

**Kaplan Professional  
Assessment Validation and  
Moderation Policy**

**Vocational Education**



## Scope

This policy is applicable to Kaplan Education Pty Ltd trading as Kaplan Professional (referred to as 'Kaplan Professional'). The policy applies to all Kaplan Professional staff involved in the validation and moderation of assessment instruments and tools associated with vocational education qualifications and courses listed on Kaplan Professional's RTO scope of registration.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- assessment instruments and tools meet the assessment requirements specified in the relevant training package (RTO Standards 1.8)
- assessment decisions are consistent and reliable, and meet the principles of assessment and rules of evidence (RTO Standards 1.8)
- the validation processes meet the requirements of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO Standards 1.9-1.12).

## Policy statement

This policy defines how assessment validation and moderation are managed at Kaplan Professional for vocational education training products.

The focus is on ensuring that all training products are compliant with the relevant training package rules, the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence. Kaplan Professional certificates are then issued to students who have demonstrated their competence in these training products, contributing towards the quality of vocational education training and assessment in Australia.

## Definitions

<b>Amount of training</b>	enables a student to meet the requirements of each training product, and gain the skills and knowledge specified in the relevant training product. The amount of training is the formal learning activities provided to a student which may include live trainer (tutor) sessions, online tutor forum, online "apply your knowledge" questions, online review questions, online practice tests, online or other self-paced study.
<b>AQF</b>	Australian Qualifications Framework
<b>Leader</b>	is the person assigned to lead a validation panel or a moderation panel.
<b>Moderation</b>	is the quality improvement process of bringing assessment judgements and standards into alignment. It ensures the same standards are applied to all assessment results within the same units of competency. It is an active process in the sense that adjustments to assessor judgements are made to overcome differences in the use of the tool and/or the severity of judgements. Moderations are not required in the RTO Standards. However, its value as a quality improvement process helps to ensure students receive the same assessment result regardless of the assessor.
<b>Practitioner</b>	is a person invited to participate in a validation panel or a moderation panel. Also known as the validator.
<b>RTO Standards 2015 and Users' Guide</b>	The Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (the Standards) set out the requirements for an organisation to be registered as a training provider. The Users' Guide aims to help RTOs ensure their practices deliver a quality experience for every student at each stage of their 'journey' through the vocational education and training (VET) system.



<b>Training product</b>	means AQF qualification, skill set, unit of competency, accredited short course or module on Kaplan Professional's RTO scope of registration. Courses will sometimes include units of competency drawn from qualifications on scope and at other times, units of competency (in courses or individually) may be explicitly listed on the scope of registration.
<b>Validation</b>	<p>is a quality improvement process. It involves checking that assessment tools produce valid, reliable, sufficient, current, and authentic evidence to enable reasonable judgements to be made as to whether the requirements of the relevant aspects of the training package or accredited course have been met. It includes reviewing and making recommendations for future improvements to the assessment tool, process and/or outcomes.</p> <p>The validation process is subject to the requirements of the RTO Standards.</p>
<b>VET</b>	Vocational Education and Training

## Policy principles

Kaplan Professional will undertake a systematic approach to the validation and moderation of its assessments to ensure its assessment strategies and tools:

- are responsive to industry and learner needs
- meet the requirements of training packages
- provide high quality training and assessment
- have regard for the amount of training required for the learner to gain the competencies as specified in the relevant training package
- support assessments that comply with the principles of assessment and rules of evidence.

## Validation and moderation

### Continuous improvement process

The validation process will involve reviewing a statistically valid random sample of assessments, as specified in the RTO Standards and ASQA guidelines, and making recommendations for future improvements to the assessment tools, process and/or outcomes if applicable.

### Schedule

An assessment validation schedule will be implemented that meets the requirements of the RTO Standards and ASQA guidelines, which currently state that 50% of training products must be validated in the first three years and 100% must be validated in the five-year audit cycle. This five-year cycle continues into the future with a review each year.

### New products

New products developed will be added to the validation schedule as they are released.

### Frequency

Kaplan Professional may, at its discretion and based on a risk assessment, identify certain training products requiring more frequent validation. Kaplan Professional will monitor ASQA notices and publications which may identify training products requiring more frequent validation.



### **Coverage of units of competency**

A minimum of two units of competency are required to be validated for a training product at least every five years (including if the product contains multiple subjects). If there are multiple subjects, the units of competency may be in one or more of the subjects of the training product.

Kaplan Professional has regulatory courses which are part of a qualification (and use the same units of competency). The regulatory courses do not need to be validated separately from the qualification, if the assessment is the same.

### **Timing**

When validation or moderation is conducted, the most recent version of the training product available to students will be validated. The assessment sample from that product should be no more than six months old.

### **Validation**

Validation activities will be conducted after the assessment/s have been completed by students, to allow Kaplan Professional to consider the validity of assessment practices, as well as judgements.

### **Principles of assessment**

Validation will involve checking that assessment tools are valid, reliable, fair and flexible (RTO Standards 1.8).

### **Rules of evidence**

Validation will involve checking that assessment tools are valid, authentic, current and sufficient (RTO Standards 1.8) allowing for reasonable judgements of students' assessment submissions and whether training product requirements have been met.

### **Recommended actions**

Kaplan Professional will implement any recommended actions for future improvement. It will assign identified improvement suggestions to specific staff and set a time frame for development and implementation. The improvement suggestions will be applied to the next version of the training product by the Teaching and Learning team.

### **Pre-validation**

Pre-validation activities are a quality improvement process which is conducted after the technical check and before the training product is available to students. A pre-validation does not include student assessment samples, because the training product has not yet been released. Pre-validations are not required by the RTO Standards; however, they may serve the purpose of checking the compliance of the training product before release and particularly before an application to add to the scope is submitted to ASQA.

An alternative to a pre-validation is an internal Quality Review of the training product by the Quality, Regulations and Standards team.

### **Validation and moderation combined**



Assessment validation and moderation may be conducted at the same time by a panel consisting of appropriately qualified content, assessment and industry experts.

### **Corporates**

Many corporate qualifications and courses are copies or similar to the publicly offered training products, and do not need to be validated separately. A corporate program will need to be validated separately if it is 50% or more customised differently to the standard retail offering.

### **Practitioner (validator) requirements for validation**

Kaplan Professional will ensure the validation process is conducted 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
- trainer and assessor requirements in clauses 1.13 to 1.16 of the RTO Standards 2015. For more information about the requirements of trainers and assessors, see the Trainer, Tutor and Assessor Policy.
- validators can be employees of Kaplan Professional. Kaplan Professional may also use the services of external validators.

It is a requirement that one or more individuals participating in the validation panel are not directly involved in the delivery and assessment of the training product being validated.

Although not part of the RTO Standards, it is recommended that some staff involved in the delivery and/or assessment of the materials be involved in the validation process, so they gain an understanding of the recommendations and implications of recommendations made by the panel. If this is the case the person:

- can participate in the validation process as part of the team
- cannot conduct the validation on their own
- cannot determine the validation outcome for any assessment judgements they made, and
- cannot be the lead validator in the assessment team.

At a minimum, one person must have relevant industry experience and qualifications, and another person must have vocational education experience and qualifications.

### **Moderation**

Moderation is not a requirement of the RTO Standards but is considered part of the overall quality management process and will be implemented in that context.

The aim of moderation is to ensure that assessment outcomes for a unit of competency are the same, regardless of the assessor or the assessment tool. Moderation will occur as part of the Kaplan Professional quality and continuous improvement process. Moderation can take place at any time, but particularly when a discrepancy between assessment results is identified.

- Moderation can be done at the same time as validation or separately.
- The outcomes of moderation will be recorded and implemented in accordance with the Continuous Improvement Policy.
- Moderation is applicable to assignments but not to examinations which are assessed online in KapLearn.



## Comparison of validation and moderation

Features	Pre-validation	Validation	Moderation
RTO Standards requirements	Not specified by the RTO Standards. It is a risk management process to check that applications to add to scope are compliant with RTO Standard 1.8.	RTO Standard 1.9-1.11	Not specified by the RTO Standards It is a risk management process that may be used to confirm that students receive the same assessment result regardless of the assessor (RTO Standard 1.8).
Measurement	Principles of assessment	Principles of assessment Rules of evidence	Principles of assessment Rules of evidence
Sampling method	n/a	As recommended on ASQA website	As recommended on ASQA website
Primary purpose	Continuous improvement before training product is implemented	Continuous improvement during the life cycle of the training product	Bring assessor judgements and standards into alignment during the life cycle of the training product
Timing	After the technical check and before copy edit with a new or updated assessment tool.	On-going Before starting technical updates, depending on the sample size.	Prior to the finalisation of candidate results
Focus	Assessment tool Processes Collected evidence	Assessment tool Collected evidence including assessor judgements	Assessment tools and candidate evidence including assessor judgements
Type of Approaches	Assessor Partnerships Consensus Meetings (validators or panels)	Assessor Partnerships Consensus Meetings External (panels)	Consensus Meetings External (panels)
Outcomes	Recommended actions for improvements implemented when the next version will Go Live	Recommended actions for future improvements	Recommended actions for future improvements and adjustments to assessor judgements (if required)



## Guiding procedures

Kaplan Professional follows guiding procedures for conducting assessment validation and moderation that are transparent, representative, confidential and equitable. Kaplan Professional is continually improving these procedures, including but not limited to the following:

Procedure	Detail
Validation and Moderation audit tracker and maintenance schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This plan should ensure that all training products (qualification or VET accredited course) is validated at a minimum of every five years, with at least 50% of products on the scope of the RTO validated within the first three years of each five-year cycle, taking into consideration risks (including those identified by the VET Regulator).</li><li>• The training product can be a qualification, course or units of competency on explicit scope. There can also be corporate versions of these training products.</li><li>• The pre-validation date occurs before the release of a new training product.</li><li>• The schedule for validation / moderation of a given training product will refer to the date of another training product, if the validation/moderation requirements are covered by that other product (for example, units of competency in a regulatory course, drawn from a qualification where assessments are the same).</li><li>• Risk requirements may include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ high volume</li><li>○ licensing</li><li>○ other factors.</li></ul></li></ul>
Training for Course Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assessment Validation and Moderation Panel Leadership training.</li></ul>
Validation and Moderation template	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Templates for validation and moderation participants to record their findings and for the panel leader to record final decisions and action plans.</li></ul>
Evidence folders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Records of all validations and moderations conducted since 2015 including evidence, outcomes and action plans.</li><li>• See the Student Records Management Policy for more information.</li></ul>
Updates to Training and Assessment Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updates to the following sections of the Training and Assessment Strategy for new or updated training products:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Validation and Moderation</li><li>○ Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence</li><li>○ Recognition of Prior Learning</li></ul></li></ul>
Validation and Moderation Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Outline of the steps to lead a validation or moderation panel from the initial invitation to participants to the final implementation of the recommended actions.</li><li>• Includes templates for invitations to be sent to participants in Validations and Moderation</li></ul>
Guidelines for Practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Instructions for participants in Validations and Moderation</li><li>• Includes information about process, fees, purpose, and expectations.</li></ul>
Integration of validation within the Kaplan Professional training product life cycle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The life cycle of the training product highlights the continuous improvement process for all course development. The validation process is built into this cycle.<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Technical edit</li><li>2. Technical check</li><li>3. Pre-validation</li><li>4. Copy edit</li><li>5. Quality assurance/user testing</li><li>6. Go live</li><li>7. Maintenance schedule and new products</li><li>8. Validation as per 5-year cycle</li></ol></li></ul>



## Complaints and Appeals

Any complaint or appeal in relation to the implementation of this policy will be managed in accordance with the Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy.

## Relevant Legislation

As a registered training organisation (RTO), Kaplan operates under strict legislation and regulations. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the legislative instruments referenced below.

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 – Standards 1.8 - 1.12
- ASQA Fact Sheet – Conducting validation.

## Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Kaplan policies and documents:

- Assessment Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Learning Facilities and Resources Policy
- Student Records Management Policy
- Trainer, Tutor and Assessor Policy
- Training and Assessment Strategy Policy

## Version control and accountable officers

It is the joint responsibility of the Implementation Officer and Responsible Officer to ensure compliance with this Policy.

<b>Policy Category</b>	Academic			
<b>Responsible Officers</b>	Head of Academic Programs			
<b>Implementation Officers</b>	Senior Manager, Teaching and Learning Programs			
<b>Review Date</b>	November 2023			
<b>Approved by</b>	Policy Committee			
<b>Version</b>	<b>Authored by</b>	<b>Brief Description of the changes</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
1.0	Head of Learning & Delivery	New procedures	31.3.2016	1.4.2016
2.0	Head of Learning & Delivery	Reviewed policy	27.6.2018	3.9.2018
3.0	Quality Regulations and Standards team	Updates procedures and changed to new template	22.11.2022	2.12.2022