

## 319-PP-MEGA Assessment Policy

<b>Relevant Standards</b> SRTOs 2015: 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11 The National Code 2018: 2.1, 6.3	<b>Linked Documents</b> Reassessment Policy Continuous Improvement Policy Quality Assurance Policy
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### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe and define MEGA’s approach to assessment. Assessment is central to collecting evidences of competency and evaluating a unit of competency. This policy sets out assessment principles, planning procedures and emphasises MEGA’s commitment to creating effective and meaningful assessment opportunities that support and enhances learning and assessment strategies.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all assessable units of competencies across all the courses on MEGA’s scope of registration.

### 3. Definitions

**Course:** A programme of study comprising units of competency leading to a qualification or an award.

**Competency:** Means 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 environments.

**Unit of Competency or Unit:** A Unit of Competency, also generally referred to as a “unit”, is a statement of a key function or role in a particular skill or knowledge area. It is made up of elements of competency, together with performance criteria, a range of variables, and an evidence guide.

**Assessment:** The means by which progress or achievement in a unit is evaluated. This can include assessment methods such as essays, examinations, projects, practical tasks, and tutorial participation.

**Reasonable Adjustment:** Means adjustments that can be made to the way in which evidence of student’s performance can be collected. Whilst reasonable adjustments can be made in terms of the way in which evidence of performance is gathered, the evidence criteria for making Competent (C) or Not Yet Competent (NYC) decisions should not be altered in any way. That is, the standards expected should be the same irrespective of the group and/or individual being assessed; otherwise comparability of standards will be compromised.

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):** Means an assessment process that assesses an individual’s formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of, a VET qualification.

### 4. Legislative Context

- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Cth)
- The ESOS Act 2000
- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Regulations 2001
- The National Code 2018
- Standards for Registered Organisations (SRTOs) 2015
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth).

## 5. Underlying Principles

MEGA's assessment policy and procedures, including RPL are guided by the following principles and rules:

### 5.1 Principles of Assessment

Principles of assessment are required to ensure quality outcomes. Assessments should be fair, flexible, valid and reliable as follows:

**5.11 Fairness:** Fairness requires consideration of the individual candidate's or learner's needs and characteristics, and any reasonable adjustments that need to be applied to take account of them. It requires clear communication between the Trainer and Assessor and the candidate or learner to ensure that the candidate or learner is fully informed about, understands, and is able to participate in, the assessment process, and agrees that the process is appropriate. It also includes an opportunity for the candidate or learner being assessed to challenge the result of the assessment and to be reassessed if necessary.

**5.12 Flexible:** To be flexible, assessment should reflect the candidate's or learner's needs; provide for recognition of competencies no matter how, where or when they have been acquired; draw on a range of methods appropriate to the context, competency and the candidate or learner; and, support continuous competency development.

**5.13 Validity:** There are five major types of validity:

- face
- content
- criterion i.e. predictive and concurrent
- construct; and
- consequential.

In general, validity is concerned with the appropriateness of the inferences, use and consequences that result from the assessment. In simple terms, it is concerned with the extent to which an assessment decision about a candidate or learner e.g. Competent or Not Yet Competent, based on the evidence of performance by the candidate or learner, is justified.

It requires determining conditions that weaken the truthfulness of the decision, exploring alternative explanations for good or poor performance, and feeding them back into the assessment process to reduce errors when making inferences about competence.

Unlike reliability, validity is not simply a property of the assessment tool. As such, an assessment tool designed for a particular purpose and target group may not necessarily lead to valid interpretations of performance and assessment decisions if the tool was used for a different purpose and/or target group.

**5.14 Reliability:** There are five types of reliability: internal consistency; parallel forms; split-half; inter-rater; and, intra-rater. In general, reliability is an estimate of how accurate or precise the task is as a measurement instrument. Reliability is concerned with how much error is included in the evidence.

### 5.2 Rules of Evidence

Rules of evidence are closely related to the principles of assessment and provide guidance on the collection of evidence to ensure that it is valid, sufficient, authentic and current as follows:

**5.21 Validity:** There are five major types of validity:

- face
- content
- criterion i.e. predictive and concurrent
- construct; and
- consequential.

**5.22 Sufficiency:** Sufficiency relates to the quality and quantity of evidence assessed. It requires collection of 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.

**5.23 Authenticity:** To accept evidence as authentic, a Trainer and Assessor must be assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the candidate's or learner's own work.

**5.24 Currency:** Currency relates to the age of the evidence presented by candidates or learners to demonstrate that they are still competent. Competency requires demonstration of current performance, so the evidence must be from either the present or the very recent past.

## 6. Policy

MEGA is committed to designing and developing assessments that engage the learners, incorporate a feedback process and are based on competency elements of each unit of competency, enabling MEGA to collect sufficient evidences of competency and provide the students with recognition of their achievements against specified criteria.

MEGA will ensure that all assessments are:

- Valid, fair, flexible, reliable, feasible and incorporate clearly defined assessment criteria and evidence requirements
- Designed to measure students' achievements against explicit learning objectives, to promote learning, and improve students' performance
- Based on a range of assessment practices or modes designed to accommodate the diversity of learners and allows them to demonstrate their achievement as learners
- Promote integrity in assessment to ensure, as far as possible, that students receive proper credit for assessable work which is their own
- Incorporate feedback that supports students' learning and is prompt, informative and where appropriate provided throughout, not just at the end of, the learning process
- Be moderated or validated to ensure appropriateness to the unit or module and level of difficulty.

### 6.1 Communication of Assessment Requirements to Students

6.1.1 Details and expectations of assessment tasks will be provided to students at commencement of a unit, describing criteria and standards by which their performance will be judged.

6.1.2 Students shall be provided with an Assessment Plan that lists the types of assessments set for a unit. Assessment tasks will provide the students with information on assessment requirements such as assessment criteria, evidence requirements, length, submission dates and provisions for extension and re-submission.

6.1.3 All students must clearly understand the assessment requirements and how they are going to be assessed. Appropriate teaching and learning support will be provided to ensure that students are able to complete their assessments on due date and have an opportunity to discuss their options with the Trainer and Assessor.

### 6.2 Feedback to Students

6.2.1 Formative assessment tasks will be designed to provide an opportunity for feedback at the early stages of the unit, enabling students to make timely and informed judgements about their performance so that subsequent assessment can be undertaken with improved likelihood of success and enhancement.

6.2.2 Feedback may be provided in a variety of ways including:

- Written and/or verbal comments on formative assessment tasks
- Class or group discussion on critical aspects of assessment

- Individual, face-to-face discussion with the Trainer and Assessor and identification of opportunities for improvement
- Email communication, discussion forums, if available.

6.2.3 Trainers and Assessors will ensure that the students are developing required competencies through formative assessment tasks before they attempt summative assessment tasks, especially in the case where summative assessment task build up on formative tasks.

6.2.4 A detailed feedback to summative tasks should be provided by the Trainers and Assessors to explain the reasons behind the grading outcome.

6.2.5 Students will have the right to view their marked exam paper, assignments and grading remarks but must not make copies or take original documents.

6.2.6 Students wishing to discuss the outcome of the summative assessments in detail may contact their Trainers and Assessors for a post-assessment meeting and feedback.

### **6.3 Management of the Assessment & Validation Processes**

6.3.1 MEGA's delivery and assessment strategies will be developed in consultation with relevant enterprises and industry groups by taking into account:

- The needs of students
- The requirements and practices of enterprises and industry
- The specifications in the relevant training package
- Their own capacity as well as the capacity of relevant enterprises to provide delivery and assessment opportunities for students
- The legislative regulations and requirements of industry.

6.3.2 To meet the quality and regulatory requirements, MEGA shall develop and implements a plan for ongoing systematic validation of assessment practices and judgements for each of the courses on its scope of registration. The plan will include:

- When assessment validation will occur
- Which courses or units of competencies will be the focus of the validation
- Who will lead and participate in validation activities; and
- How the outcomes of these activities will be documented and acted upon.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) shall delegate Academic Manager and the Quality Assurance Committee to ensure that such a plan is developed and approved at the start of each academic year.

## **7. Assessment Planning Process**

### **Step 1: Establish the learning and assessment context**

MEGA will consider the following questions when establishing the delivery and assessment context:

- What need is the programme intended to address? Is this programme directed at an enterprise, a group of enterprises or a broader audience?
- Will the programme be offered through a 'work-based' or 'institutional' pathway?
- Who should be consulted about the development of this programme?
- What is the best way to engage these individuals and organisations?
- What are the characteristics of the likely participants?
- Will they be in employment?
- Will they have access to workplaces?
- What are the occupational health and safety requirements?

## Step 2: Identify participant and enterprise needs

When considering enterprise needs an assessment will be made of the macro and micro level requirements of the enterprise.

### *Macro Level:*

- The broad areas in which training is required, e.g., customer service, OH & S, quality control
- The training delivery mode, e.g., self-paced delivery, coaching, learning syndicates
- The enterprise and MEGA's capacity and willingness to deliver and assess
- Customisation of the Training Package to meet enterprise conditions
- The sequencing of delivery and assessment
- The recognition of prior learning and current competency
- The situations in which simulation may or may not be used in evidence gathering evidence collection, i.e. collected by Trainers and Assessors and students
- The ways of catering for students with special needs, e.g., literacy, numeracy and disability.

### *Micro Level:*

- The specific competencies to be developed through the programme
- Discussing and understanding the different aspects of the units of competency
- Integrating enterprise operating procedures and performance standards with the relevant industry competency standards
- The design of assessment tools and processes
- Scheduling delivery and assessment activities
- Establishing communication links between MEGA and the enterprise
- Establishing record-keeping strategies
- Providing students with information on the programme
- Appeals and reassessment.

This process can be demonstrated by:

- Surveys, research reports, statistical information on needs of student groups
- Customised delivery and assessment strategies to meet client needs
- Meeting minutes or notes to indicate enterprise/industry consultation in development of assessment strategies
- Letters acknowledging enterprise or industry involvement in development of assessment strategies.

## Step 3: Select the relevant qualification and units of competency

The appropriate qualification and units of competency will involve:

- Identifying the appropriate Training package, qualifications and units of competency
- Interpreting and analysing the units of competency
- Checking the assessment guidelines to ensure that proposed assessment approaches are consistent with the advice provided in the Training package
- Checking the packaging advice in the Training package to ensure that the required combination of units of competency is permitted
- Reading the customisation guidelines in the Training package to identify what changes can be made to the qualification and units of competency to ensure that enterprise and students' needs are met
- Identifying relevant support materials, such as learner guides and assessment tools
- Confirming the selection of Training Package, qualifications and units of competency with the enterprise, if appropriate.

## Step 4: Determine the structure, mode and sequence of learning and assessment

This involves making decisions about the:

- Structure of the training programme
- Mode of delivery
- Evidence-gathering techniques and tools
- Sequence of learning and assessment.

Trainers and Assessors may choose to deliver and assess each unit in a course independently. However, this can lead to situations where:

- Learning and assessment strategies do not conform with the way in which work activities are organised in an enterprise
- Too much evidence is collected as Trainers and Assessors and students feel that it is necessary to gather multiple items of evidence for each unit of competency.

In response to these issues, staff may choose to cluster the units of competency for delivery and assessment purposes. Units of competency in this case may be clustered around key work activities or around key areas of underpinning knowledge and related work activities.

The above process can be demonstrated by:

- Outline of programme structure and delivery and assessment strategies
- Students' information on delivery and assessment options
- Delivery plan and evidence of implementation
- Assessment plan and evidence of implementation.

#### **Step 5: Prepare the student for assessment**

Explain the purpose, criteria and methods of collecting evidence for the assessment to students well before the assessment as well as the reporting processes.

Ensure students are informed of all known potential consequences of decisions arising from an assessment, prior to the assessment:

- Negotiate collection of evidence with students
- Determine with students whether any reasonable adjustments are necessary
- Explain the purpose, criteria and methods for the assessment event
- Seek feedback regarding students' understanding of the assessment procedure
- Use appropriate communication skills when preparing students
- Ensure students are made aware of rights and process of appeal.

#### **Step 6: Confirm staffing and infrastructure requirements**

A process of confirming that MEGA has access to the staffing and infrastructure required to support the programme is documented.

This will include:

- Demonstrating that Trainers and Assessors have the required competencies as described in VET Quality Framework and the relevant Training packages
- Documentation of the verified access to facilities, equipment and training and assessment materials needed for delivery and assessment.

#### **Step 7: Post assessment - give feedback, result and reassessment options to students**

- Make the decision based on the evidence
- Use an appropriate location for providing feedback to students

- Ask students' what went well for you? and what would you do differently?
- Have students self-assess their performance
- Add any feedback if necessary
- Ask students to summarise the outcome and major aspects of the feedback.

Formal agreement is obtained from both students and Trainers and Assessors that the assessment was carried out in accordance with agreed procedures.

For students who have been assessed as Not Yet Competent (NYC), the following options will be available:

- **FEEDBACK:** Trainers and assessors will provide assessment feedback to students and advise how they can improve their performance
- **RESUBMISSION:** Further evidence for assessment might be required if students have partially completed the assessments and some of the works or assignments can be corrected or completed for resubmission
- **REASSESSMENT:** If a student does not qualify for resubmission or is still deemed Not Yet Competent (NYC) after the resubmission, the student will need to go through the reassessment process. To qualify for reassessment the student should have participated in all learning and assessment activities and tasks for the unit of competency for which reassessment is sought and attempted at least part assessments
- **RESIT:** The student will need to re-sit the unit in the term the unit is offered, if they are not deemed eligible for any of the above post-assessment options; i.e., both the options of resubmission and reassessment have been exhausted. The student will also need to re-sit the unit if the result from reassessment is still Not Yet Competent (NYC). Re-sit may result in extension of course duration and may affect student's original completion date of the course.
- **ABSENTEES:** Students are absent on the day of the assessment submission due date without prior approval or a **valid** reason (e.g. medical certificate) will be marked **Not Yet Competent** and will be required to resit the affected unit(s).

Detailed reassessment policy is provided separately. Please refer to *Reassessment Policy*.

## Step 8: Establish the assessment validation process

### Principles

- MEGA will carry out an assessment validation at least annually. This process involves reviewing, comparing and evaluating assessment methods, tools and evidence to achieve standardisation in assessment. This will determine that outcomes of training are consistent both within MEGA and between other RTO's issuing the same qualification
- All Trainers and Assessors involved in training and assessment will attend assessment validation meetings to ensure they are using appropriate assessment tools and making accurate assessment decisions
- At the validation meeting Trainers and Assessors analyse samples of students' work and discuss the assessment methods and tools used to determine the competence of students. They determine whether there has been consistent interpretation of the standards in both the design of assessment tools and the judgements made. They help to identify effective practice and if necessary, modify current practice
- Each course will be validated at least once every five years, with at least 50% of products validated within the first three years of each five-year cycle, taking into account the relative risks of all of the training products on MEGA's scope of registration, including those risks identified by the VET Regulator
- For this purpose, MEGA will also include one or more persons who are not directly involved in the particular instance of delivery and assessment of the course being validated in the validation process – or as an additional review by an external expert in core and high risk units.

## 8. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer processes are guided by MEGA's *RPL and Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure*.

## 9. Reasonable Adjustment

MEGA will implement policies that include reasonable adjustment and access and equity principles. Reasonable adjustment will be provided for students with special learning needs, such as a disability or learning difficulty, according to the nature of the learning need. Evidence collection can be adjusted to suit individual student's needs if required and will be endorsed by the Academic Manager and student.

Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that the student is not presented with artificial barriers to demonstrating achievement in the programme of study. Reasonable adjustments may include the use of adaptive technology, educational support, and alternative methods of assessment such as oral assessment.

The learning need identified from this review will form the basis of any adjustment to the training programme and appropriate strategies will be agreed with the student. Any adjustments will be recorded in the student file and will not compromise the competency standard.

The following LLN strategies might include, but are not limited to:

- Using inclusive teaching practices
- Acknowledging a range of learning styles and adapting teaching strategies to reflect the needs of learners
- Regularly revising content
- Note-taking and assignment writing skills
- Allowing additional time to complete tasks.

Whilst reasonable adjustments can be made in terms of the way in which evidence of performance is gathered, the evidence criteria for making Competent (C) or Not Yet Competent (NYC) decisions and or awarding grades, must not be altered in any way.

## 10. Responsibility

Trainers and Assessors are responsible for implementing and maintaining key principles of assessment and providing required information, support and direction to students.

The Academic Manager is responsible for providing adequate assessment resources, tools and guides to Trainers and Assessors.

The Academic Manager is responsible for maintaining integrity of the assessment process and collecting and storing evidences of competency of each student.

The Academic Manager is responsible to effective implementation and management of this policy as well as provision of information on ways to resolve complaints of breaches of this policy.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has overall responsibility for the implementation and review of this policy.

Any complaints or breaches in relation to this policy should be reported to the Chief Executive Officer in person or by email to: [ceo@mega.edu.au](mailto:ceo@mega.edu.au)



**Revision History:**

Version No:	Date	Description of modifications	Staff responsible
1	Dec 2017	First Review and alignment of PP to new National Code 2018 and SRTOs 2015.	CEO
2	Jan 2018	New PP approved	CEO
3	Oct 2018	Review of Policy and Procedures and change Academic Coordinator to Academic Manager	CEO