

Course Design, Development and Review

Approved by: Chief Product and Quality Officer

Approval date: 16 July 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, TAFE NSW acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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Section 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Policy outlines the principles that guide the quality and integrity of planning, designing, developing, and reviewing courses and associated learning and assessment materials. This includes vocational education and training (VET), higher education (HE), micro-credentials, micro-skills, accredited courses, and short courses.
- 1.2 This policy promotes transparency and ensures courses are current, meet diverse student needs, comply with relevant standards, and aligns with industry requirements to achieve quality outcomes for students. Aligned with all relevant regulatory frameworks and legislative instruments, including:
 - a. [Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\)](#)
 - b. [ELICOS Standards 2018](#)
 - c. [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#)
 - d. [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#)
 - e. [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#)
 - f. [National Vocational Education and Training Regulator \(Compliance Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations and Fit and Proper Person Requirements\) Instrument 2025](#)
 - g. [National Vocational Education and Training Regulator \(Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations\) 2025](#)
 - h. [Standards for Registered Training Organisations Credentials Policy \(2025\)](#)
 - i. [Standards for Vocational Education and Training \(VET\) Accreditation courses 2021](#)
 - j. [Child Safe Standards](#)
 - k. Any other relevant licensing, contractual and regulatory requirements

Section 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all staff, contractors, third parties engaged by TAFE NSW and stakeholders involved in the planning, design, development, review and management of courses, subjects or explicit units of competency that TAFE NSW is authorised to deliver.
- 2.2 Stakeholders are inclusive of Faculty and Branch staff, students, industry, community and regulatory representatives engaged in course consultations, feedback, planning design, development and validation activities.
- 2.3 This policy excludes the design, development and review of courses developed under commercial contracts or projects, unless they align with VET, nationally accredited, or higher education products.
- 2.4 Design involves planning and structuring the course, focusing on the ‘what’ and ‘how.’
- 2.5 Development involves building and implementing the course materials, focusing on the ‘creation’ and ‘execution’ of the course content.

2.6 Review is about evaluating and refining the course to maintain its quality and relevance.

Section 3. Principles

- 3.1. TAFE NSW upholds the following principles in course design, development and review ensuring:
- a. Designs meet national regulatory requirements, ensuring both quality and compliance.
 - b. Development and review processes are conducted in collaboration with teachers, industry experts and employers to ensure relevance and address current skills needs.
 - c. A student-centric approach is adopted in the design, considering the diverse needs of all students, including those under 18. This includes ensuring accessibility, flexibility and high levels of student engagement through thoughtful course structure, content, learning activities, resources, assessments and delivery methods.
 - d. Regular monitoring, evaluation and review processes are implemented to ensure the courses remain current and fit for purpose.
 - e. Integration of new technologies, digital learning tools and sustainable practices in the design and delivery promotes sustainability and innovation.
 - f. Academic integrity is upheld by minimising risks and embedding assessment for learning through progressive assessment and feedback.
 - g. Course development approvals adhere to internal governance frameworks and regulatory requirements.

Section 4. Policy requirements

4.1 TAFE NSW ensures integrity and quality outcomes for students by complying with the following requirements in course design, development and review.

Course Planning

- 4.2 Course design and course planning are closely related and often overlap, but they serve distinct purposes within the policy. Course planning typically precedes course design. Planning sets the foundation and direction, while design brings the plan to life. This policy ensures that course planning aligns with institutional goals, regulatory requirements, and industry standards.
- 4.3 Course planning ensures an informed and cohesive learning experience that supports student success by identifying student needs and course outcomes. This process includes consultations with stakeholders, such as subject matter experts, industry professionals, and community representatives, to substantiate the planning efforts. Additionally, planning encompasses the following elements:
- a. Planning is inclusive of accessibility, diversity and cultural inclusivity, ensuring that all students, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities, have equitable opportunities to succeed.

- b. Incorporates work-integrated learning where relevant and feasible, ensuring students gain practical experience and industry-relevant skills alongside their academic studies.
 - c. Initial phase where the overall structure and objectives of the course are outlined. It involves identifying the needs of the target audience, setting learning outcomes and determining the resources required.
- 4.4 Course planning details are captured in the Course Development Schedule, which identifies the scheduled courses for design and development inclusive of continuous improvement updates. The Course Development Schedule is created by ensuring:
- a. Alignment to the TAFE NSW Training Portfolio, Course Catalogue and Education Delivery Plan.
 - b. Application of the Elective Selection Framework (ESF) to manage elective choices.
 - c. Incorporation of industry requirements, job roles and feedback used to inform unit sequencing, clustering, pre-requisites and where possible, co-assessment of units
 - d. Application of cost feasibility analysis. This analysis evaluates the financial viability of a proposed development by comparing the expected costs and benefits, including capacity requirements. It helps decision-makers assess whether the development type is economically feasible and identify the most efficient and effective options.

Course Design

- 4.5 The course design phase entails the conceptualisation of the course structure, objectives, and content. It includes identifying the target audience and/or cohorts, setting learning outcomes, and determining the instructional and teaching strategies and technologies to be used.
- 4.6 The Course design includes:
- a. Aligning with relevant AQF levels, course accreditation requirements and guidelines, including nationally registered training products, higher education frameworks and any applicable state or industry regulations.
 - b. Applying design principles and practices, including accessibility and inclusivity as outlined by the TAFE NSW Educational Quality Framework, specifically in quality areas 'Learning and Assessment' and 'Student Support.'
 - c. Incorporating work-integrated learning strategies and design plans that support the educational approach of combining academic learning with practical work experiences, where feasible and where it is a requirement of the training product or qualification. This method assists students in applying theoretical knowledge in real-world settings, enhancing their skills, and preparing them for the workplace. Examples include courses designed for apprenticeships or traineeships, practical scenario-based workshops, work placements, or community-based learning opportunities.
 - d. Identifying and consolidating common themes, topics, job tasks, learning and assessment outcomes to reduce duplication and streamline the course content, where feasible.

- e. Defining specific, measurable learning and assessment outcomes and required competencies (if applicable) that guide the content and activities. Ensure that outcomes reflect the skills and knowledge required for relevant job role(s).
- f. Applying curriculum mapping, linking course content, learning activities and assessments to defined outcomes. Identifying and addressing gaps and opportunities to integrate industry specific elements.
- g. Embracing meaningful and relevant content, structured in a clear, sequential manner to facilitate student understanding and retention. Incorporate principles of spiral learning and align common and complementary units, topics, or themes to help students grasp complex concepts and apply their knowledge in practical situations.
- h. Incorporating planned activities and interactions that promote student engagement and participation. Include interactive and engaging activities that encourage active learning.
- i. Applying design approaches that start with desired learning outcomes. Plan assessments and instructional activities to support these goals, ensuring coherence and alignment across all course components.
- j. Incorporating assessment events that reflect industry requirements, practices, processes, and job roles. Ensure these assessments are holistic and streamlined to reduce duplication, using unit sequencing, clustering, and co-assessment approaches to reflect real-world applications where feasible.
- k. Implementing sufficient learning opportunities for students to practice and give and receive feedback to enhance their learning experience and prepare for assessments.
- l. Implementing design features and approaches that ensure course learning and assessment are equitable, accessible, and flexible. Underpinned by language, literacy, numeracy, and digital foundation principles to support and meet the diverse needs of all students.

Course Design for Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students. (CRICOS).

- 4.7 In addition to the above, designing a course for international students must comply with the requirements of the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act), the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018), and for English-language courses, the ELICOS Standards 2018 (P1-P8).

Course Development

- 4.8 The Course development phase is about the practical creation and assembly of the course materials. It includes developing course content, creating assessments, and integrating multimedia or interactive activities, where feasible.
- 4.9 Course development aims to produce complete and functional course materials ready for delivery. Considerations when developing course learning and assessment materials include:
- a. Defining clear outcomes that outline specific, measurable assessment results or competencies. These should articulate what students should achieve by the end of the unit, module, micro-credential, or Micro-skill.

- b. Developing meaningful and relevant content, structured into manageable modules, units, or topics in a clear, sequential manner and as appropriate to the expected Language, Literacy, Numeracy and Digital (LLND) levels for the course, to facilitate understanding and retention. Use a variety of engaging methodologies, such as interactive activities and multimedia, to enhance engagement and active learning. Apply inclusive design principles and adhere to quality writing standards.
- c. Considering appropriate facilities, resources and equipment needed for students to participate in the training and assessment.
- d. Applying approaches that support engaging and customisable teaching strategies and assessment guides, using various methods to cater to different learning styles and promote active participation. Include diverse resources and content formats to enhance learning and ensure flexibility in materials for customisation to specific student needs and industry contexts.
- e. Observing learning principles to allow students to revisit topics at increasing levels of complexity, reinforcing prior knowledge. Consult with SMEs, LLND specialists, industry, and community stakeholders to ensure course content and assessments are relevant and aligned with current industry standards.
- f. Aligning assessments with learning outcomes using various methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of student learning. Ensure assessments adhere to principles of assessment and rules of evidence. Create holistic and streamlined assessments through unit sequencing, clustering, and co-assessment approaches reflecting real-world applications.
- g. Consulting with SMEs, LLND specialists, industry, and community stakeholders to ensure that course content and assessments are relevant and aligned with current industry standards.
- h. Review assessments prior to course delivery and use findings to inform necessary changes and improvements.

Course Review and Continuous Improvement

- 4.10 TAFE NSW is dedicated to ensuring courses remain effective and relevant through systematic monitoring, evaluation and enhancement of training and assessment practices. This involves gathering feedback, analysing course performance data and making evidence-based decisions to inform continuous improvement plans. The outcome of course reviews is to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with current standards and industry requirements, ultimately supporting student success outcomes.
- 4.11 TAFE NSW defines course review as the evaluation of courses against regulatory and TAFE NSW standards to ensure accuracy, relevance, and effectiveness in supporting learning goals and achieving VET outcomes. The review process involves selecting and completing a range of activities, which evaluate content accuracy, aligning resources with regulatory and TAFE NSW standards, and assessing their effectiveness in supporting learning goals and VET outcomes.
- 4.12 The TAFE NSW Self-Assurance model, supports a system for monitoring and ongoing evaluation of courses, ensuring they remain current, effective and meet stakeholder needs. This includes:

- a. Implementing quality reviews and internal audits to ensure alignment with regulatory standards and requirements, including updates to relevant Training Packages.
- b. Documenting identified non-compliance and corrective actions taken as part of the TAFE NSW self-assurance model.
- c. Conducting systematic course performance reviews, ensures courses, teaching methods, assessments, and student success outcomes. These reviews capture comprehensive feedback from industry, educators and students and utilise data-driven insights to identify and implement evidence-based improvements. The reviews are informed by:
 - i. Delivery and course performance data
 - ii. Quality indicator data
 - iii. Feedback from learners, employers, educators, and industry consultations
 - iv. Validation and moderation outcomes
 - v. Benchmarking and external referencing with national and international standards
 - vi. Information from complaints, appeals, and their resolutions.
- d. Undertaking systematic validation or moderation of assessment tools to ensure practices are consistent with the training product and regulatory requirements to produce consistent outcomes, in accordance with the [Assessment Validation Procedure](#).
- e. Testing conformance of inclusive design in training and assessment materials and courses, aligned with Australian Standards. This involves systematic evaluations to promote and ensure accessibility and equity for all students, including those with diverse learning needs and abilities.
- f. Based on findings from monitoring and periodic reviews, a range of continuous improvement initiatives are implemented. These include updating content, modifying training and assessments, refining teaching strategies and learning resources, identifying staff professional development needs, and enhancing learner support services.

4.13 English-language courses are reviewed to ensure they meet English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) Standards 2018.

4.14 TAFE NSW Governance committees, through reporting, monitor course review themes and improvement plans to ensure quality and accessibility standards are adhered to. This process includes updating course materials for students.

Section 5. Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Executive Director Course Development and Quality (Accountable Officer)	Oversight of the development, review, and amendment of this policy, with the authority to approve revisions to the policy to ensure alignment with regulatory and legislative requirements and current TAFE NSW operations.
Director Course Development (Responsible Officer)	Supports the Accountable Officer in the development, monitoring, review, and amendment of this policy, to ensure alignment with regulatory and legislative requirements and current TAFE NSW operations.
Product and Quality Group Senior Managers	Implements and operationalises this policy as it pertains to course design, development and review including learning and assessment course materials.
Learning and/or Assessment designers	Creates, develops and reviews course materials to ensure they meet educational standards and effectively support student learning outcomes.
Industry Innovation Specialist	Benchmarks and provides feedback to ensure course designs align with current industry standards and practices.
Faculty / Branch Leadership delegates	Ensures collaboration and support from relevant Learning and Teaching teams to facilitate the operations of this policy.
Head teachers, teachers, discipline experts and subject matter experts (SMEs)	Collaborates in designing, developing and reviewing courses and materials, creating engaging content, incorporating feedback and ensuring industry relevance.

Section 6. Monitoring

- 6.1 The Responsible Officer or their delegate will monitor the effectiveness of, and feedback received relating to this policy and take action to ensure its continued improvement and adherence to the legislative requirements.
- 6.2 The Responsible Officer will coordinate a formal review of this policy every three years or where a change to legislation or organisational structure necessitates a review.

Section 7. Governance information

Governance	Details
Legislation, regulations, and standards	<p>This policy is governed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). • Standards for Vocational Education and Training (VET) Accreditation courses 2021. • National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations) 2025. • Standards for Registered Training Organisations Compliance Requirements (2025) • Standards for Registered Training Organisations Credentials Policy (2025) • Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 • National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 • ELICOS Standards 2018 • Child Safe Standards
Related procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Product Procedure.pdf • Add Training Product or Location to CRICOS Procedure • Higher Education Course Design and Development Procedure (HE) • Higher Education Course Management, Evaluation and Review Procedure (HE) • Higher Education Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework (HE) • TAFE NSW Higher education assessment moderation guidelines • Assessment Procedures (VET) • Assessment Validation Procedure (VET) .pdf • Master Cohort Training and Assessment Strategy (MCTAS) & Cohort TAS Development Procedure

Governance	Details
Related policies and frameworks	<p>This policy is to be read together with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Policy • Industry Consultation Policy • Generative Artificial Intelligence in Education Policy • Elective Selection Framework (ESF) • Educational Quality Framework • Modular and Stackable Learning Framework
Accountable Officer	Executive Director Course Development and Quality
Responsible Officer	Director Course Development
Content Manager number	PROJ25/543
Next review date	3 years from the approval date, unless legislation states otherwise

Section 8. Definitions

Word	Definition
Accredited Course	A locally developed course that has been formally approved by a regulatory authority and meets national education standards.
Assessment	The process of evaluating a learner's knowledge, skills and competencies against a set of defined criteria.
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	The national framework that defines the levels and qualifications in the Australian education system.
Community-based learning	Community-Based Learning (CBL) is an educational approach that connects classroom learning with real-life experiences in the community.
Course design techniques	Course design techniques are methods used to create effective and engaging educational experiences. They help ensure that courses are well-structured, engaging and effective in meeting learning objectives. Examples include Active learning, scaffolded learning, universal design for learning, formative and summative assessment, backward design and modular and stackable learning.
Benchmarking	A comparison of different providers to provide insight into how they monitor, review and improve their procedures.

Word	Definition
Courses	Include, vocational education and training (VET), higher education (HE), ELICOS, micro-credentials and short courses.
Course Design	The process of structuring learning outcomes, content, assessments and delivery methods for a course.
Course Development	Is the process of designing and creating educational courses. It involves identifying learning objectives, selecting appropriate teaching strategies, developing course materials and creating assessments This can include new course development or significant course improvements.
Course Review	The systematic evaluation of course content, delivery and student outcomes to ensure quality and relevance.
Inclusive design principles	Focus on creating products, services, environments and experiences that are accessible and usable by as many people as possible, regardless of age, ability, background, or circumstance. These principles aim to remove barriers and ensure equitable access.
Industry Advisory Committee	A group of industry representatives that provide input on course content to ensure it aligns with workforce needs.
LLND	Language, Literacy, Numeracy and Digital literacy.
Micro-credentials	Short, targeted courses designed to provide specific skills and competencies in a particular area.
National Training Package	A set of nationally endorsed standards and qualifications that define competency requirements for a specific industry.

Word	Definition
Training and assessment strategies (TAS)	<p>A Training and Assessment Strategy (TAS) is a detailed plan outlining how TAFE NSW will deliver and assess a specific program. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualification and Units: The specific qualification and units being delivered. • Target Group: The intended learners. • Delivery Methods: How the training will be delivered (e.g., online, face-to-face). • Assessment Methods: How learners will be assessed. • Timeframes: Duration for delivery and assessment. • Resources: Required equipment and materials. • Staff: Qualifications and experience of trainers and assessors. • Industry Engagement: Alignment with industry needs and standards. • Continuous Improvement: Processes for updating and improving the training and assessment based on feedback and reviews.
VET Accredited Course	A nationally recognized vocational education course that meets the <i>Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021</i> .
Work-integrated Learning	Practical learning experiences integrated into a course, such as internships, placements, or industry projects and that may be identified as a requirement in the training product.
Work Placement	A period of supervised work in an actual workplace to apply learned skills, it is mandated by a training product to meet competency outcomes.

Section 9. Document history

No.	Effective	Approved by	Amendment
1	19 July 2024	Chief Product and Quality Officer	New.
2	16 July 2025	Chief Product and Quality Officer	Updated policy to align with the new standards for RTOs (2025).

Note: (17 March 2026) Accountable and Responsible Officer roles have been updated since publication, as part of an automated update associated with recent operating model changes. These updates reflect position title or organisational alignment changes only and will be captured in the version history when the document is next reviewed and published.