

## Audit Guide – Clause 1.8

**1.8 The RTO implements an assessment system that ensures that assessment (including recognition of prior learning): a) complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package or VET accredited course; and b) is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence.**

**What is this clause about:** This clause is simply about assessment! ☺ Of course it's not simple at all. It involves interpreting the training package requirements through unpacking the units of competency and designing assessment resources that support the principles of assessment, the rules of evidence and the training package requirements. It's about having good assessment resources in support of every unit of competency you deliver. It is also about having good assessment instructions for the candidate and for the assessor and suitable documents to record assessment evidence. The assessment tasks must align to the units of competency and the evidence you retain must justify the assessment decision and comply with the ASQA retention requirements for completed learner assessment items [Click Here](#). If none of this makes sense to you then seek help immediately. ☺ Ok, sorry, a bit of tongue-in-cheek there. Seriously though, this is a complex clause and is where the vast majority of RTO's are found non-compliant. Assessment is one of the most subjective areas within the standards. Every auditor has their own preferences and will interpret the same requirement in the unit of competency differently. To overcome this subjectivity, you need to invest in the development of the best assessment tools you can afford and then have these reviewed by as many people as possible who know what they're looking for. There are a couple of do nots to follow when preparing for assessment:

- **Do not** simply buy commercial assessment resources and make a false assumption that these are compliant because the organisation supplying them says that they are. There are some good commercial suppliers of assessment resources (including us), but the vast majority are seriously crapola ([link](#) ☺). Always ask for a sample and review the sample to identify how much actual assessment design has gone into the activities. Most of these materials are simply the units of competency unpacked into observation tools and have converted the performance evidence statement into assessment instructions. Seriously hopeless. Buyer beware!
- **Do not** assume that the assessment materials that your friend or another RTO says have "passed" audit will be compliant at your audit. The reality is that an audit only looks at a sample and not the entire RTO's scope is sampled. As outlined above, the audit of assessment is notoriously subject. Some auditors gloss over the audit of assessment because they don't really understand assessment requirements (true). Other auditors understand assessment thoroughly and apply a high attention to detail to your assessment and its alignment to the unit of competency. I have seen assessments (same unit, same assessment resource) found compliant 30 out of 35 audits. What was unique about the 5 non-compliances? Answer: The auditor and their personal preferences and attention to detail.
- **Do not** interpret the unit of competency. Accept the unit as written in black-and-white and design your assessment to address every component of the unit of competency particularly the assessment requirements. If it says the candidate needs to be observed on 3 occasions, then do it 3 times. Don't try and be tricky and get away with only collecting partial evidence. Collect exactly the evidence that the unit of competency specifies in the context of tasks required.

<b>Audit Guide – Clause 1.8</b>	
<p>Sorry to be a killjoy, but be aware that it is a civil offence to issue a vet qualification or unit of competency without undertaking adequate assessment (see <i>National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011, Part 6, Division 1, Subdivision A, Section 102</i>) <a href="#">Click</a> - \$21,600.00 fine! Assessment is a serious business. In some industries, the adequacy of the candidate's assessment could impair their ability to perform workplace tasks and impact on their workplace safety. Get it right.</p>	
<p><b>Evidence to prepare:</b></p> <p>For each unit or cluster of units, all assessment materials. These might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Access to all learner records where actual learner assessment items and assessment records are retained. Again, note the ASQA General Direction— Retention requirements for completed learner assessment items <a href="#">Click Here</a></li> <li>– Assessment coversheet to record the results of the assessment. This document should bring together all of the evidence gathered in relation to the assessment of the unit.</li> <li>– Assessment instructions for the Assessor, Candidate and Supervisor if applicable. These should be detailed and describe the specific assessment tasks to be completed.</li> </ul> <p>If the assessment requires the candidate to complete a document in a specific format, a document template must be provided to the candidate.</p>	<p><b>You must be able to demonstrate that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Your assessments meet the requirements of the training package, which means that if the unit of competency specified that the candidate must be observed five times performing a specific task then that is exactly what the assessment should include.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key point.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– You have adequate assessment instructions that detail the requirements for the assessor and the candidate and support the <b>fairness</b> and <b>flexibility</b> of the assessment. We apply the following model to the development of assessment instructions:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Who:</b> Define who is being assessed and the role of any other persons that may be contributing to the assessment in a role-play.</li> <li>○ <b>What:</b> Specify the assessment task in terms of what the candidate must do exactly in order to demonstrate their competency. This will sometimes set limitations on the task.</li> <li>○ <b>Where:</b> Identify the assessment context in terms of the environment and the equipment required to conduct the assessment. This may also include information about the assessment scenario.</li> <li>○ <b>When:</b> Define the timeframe for the assessment activity</li> <li>○ <b>Why:</b> Specify the standard of performance for the assessment. This will relate to what is being assessed and will provide a guide to the assessor about specific requirements they need to look for.</li> <li>○ <b>How:</b> identify how the assessment will be conducted in terms of the sequence of activities from briefing the candidate through to collecting evidence and informing the candidate of the result. This should not repeat generic information that is contained elsewhere but may need to specify</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Audit Guide – Clause 1.8	
<p>If assessment of knowledge is planned using written or verbal assessment, model answers for the assessment questions must be provided in order to ensure the reliability of the assessment.</p> <p>Observation assessment tools for practical or product based assessment. These should be designed to include observation criteria that relate to the specific assessment task being assessed. Do not simply copy all the performance criteria. The auditor wants to see customised observation criteria that are observable and measurable.</p> <p>Assessment mapping that shows how the assessment evidence being gathered relates to the unit of competence. This should display the mapping to elements, performance criteria, performance evidence and knowledge evidence requirements.</p> <p>Assessment policy and procedure that defines how the organisation prepares and implements the assessment.</p> <p>All RPL Assessment tools /resources for each training product on the scope of registration.</p>	<p>particular sequence or activities that are relevant to the assessment task. This should also specify any arrangements or mechanisms for reasonable adjustment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Your assessment task and the evidence being collected align perfectly with the tasks specified within the unit of competency and are informed by the desired workplace context to support the <b>validity</b> of the assessment. I have a favorite saying that I repeat frequently to clients in respect of validity: <i>“Collecting evidence of the candidate’s understanding of a task is not valid evidence of their ability to perform that task.”</i></li> <li>– You are applying <b>reliability</b> in your assessment process which is supported by having model answers (<u>benchmark responses</u>) for written knowledge assessment, detailed observation criteria in support of observation tasks (<u>benchmark behaviours</u>) and developed examples in support of assessment projects and assignments (<u>benchmark examples</u>).</li> <li>– You are collecting <b>sufficient</b> evidence that confirms the consistency of the candidate’s performance and their ability to perform <b>all</b> tasks specified within the unit of competency.</li> <li>– You are applying arrangements to ensure that the evidence being collected is <b>authentic</b> and is the work of the candidate. These might include simple measures such as obtaining a declaration of authenticity from the candidate when they submit a response to an assessment task.</li> <li>– You are only confirming a candidate’s competency based on <b>current</b> evidence particularly when RPL assessment processes are being applied. Mechanisms to confirm the candidate’s current skills and knowledge might include verbal interview or knowledge assessment combined with observation assessment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>You should prepare for these types of questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Can I see the completed assessment records (Learner File) for the following learners please?</li> </ul>	

### Audit Guide – Clause 1.8

- I am auditing the unit of competency XXXXXX, can you talk me through this assessment arrangement and identify how the evidence is being gathered and assessed?
- How do you ensure the reliability of your assessment?
- How did you determine the assessment tasks?
- How do you ensure that the evidence being submitted is the candidate's own work?
- I am trying to understand how you observe these tasks being performed. How do you inform the candidate of the assessment activity?
- Can you explain your approach to gathering third-party evidence? How do you verify the suitability of the third-party who is providing evidence? ([ASQA Fact Sheet](#))
- How do you prepare or support the supervisor to provide this evidence toward the assessment?
- What resources and equipment do you use in support of this assessment?
- For workplace assessment, how do you ensure that sufficient resources are available in the workplace to support the assessment.
- How do you ensure that the assessment decisions between different assessors are reliable?
- The unit of competency performance evidence statement requires the candidate to be observed performing this task five times over these range of situations, can you show me in this assessment evidence how this has been achieved?
- The unit of competency knowledge evidence statement specified the requirement for knowledge of XXXXXXXX, can you show me in the assessment evidence where this knowledge was assessed? Do you have a model answer that question?
- The unit of competency assessment conditions statement specifies the requirement that the assessment must be undertaken in a real workplace with access to the following minimum equipment. How has this been achieved and verified?
- All of these assessment materials have been commercially supplied to you. How have you customised them to align with your delivery model and target learner?
- How are assessment results being reported and recorded?

### Audit Guide – Clause 1.8

- What is your process for a candidate to be re-assessed or appeal an assessment decision?
- How does the candidate receive feedback on their assessment result?
- Can you explain your approach to assessment using recognition of prior learning? Do you have a separate RPL assessment tools for this unit or qualification? Can I see an example of RPL you have completed?
- There is minimal or no observations or evidence being recorded by the assessor in this assessment record, I need to see valid evidence of the assessment as opposed to ticks on sheets of paper. Do you have any further evidence in support of this assessment? ([ASQA General Direction](#))

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