

f. **Specified standard –** the level of competency required for effective performance in the workplace, often expressed in outcome terms such as "effective technique used to……". It could also be expressed as a percentage mark.

g. **Student -** is a person formally enrolled to study at the College. The person who appears on the College's documents, such as enrolment, admission, and payment documents, is assigned an individual student ID.

h. **Teaching Period –** is a formal period (term or semester) within the teaching year in which a student may be enrolled.

i. **Training Package -** A training package is a set of nationally endorsed standards and qualifications for recognising and assessing people's skills in a specific industry, industry sector or enterprise. They are developed by national Industry Skills Councils (ISCs).

j. **Training Package Assessment Guidelines -** are contained within each training Package and are designed to ensure that assessment is consistent with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015.

k. **Unit of Competency - the** specification of industry knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill to the standard of performance expected in the workplace.

l. **Unit outline –** detail what will be taught and assessed in a unit of study. It enables all assessment tasks to be mapped against the required elements from each unit of competency.

30.   Further Information:

a. **Related Policies**

   I.   Grievance Policy
   II.   Plagiarism Policy
   III. Special Circumstances Policy
   IV.   Validation and Moderation Policy
   V.   Academic Progression Policy - VET

b. **Benchmarking:**

   I.   Think Education
   II.   Western Sydney University

Policy Author:	National Training Manager
Policy Owner:	National Training Manager
Contact:	Leena.panicker@tredcollege.edu.au
Approved by:	Chief Executive Officer of TrEd College
Policy Status	approved
Responsibilities for Implementation:	• Head of Disciplines • National VET Manager • Student Support Services Manager • Student Services Support Team
Key Stakeholders:	• Chief Operating Officer • National Training Manager • All VET Trainers • All VET students • Student Support Services Team

31.   DOCUMENT CONTROL

a.   Document Version History

Version	Release date	Description	Review date
1	January 2021	First Version	January 2021
2	September 2023	Amended	September 2023

b.   Document Review and Approval

Name Person	Position / Role	Function Owner/author/review/approve
Leena Panicker	National Training Manager	Document / Owner/Author/ Review
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