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Assessment Policy

SECTION 1

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy sets out the principles and framework for the design, implementation and review of assessments at the Institute of Health and Nursing Australia (IHNA).

1.2 This policy ensures that IHNA's assessment practices comply with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 (the Standards) and accreditation standards such as the Enrolled Nurse Accreditation Standards 2017. It offers clear guidance to IHNA assessors on assessment processes and evidence requirements, ensuring assessments adhere to the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all courses and assessments offered by IHNA. It encompasses assessments for Assessment Qualification Framework (AQF) levels 3 to 8 as well as any non-degree or continuing education programs unless otherwise specified in program-specific assessment policies.

2.2 All students, staff and other individuals involved in assessment within IHNA courses are subject to this policy.

3. Definitions

3.1 Refer to IHNA's Glossary of Terms.

SECTION 2

4. Policy Statement

4.1 IHNA is committed to providing quality training and assessment in accordance with the Standards. As such, IHNA has implemented an assessment system that ensures assessments (including recognition of prior learning) comply with the assessment requirements of training products and VET Accredited courses within its scope of registration.

4.2 IHNA recognises that assessment is a core service offered to students (candidates) and is at the centre of its operation as a Registered Training Organisation. Quality assessment ensures that the skills and knowledge of candidates are assessed using following principal determinants:

   a. Assessment decisions are based on the assessment of skills and knowledge compared with units of competency drawn from nationally endorsed Training Products or accredited courses.

   b. Target industry or enterprise requirements are contextualised and integrated within the

assessment.

c.   Assessment methods are selected and implemented in collaboration with students, industry and teaching staff.

d.   Evidence that is gathered meets the Rules of Evidence.

e.   Assessment is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment.

5.   Assessment Principles

5.1   IHNA follows competency based assessment which focuses on gathering evidence of a candidate's knowledge and performance to pre-set competency standards. It prioritises what a candidate is able to do (the outcome). The assessment results in designations of either Competent (C) or Not Yet Competent (NYC) rather than traditional pass or fail. This approach ensures that the training is targeted and promotes active student involvement in the assessment process.

5.2   IHNA implements an assessment system which ensures that VET assessment (including Recognition of Prior Learning) complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package/skill set conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence contained in the table listed below.

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6. Principles of Assessment

Principle	Definition	IHNA's Approach
Fairness and Equity	Individual student's needs are considered in the assessment process. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied to consider the individual student's needs.	IHNA ensures this principle of assessment is addressed by: • Informing students about the assessment process. • Providing them with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and to be reassessed if necessary. • Ensuring the chosen processes and materials within the system of assessment do not disadvantage candidates. • Supporting individual student needs and making reasonable adjustments as required. • Providing clear instructions to students about their assessment requirements in the assessment tasks. • Providing opportunities to appeal an assessment decision following complaints and appeals procedure. • Having students agree to the assessment arrangements in the assessment task

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Flexibility	Assessment is flexible for the individual student by: • Reflecting individual student's needs. • Assessing competencies held by the student no matter how or where those competencies have been acquired. • Drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, unit of competency, associated assessment requirements and the individual student.	IHNA ensures this principle of assessment is addressed by: • Providing options in tasks based on student's individual situation, drawing on a range of assessment methods suitable to the student's current situation and allowing recognition of existing competencies through a formal RPL process.
Validity	Any assessment decision of IHNA is justified according to the evidence of performance of the individual student. Validity requires: • Assessment against unit/s of competency associated. • Assessment requirements cover the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential for competent performance. • Assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with student's practical application. • Assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a student could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations. • Judgement of competence is	IHNA ensures this principle of assessment is addressed by: • Designing assessment tasks where all unit of competency requirements are covered, several times where possible, (demonstrated through mapping). • Using several forms of evidence to form assessment decisions – ensuring validity and sufficiency. • Integrating assessment of knowledge and skills with practical application.

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	based on evidence of student performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.	
Reliability	Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.	IHNA ensures this principle of assessment is addressed by: • Conducting regular validation, moderation and quality reviews of assessment processes. • Providing clear, unambiguous, well documented assessment procedures and competency standards. • Employing effectively trained, briefed and monitored assessors.

7. Rules of Evidence

Principle	Definition	IHNA's approach
Validity	The assessor is assured that the student has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.	IHNA ensures this rule of evidence is addressed by: • Designing assessment tasks where all unit competency requirements are covered, several times where possible, (demonstrated through mapping). • Using a variety of forms of evidence to form assessment decisions– ensuring validity. • Ensuring the assessor is confident of students' skills, knowledge and attributes required in the unit of competency and assessment.

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Sufficiency	The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement of the student's competency to be made.	IHNA ensures this rule of evidence is addressed by: • Designing assessment tasks where all unit competency requirements are covered, several times where possible, (demonstrated through mapping). • Using several forms of evidence to form assessment decisions – ensuring sufficiency. • Clearly advising students about the amount and type of evidence, which is sufficient to prove competency. • Avoiding situations where masses of evidence are provided, requiring assessors to spend more time than necessary per student, or situations with too little evidence, making it difficult to judge competence.
Authenticity	The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the student's own work.	IHNA ensures this principle of assessment is addressed by: • Ensuring all students submit written assessment tasks with a signed Student Assessment Instruction Declaration Form, either online or hard copy, which requires students to declare the work is their own.
Currency	The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past (generally 5 years or depending on industry changes over the period).	IHNA ensures this rule of evidence is addressed by: • Ensuring evidence is current as it relies on evidence collected during the course and includes third party reports and observations of work performance.

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8. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

8.1 All applicants are offered access to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) upon enrolment. Refer to RPL and Credit Transfer Policy for further information.

9. Assessment Design

9.1 Assessments are designed to assess prior knowledge and skills (diagnostic), develop student learning (formative), make judgments about student learning relative to stated learning outcomes (summative) and monitor student learning as a measure of teaching effectiveness. Assessments are to be relevant to the workplace where appropriate and consultation with industry should form part of this process.

10. Training and Assessment Strategy (TAS)

10.1 Assessment strategies outlined in this policy should form the basis of the assessment section in the TAS document for each course. Refer to the Training and Assessment Strategy Development Policy for further information.

11. Developing Assessment Instruments

11.1 IHNA adopts the steps outlined in the ASQA guide to developing assessment instruments. At a minimum, each unit should include:

   a. Assessment activity instructions documents (assessment brief)

   b. Marking guides

   c. Observation checklists (Practical Skills)

   d. Summary assessment mapping guide.

12. Assessment

12.1 IHNA adopts assessment methods that include, but are not limited to:

   a. Theory Assessment

   b. Simulation Based Assessment (SBA)/Objective Structured Clinical Assessment (OSCA)

   c. Professional Experience Placement (PEP)

12.2 IHNA utilises the following assessment tools (but not limited to):

   a. Case studies

   b. Observation of competency in a simulated environment and on-the-job (where necessary)

   c. Laboratory procedures

   d. Question and answer sessions

   e. Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

   f. Projects

   g. Essays

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    h.   Presentations

    i.   Role plays

    j.   Written tests

      i.   Open book examinations

      ii.   Closed book examinations

    k.   Literature (article) review

    l.   Participation in classroom activities

    m. Integrated assessment of some units/modules.

12.3   Advance notice of the assessment will be given to students for all forms of summative assessments.

12.4   Students are required to sign an Assessment Agreement (Training Plan) at the commencement of the course. The Assessment Agreement sets out general information and instructions for students.

12.5   Student assessment is based on the achievement of competency by each student. Competency involves the specification of skills and knowledge and their application to a particular standard of performance required in the workplace.

Aspects of work performance included in this concept are:

    a.   Performance at an acceptable level of technical skill

    b.   Organising one's tasks

    c.   Responding and reacting appropriately when things go wrong

    d.   Transferring skills and knowledge to new situations and contexts

12.6   IHNA acknowledges that effective and objective assessment is the key to the successful implementation of competency standards in the workplace and in education. This is the judgement of performance and knowledge against the relevant industry competency standards. Assessment is carried out by the comparison of a student's evidence of skills and knowledge, against the requirements of the Standards.

13. Assessment Validation and Moderation

13.1   Assessment validation and moderation is undertaken as part of IHNA's quality assurance and continuous improvement of learning and teaching activities. Assessment validation and moderation activities are undertaken collaboratively and will involve all staff who deliver and assess the relevant unit. These activities will also be informed by the broader spectrum of external benchmarking activities. Refer to Assessment Validation and Moderation Policy for further information.

14. Assessors

14.1   Assessors include both IHNA educators and external stakeholders (wherever applicable based on the course offered). The role of an assessor is to objectively assess and judge a student's evidence against a set of

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standards. To do this effectively, an assessor must have a sound knowledge of and be skilled in, the relevant industry area. In addition, the assessor must have acknowledged competency in assessment and hold an appropriate qualification (refer to IHNA's compliance documentation for trainers/assessors in accordance with clauses 1.13 - 1.16 of the Standards for RTOs 2015).

14.2   An assessor must:

   a. Interpret and understand the criteria.

   b. Ensure that evidence meets the standards.

   c. Ensure that evidence is valid, authentic, reliable, consistent, current and sufficient.

   d. Use expertise to make fair and objective judgments.

14.3   The training and ongoing professional development of assessors covers:

   a. Roles, responsibilities and ethics

   b. Procedural and administrative duties

   c. Performance and knowledge evidence gathering and presentation

   d. Interpretation and usage of standards

   e. Selecting and using appropriate methods of assessment

   f. Requirements regarding processing and recording of results, progress and feedback.

14.4   Assessors are responsible for understanding and practising fair, objective, unbiased and flexible assessment processes. Assessors contribute actively to the assessment strategy development and conduct the assessment process cognizant of existing best practices and research in the relevant field.

14.5   Trainers and Assessors always maintain a Professional Development log and Industry Currency Register throughout their employment at IHNA. The Human Resource Manager is responsible for monitoring professional development activities and ensuring that all educators participate actively in professional development activities.

14.6   Assessors' work is crucial as the decisions that they make will influence the quality of work. To help understand the importance of this work, and to guide Assessors in the way that they undertake and validate assessments, IHNA requires all educators to follow Standards for RTOs Clauses 1.8 to 1.12.

15.   Forms of Evidence Other than Assessment Tasks

15.1   The following forms of evidence will be considered by assessors when assessing competency of skills and underpinning knowledge.

15.2   Direct performance evidence current or from an acceptable past period from:

   a. Extracted examples within the workplace

   b. Observation in the workplace

c. Simulations, including competency and skills tests, projects and assessments.

15.3 Supplementary evidence, from:

a. Oral and written questioning

b. Personal reports

c. Third Party report

15.4 Appropriate and valid forms of assessment utilised for both skills and knowledge may include:

a. Evaluation of direct products of work

b. Observation

c. Skill tests, simulations and projects

d. Evaluation of underpinning knowledge and understanding

e. Questioning and discussion

f. Video recordings of skills demonstrations

g. Evidence from prior achievement and activity

16.   Assessment Outcomes

16.1 The recognised training and assessment approach in the VET sector is competency-based which emphasises what an individual can do in the workplace after completing a course of training. The following table identifies the results awarded for students at IHNA.

Satisfactory (S)	Awarded to a student who has demonstrated that they are competent to specified standard against each of the elements being assessed.
Not Yet Satisfactory (NYS)	Relates to an assessment outcome when a student has failed to demonstrate that they are competent to the specified standard against each of the elements being assessed.
Competent (C)	Awarded to a student who has achieved all the elements specified for a unit of competency to the specified standard.
Not Yet Competent (NYC)	Relates to an outcome when a student has failed to achieve all the elements specified for a unit of competency to the specified standard.
Credit Transfer (CT)	Relates to the credit received by a student for a unit of competency through recognition of formal learning.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	Relates to the credit received by a student for a unit of competency through recognition of formal/non-formal/informal learning.

17. Students with Special Needs – Reasonable Adjustment

17.1 Every student will have access to fair and open assessment. Students with special needs will, where possible, be offered the same opportunities as any other student.

17.2 As special needs extend to more than identified physical or learning difficulties, assessors will require to consider a variety of measures to ensure fairness when dealing with students with special needs. For example, students with needs such as low literacy, lack of confidence, mature aged students and students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds may be offered additional time to complete examinations and assessment tasks and will be offered additional academic and personal support.

17.3 Assessors will take special needs into consideration when assessing. Depending on any specification given in the standards/training and assessment strategies, the assessor may be able to accept alternative evidence from a candidate with special needs. Each training and assessment strategy will have allowable reasonable adjustment processes identified for the assessor.

17.4 If there is uncertainty, the assessor will call on other assessors or a verifier for assistance and guidance, as required. In such a case, the situation and processes implemented will be fully documented, with appropriate feedback being provided to the student at all stages.

18. Feedback

18.1 Comments on assessment performance will be noted in the assessment instruments and stored electronically. Feedback on assessment will be returned to the students within two weeks after the submission deadline. Where students are assessed as 'not satisfactory', they will be provided with additional feedback on their assessment outcome to assist in achieving the required performance standard upon reassessment.

19. Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating

19.1 Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating are considered as serious offences. IHNA defines:
   a. Plagiarism is taking someone's words, ideas or other materials and presenting them as their own work.
   b. Collusion is an understanding or agreement between two or more people to intentionally cooperate and gain an unfair advantage in assessment. It includes:
      i. Unauthorised and unacknowledged joint authorship in an assessment task;
      ii. Unauthorised and unacknowledged copying or use of material prepared by another person for use in

assessment.

19.2   Cheating is seeking to obtain an unfair advantage in an examination or test.

19.3   Refer to Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating Policy for further details and information about associated disciplinary procedures.

19.4   In response to the growing capabilities and accessibility of generative artificial intelligence (Gen AI) tools, IHNA has placed a strategy to address and mitigate issues related to plagiarism, collusion and cheating. The strategy is aimed at preserving academic integrity and ensuring that all assessments reflect the true capabilities and knowledge of our students.

   a.   IHNA will employ advanced plagiarism detection software capable of identifying AI-generated content. Regular updates and training will ensure the detection methods are effective against the latest AI tools.

   b.   Students will receive comprehensive guidance on the ethical use of AI tools, emphasising the importance of originality and proper citation. Workshops and resources will be provided to help students understand the boundaries of acceptable use.

   c.   Any content generated or significantly altered by AI tools must be explicitly acknowledged and cited. Failure to do so will be considered a breach of academic integrity.

   d.   Assessors will receive training on how to identify AI-generated content and understand the nuances of AI-assisted academic dishonesty.

   e.   New students will undergo orientation sessions that include information about the updated policy and the consequences of violating it.

20.   Reassessment and Learning Contracts

20.1   Students are provided with an opportunity for reassessment. Students will have to enter a Learning Contract if they do not satisfactorily complete the theory assessment and simulation assessment components. The procedure for entering into a Learning Contract is explained in the Assessment Procedure.

21.   Standards for Assessment Marking

22.1   Time Allocation: Assessors are to spend a minimum of two (2) minutes for every ten (10) Theory assessment Questions, this is to ensure a thorough evaluation. Assessors found marking assessments in less than the stipulated time will be subject to immediate remedial actions, including loss of after-hours assessment payments, Loss of ability to mark assessments, mandatory retraining and closer monitoring.

21.1   Use of AI in marking assessments: IHNA prohibits the use of Artificial Intelligence in order to grade students' assessments.

21.2   Marking Guides: IHNA marking guides must be used for each type of assessment to ensure consistency and transparency in marking.

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22. Responsibility

21.1 The Academic Director along with the National Training Managers has the overall responsibility for this policy. The policy establishes the roles and responsibilities in the assessment process of key stakeholders, including, but not limited to educators, students, academic administrators, course coordinators and relevant support personnel.

SECTION 3

23. Associated Information

Related Internal Documents	- Assessment Procedure - Academic Participation and Progress Policy - Access and Equity Policy - Assessment Validation and Moderation Policy - Assessment Validation and Moderation Procedure - Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating Policy - Student Misconduct Policy - Training and Assessment Strategies
Related Legislation, Standards and Codes	- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 - Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 - Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) - National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code) - Enrolled Nurse Accreditation Standards 2017 - Australian Core Skills Framework - Relevant State and Commonwealth contracts and eligibility documents (VET Student Loans, Skills First Program, Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD), Smart and Skilled)
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24. Change History

Version Control		Version 6.0
Version No.	**Date**	**Brief description of the change, incl. version number, changes, who considered, approved, etc.**

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V.5.0	10/03/2021	Separated Assessment Policy from Assessment Procedure, revised and updated with pertinent sections including Assessment Design, Grading of Assessment and Assessment Validation and Moderation, Version 5.0, approved by Academic Board on 10/03/2021
V.6.0	23/11/2023	Policy scope re-written with substantial change in template with new logo Minor change: code of conduct for educators
V.7.0	08/08/2024	Updated in new template and logo with an update on Gen AI and Standards for Assessment Marking

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