

GENERAL DIRECTION

Retention requirements for completed student assessment items

This is a general direction made under section 28(1) of the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (Cth) (the Act). This general direction was first in effect from **22 June 2012**. This version is as amended on **20 February 2013**.

A general direction may be given by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), as the National VET Regulator, on the way in which providers must comply with the VET Quality Framework and other conditions defined in the Act.

It is a condition of registration that an ASQA registered training organisation (RTO) must comply with any such general directions.

Purpose

This general direction provides guidance to ASQA RTOs on retaining evidence demonstrating the validity of their judgement of students' competence.

ASQA will seek evidence consistent with this general direction at audit.

Terms and definitions

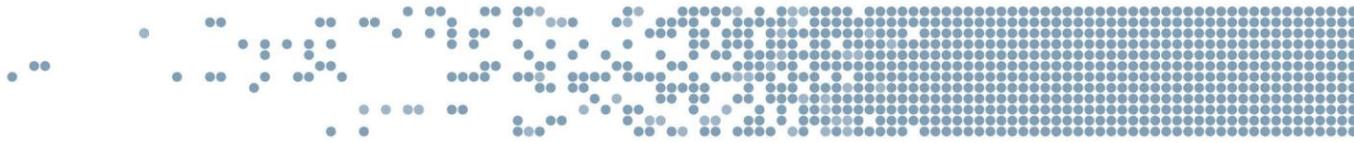
- **Assessment:** The process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace, as expressed by the relevant endorsed industry/enterprise

competency standards of a training package or by the learning outcomes of an accredited course.

- **Assessment tools:** Assessment tools include the following components—context and conditions of assessment, tasks to be administered to the student, an outline of the evidence to be gathered from the candidate and evidence criteria used to judge the quality of performance (i.e. the assessment decision-making rules).

This term also takes in the administration, recording and reporting requirements, and may address a cluster of competencies as applicable for holistic assessment.

- **Completed student assessment items:** The actual piece(s) of work completed by a student or evidence of that work, including evidence collected for an RPL process. An assessor's completed marking guide, criteria, and observation checklist for each student may be sufficient where it is not possible to retain the student's actual work. However, the retained evidence must have enough detail to demonstrate the assessor's judgement of the student's performance against the standard required.
- **RTO:** ASQA registered training organisation
- **RPL:** Recognition of prior learning



- **Securely retain:** To retain records in a manner that safeguards them against unauthorised access, fire, flood, termites or any other pests, and which ensures that copies of records can be produced if the originals are destroyed or inaccessible. Records may be in hard copy or electronic format.

Principles underpinning the general direction

- Standard 15.5 of the *Essential standards for continuing registration*, within the [Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2012](#), requires an RTO to provide quality training and assessment services across all of its operations.
- Among other things, this means that assessment (including recognition of prior learning) must:
 1. meet the requirements of the relevant training package or accredited course, and
 2. be conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence, and
 3. meet workplace and, where relevant, regulatory requirements.
- While the examination of **assessment tools** at audit will determine whether an RTO has a plan in place to ensure the valid assessment of students, only the review of **completed student assessment items** will confirm the extent to which those plans have been implemented.

Therefore, ASQA will generally examine a sample of completed student assessment items at all audits except initial registration audits.

Retention requirements

An RTO is required to **securely retain**, and be able to produce in full at audit if requested to do so, all completed student assessment items for each student, as per the definition above, for a period of six months from the date on which the judgement of competence for the student was made.

Note:

Other record-keeping requirements may apply if an RTO participates in some training and assessment activities. For example, where training and assessment is conducted under a government-funded agreement or contract, RTOs must consider the record-keeping requirements of that agreement or contract.

Qualifications, courses or units of competency that lead to regulated/licensed outcomes may also impose specific records retention requirements. RTOs should refer to specific regulatory requirements relating to that delivery area to ensure compliance.