

## GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING THE COMPETENCY OF PERSONS WHO HAVE ACQUIRED TRADE SKILLS OR QUALIFICATIONS OTHERWISE THAN UNDER THE AQF UNDER PART 5 OF THE *TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ACT 2008*

### PREAMBLE

These guidelines describe arrangements approved by the Training and Skills Commission for the assessment and certification arrangements for persons who:

- have not completed an apprenticeship but developed the skills and knowledge for a trade through employment and training in a trade related occupation or an occupation that allowed the applicant to develop trade related skills
- have gained a trade qualification overseas.

**Note:** Overseas applicants with trade qualifications that can be assessed by Trades Recognition Australia and for which no assessment process is available in South Australia, must apply to have their qualifications assessed by that body.

The Commission has approved these guidelines to provide a trade certification arrangement that acknowledges employment based skill outcomes and also provide recognition for:

- licensing purposes
- access to trade level remuneration under awards or other industrial agreements
- further career progression and up-skilling
- overseas qualified tradespersons.

The Commission is authorised under Part 5 of the *Training and Skills Development Act 2008* to assess and certify competencies attained other than under the Australian Qualifications Framework:

‘The Commission may assess, by such means as the Commission thinks fit, the competency of persons who have acquired skills or qualifications otherwise than under the AQF and, in appropriate cases, having regard to the standards and outcomes specified in accredited courses or training packages, grant, or arrange for or approve the granting of, qualifications or statements certifying that competency.’

## Definition

In these Guidelines:

- An **Australian Recognised Trade Certificate (ARTC)** is a certificate issued by the Federal Government that recognises trade skills learnt on the job or through other formal training in Australia or overseas including defence force training. (ARTCs are issued by Trade Recognition Australia which is an agency of the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Workplace Relations)
- The **Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)** defines all qualifications recognised nationally in post compulsory education within Australia, endorsed by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, which commenced on 1 January 1995.
- A **Certificate of Competency** is issued by the Training and Skills Commission at the successful completion of a traineeship/apprenticeship. It requires the achievement of the AQF Qualification and the successful completion of the contract of training.
- A **Certificate of Recognition** may be issued to a person who has not completed an apprenticeship but developed the skills and knowledge for a trade (either in Australia or overseas) through employment and training in a trade related occupation or an occupation that allowed the applicant to develop trade related skills.
- An **assessment committee** is established to assess the competence of a person (or to assess the equivalence of a non-AQF qualification with an AQF qualification (by credit transfer). In the case of the latter process, the panel might decide that the non AQF qualification could be used as an alternative qualification for licensing or similar purpose, or that the applicant would require further assessment or training to qualify for a Certificate of Recognition.
- The **Commission** is the Training and Skills Commission or its delegate.

## GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING COMPETENCY OF PERSONS WHO HAVE ACQUIRED TRADE SKILLS OR QUALIFICATION OTHERWISE THAN UNDER THE AQF

### Certification

Certification under Part 5 of the Act will take the form of a Certificate of Recognition.

### Criteria for certification

#### Certificate of Recognition

In assessing an application for a Certificate of Recognition the assessment must have regard to the need to maintain a satisfactory level of equivalence to the standards and outcomes of the relevant nationally endorsed qualification and the breadth, depth and currency of employment experience required for trade recognition. In the case of an overseas trade qualification, the assessment must establish a satisfactory level of equivalence between an overseas trade qualification and requirements for trade recognition in Australia. The assessment may lead to a recommendation that an overseas qualification is equivalent, contingent upon the satisfactory attainment of specified units of competence from an AQF qualification.

#### Assessment arrangements for certification for a trade occupation

An industry based assessment committee whose membership and operating procedures are approved by the Commission or its delegate will assess applications for certification under Part 5. The development of assessment and certification arrangements may be initiated by industry, government or other parties.

Assessment arrangements for a trade must be developed in consultation with and have the written support of all relevant industry parties. The application must also have the written support of the relevant South Australian Industry Skills Board. At least one Registered Training Organisation with the AQF qualification relevant to the trade or licensed occupation listed on its scope of registration must also support the proposed assessment arrangements

The assessment committee must include an assessor(s) from an RTO and representatives of relevant employer and employee organisations plus a nominee of the Training and Skills Commission. The appropriate regulating authority (e.g. Office of Consumer and Business Affairs) must be consulted if certification is required for licensing purposes. If required, the authority can be included on the panel.

#### Approval of assessment arrangements

A proposal to assess applications for certification under Part 5 must cover the following elements:

- Need and demand for assessment and certification under Part 5
- Governance arrangements for management of the assessment process
- Procedures for selecting members of the governance committee and/or assessment committee(s)
- Criteria to ensure that assessments are performed by personnel with the relevant expertise.
- Committee meeting procedures
- Information and advice to applicants including advice on options for unsuccessful applicants
- Application form(s), administrative procedures for processing applications, fees and refunds policies, and arrangements for maintaining adequate records

- Assessment procedures and instruments that are valid, reliable, fair and flexible and structured to provide a cost and time effective process for applicants
- Appeals procedures
- Procedures for evaluating the quality of assessments and moderating assessment decisions
- Reporting format to the delegate for all decisions and recommendations made on behalf of the Commission
- Agreement to providing an annual report to the department in the required format (see reporting section below)
- Where relevant procedures for assessing the equivalence of overseas qualifications relevant to the occupation.
- Proposals for assessment and certification under Part 5 should be made to the Director Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology.
- Proposals will be assessed by a panel comprising:
  - At least two senior departmental staff (one of whom will chair the panel) who have a sound understanding of assessment and also the apprenticeship system
  - A nominee of the Commission.

Proposals will be assessed against the requirements set out in these guidelines.

The panel will make a recommendation for approval/non-approval of the proposed assessment and certification arrangements to the Director Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services who will advise the applicant/s of her/his decision. Unsuccessful applicants may appeal the decision to the Commission.

Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services will maintain and publish a register of approved assessment and certification arrangements, including contact details of Assessment Committees for people wishing to have their qualifications and/or experience assessed.

### Arrangements for the issuance of a Certificate of Recognition

Each assessment committee must provide a written report to the Director Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services of all assessments. The report must include:

- assessment committee members
- names of all applicants and the type of certificate sought
- names of all successful applicants
- names of all unsuccessful applicants
- notice of any appeals lodged (and if available the outcome of these appeals)
- certification from the committee chair that the assessments were conducted in accordance with the approved procedures.

The Director Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services is responsible for ensuring that departmental procedures are in place for:

- receiving assessment committee reports and checking these for completeness
- issuing certificates and entering the relevant details into the permanent records.

## Annual reports from assessment panels

Each assessment committee will provide an annual report to the Director Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services. The report must detail:

- the activities of the committee
- annual data on applications received and assessment outcomes
- if relevant, determinations made on equivalence of overseas qualifications assessed
- outcomes from quality assurance activities
- any changes to policies and procedures
- any other recommended changes.

## Reports to the Commission

The Director Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services will provide a quarterly report to the Commission on certificates issued under Part 5. The report will identify by occupation:

- number of applications assessed
- number of applications approved/declined
- number of appeals and outcomes.

The Director Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services will also provide a quarterly report to the Commission on applications received for the approval of assessment arrangements under Part 5 and the outcomes of these assessments.

The Director Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services will arrange for a consolidated annual report on the operation of arrangements under Part 5 to be presented to the Commission.