

## Assessment Validation & Moderation Policy

### Introduction

Validation is the process where assessors compare and evaluate their assessment methods, assessment tools, assessment procedures and assessment decisions. Validation forms part of the Comm Unity Plus Services Ltd review of assessment strategies with the requirements of the Australian Quality Training Framework and industry Training Package. The process of validating Comm Unity Plus Services Ltd's assessments will also serve to moderate assessment decisions made by assessors.

### Authorisation

Chief Executive Officer to authorise policy;

Director of Education to implement operational strategies.

### Definitions

#### Validation

Validation is a quality review process that confirms your RTO's assessment system can consistently produce valid assessment judgements. Validation involves checking that your assessment tools have produced valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence that allows your RTO to make reasonable judgements about whether training product requirements have been met.<sup>1</sup>

#### Moderation

Moderation is a quality control process aimed at bringing assessment judgements into alignment. Moderation is generally conducted before the finalisation of student results as it ensures the same decisions are applied to all assessment results within the same unit of competency.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 2015 Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015

<sup>2</sup> 2015 Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015

## Policy

### The Purpose of Assessment Validation

The purpose of validation is to ensure that assessment is valid, reliable, fair and flexible and that assessment decisions are made on the basis of sufficient and appropriate evidence. Validation also ensures that assessors working across a number of delivery sites are applying consistent standards and making consistent judgements.

### Validation Method

Who conducts validation?

At Comm Unity Plus Services Ltd, validation is undertaken by a team of people. Comm Unity Plus Services Ltd ensures the review process is completed by people who collectively hold:

- vocational competencies and current industry skills relevant to the assessment being validated;
- current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning; and
- the TAE40110 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (or its successor) or the TAESS00001 Assessor Skills Set (or its successor).

Validators can be employees of Comm Unity Plus Services Ltd, or external validators.

The trainer and assessor who delivered/assessed the training product being validated:

- **can** participate in the validation process as part of a team;
- **cannot** conduct the validation on his/her own;
- **cannot** determine the validation outcome for any assessment judgements they made; and
- **cannot** be the lead validator in the assessment team.

These sessions also provide an opportunity for groups of assessors, teachers, Teacher Curriculum and Assessment Coordinator and Quality Coordinator along with education management staff to discuss the sufficiency, validity, authenticity and currency of evidence being observed during assessment and how they apply their professional judgement to reach an assessment decision. This serves to moderate assessment across Comm Unity Plus Services Ltd teaching and assessment staff.

We achieve this through three elements:

- Formulating an assessment validation schedule;
- Facilitating assessment validation meetings; and
- Sampling assessment processes and outcomes.

### **Assessment Validation Calendar**

The Training Manager will take the role of the validation co-ordinator and will formulate a validation schedule that identifies:

- When validation meetings are to occur;
- What units of competency or modules are to be included;
- What percentage of assessed work is to be scrutinised; and
- How identified improvements will be made.

Validators are informed of the training product validation scheduled and provided with validation materials at the beginning of the relevant term.

### **Assessment Validation Meetings**

At assessment validation meetings, validators should consider whether the assessment tools:

- comply with the assessment requirements of the relevant training product;
- ensure the principles of fairness, flexibility, validity and reliability are adhered to;
- have been designed to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and current evidence;
- are appropriate to the contexts and conditions of assessment (this may include considering whether the assessment reflects real work-based contexts and meets industry requirements);
- are appropriate in terms of the level of difficulty of the tasks to be performed in relation to the skills and knowledge requirements of the unit;
- provide sufficient instruction to clearly explain the tasks to be administered to the learner (if the assessment samples demonstrate the evidence provided by each learner is markedly different, this may indicate that instructions are not clear);
- give sufficient guidance as to the evidence to be gathered from the learner;
- outline appropriate reasonable adjustments that could be made to the gathering of assessment evidence;
- provide sufficient instructions for the assessor on collecting evidence, making a judgment, and recording the outcomes of the assessment (assessment samples should validate recording and reporting processes);
- are supported with evidence criteria to judge the quality of performance (if the assessment samples demonstrate the judgments made about each learner are markedly different, this may indicate that decision-making rules do not ensure consistency of judgment); and
- adhere to the requirements of the RTO's assessment system.

Assessment validation meetings are to occur not less than once each quarter and are to include all groups of assessors and external parties, where possible. In the situation where the staff are in different locations, the use of telephone, and email is to be used, although face-to-face sessions for all assessors/teachers involved in the validation process is preferred.

Outcomes of the meetings will be recorded to provide a record for retrospective review. This is to include raising continuous improvement reports as required.

### **Assessment Sampling**

Assessment sampling involves choosing a selection of assessed work from a sample of target units of competence or modules. You must validate enough assessments to ensure that the results of your validation are accurate, and are representative of the total completed assessments for the training product.

Samples are to be selected using the following criteria:

- The assessment work of a range of learners in different training programs;
- The assessment work of a range of assessors across different sites; and
- Any apparent anomalies or borderline cases.

To support a consistent approach to validation sampling, a validation checklist is provided.

### **Validation Outcomes**

The validation outcomes can identify recommendations for improvement to the assessment tool, assessment process or assessment outcome.

The validation Checklist must include the validation outcome and recommendations that are required. The Validation Checklist is reviewed by the Training Manager and if improvements are identified they are recorded in the Continuous Improvement Register clarifying how the validation outcomes will be acted on.

If the validation outcomes recommend improvements to the assessment tool, the changes are to be implemented across all training products, not only those included in the sample.

The Training Manager maintains records of evidence of the validation. Evidence includes:

- the trainers leading and participating in the validation;
- the validation tools used;
- all assessment samples considered; and
- the validation outcomes.

### **Relationship to the Continuous Improvement Process**

Address: Level 1, 358 Main Road West, St Albans, 3021  
Email: [education@comm-unityplus.org.au](mailto:education@comm-unityplus.org.au)  
Ph: 03 8312 2030 Fax: 03 9367 9438  
ABN: 75 989 153 699 ACN: 603 318 494



Often improvements will be identified as an outcome of both validation meetings and sampling. These are to be linked to the continuous improvement system by raising a continuous improvement report for the major validation outcomes. Further information on continuous improvement reporting is available in the Continuous Improvement Policy.