QUALITY IN ONLINE DELIVERY

This fact sheet gives an overview of requirements about online training and assessment in the VET Funding Contract (the Contract).[1]

BACKGROUND

Online training and assessment can offer a range of benefits for students, including flexibility to combine work and study, or accessibility for those who can't attend a campus due to time or distance.

The Department of Education and Training (the Department) recognises these potential benefits, but also wants to make sure that training providers address the unique requirements of online delivery of training and assessment.

The Contract has a number of measures to ensure the online learning experience for students is the same level of quality as other modes of delivery, and it meets *Skills First* objectives.

Online service standards

If you deliver any training and assessment online, you must publish 'online service standards' in a prominent place on your website.

Online service standards help students to make an informed choice about which delivery mode and training provider will suit their individual needs and best help them to achieve the outcomes they seek from training.

The Department notified training providers about what must be included in online service standards in Contract Notification CN 2020-04.

We tell you what items to include in these online service standards, but we haven't set specific benchmarks for each item, recognising these may vary depending on the training provider and cohort.

The Department has published an example version of online service standards to show what they could look like. You can refer to these for information, but must create your own version, based on your actual service delivery

Contract reference: Clause 1.5 (d) of Schedule 1

Professional development

You must make sure that all *Skills First* Teachers do appropriate professional development if they are involved in online delivery, whether that delivery is wholly or partly online.

You must do this by adopting and implementing a professional development program specific to the delivery of online training and/or assessment.

We don't mandate the form or content of this professional development, as it needs to be relevant to your own context.

However, the professional development should ensure that *Skills First* teachers have the necessary skills and knowledge to engage and support students in an online environment. This includes the ability to:

- use contemporary technologies
- facilitate and communicate effectively in an online environment
- provide effective and timely feedback
- ensure students are motivated and continue to progress throughout their course.

Contract reference: Clause 7.21 of Schedule 1[2]

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[1] All clause references based on the 2018-19 Standard VET Funding Contract (extended to 31 December 2020)

Planning for quality online training and assessment

You must make sure that your online training and assessment is planned and delivered in a way that is suited to an online learning environment.

Students must have the capacity to participate fully in online learning. This should be assessed as part of a comprehensive Pre-Training Review and be determined by assessing prospective students' digital literacy, access to necessary technology, and providing support to overcome any barriers.

Training and Assessment Strategies must also address the unique requirements of online learning. A course delivered online needs to be intentionally designed for the online environment, not simply an electronic replication of classroom-based resources.

Training and Assessment Strategies must also include the validation method for online assessment tools, given the importance of making sure the student's work is their own and it is assessed authentically.

Contract reference: 5.1 (d) of Schedule 1, 5.10 (c) of Schedule 1, 5.12 of Schedule 1

Learning materials

All learning materials used for online delivery of training and assessment must comply with the principles of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG).

The Department doesn't require full compliance with all requirements of the WCAG.

However, you must, at minimum, comply with the high level principles of the WCAG, that is, online learning materials are presented in a manner that is:

- perceivable
- operable
- understandable
- robust.

Contract reference: 1.6 of Schedule 1

Online Delivery Restriction List

The Department has published the Online Delivery Restriction List. This is a subset of the *Skills First* Funded Courses List.

Courses on this list and any qualifications delivered as an Apprenticeship cannot be delivered wholly online, or marketed or promoted by training providers as such.

This recognises that some courses are not suited to being delivered wholly online, due to the need for practical skills to be demonstrated, learned and practiced in an appropriate setting and the level of risk associated with the competencies not being fully attained if this does not occur.

Contract reference: 1.1(g) of Schedule 1

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Submit an enquiry via SVTS

Contract Notification CN-2020-04

Online Delivery Restriction List

Online service standards