

Training and assessment (TAE) guide

A guide for new trainers and assessors in Vocational Education and Training (VET) automotive and mining contexts

Part of the AUSMASA Trainer and Assessor VET Career Framework



About this guidance document

This guide is designed to support new trainers and assessors as they begin their VET journey. It provides a clear introduction to the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE), what it is, why it is required and what it covers.

This guide has been developed to help build your confidence, clarify your options and highlight the key questions, delivery models and support networks to help you succeed in your role.

What is the TAE, and why is it required?

The Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE40122) is the foundation qualification for people working as trainers and assessors in Australia's vocational education and training (VET) system. It is a minimum regulatory requirement, not optional.

To deliver and assess nationally recognised training, you must hold the TAE or be working towards it under a specific arrangement agreed with your organisation. The Standards set this requirement for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in 2025, which govern how all RTOs operate. It is your employer's responsibility to ensure you complete it.

*Note that higher-level qualifications in teaching or adult education may also be acceptable. If you have other qualifications, discuss them with your manager.

The TAE covers the foundations of vocational training and assessment, including how to design and deliver training, conduct competency-based assessment, and work within the VET regulatory framework. It is designed to give you a working understanding of what these activities entail and why they are structured as they are.

What is the TAE, and why is it required?

The TAE is a starting point, not a destination. It provides a foundation but does not delve deeply into teaching practice. Completing it does not make you an expert educator. Expertise develops through experience, mentoring, reflection and ongoing professional learning over time.

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There are aspects of the work you will encounter daily that the TAE does not fully prepare you for, including:

- managing a classroom of students with very different learning needs and backgrounds
- the emotional demands of supporting students through personal difficulties
- the administrative and compliance workload involved in regulated training delivery
- the pace of change in VET systems, training packages and digital tools
- the specific practices and expectations of your organisation and delivery context.

The TAE remains highly valuable, but it is important to recognise both what it covers and what must continue to be developed beyond completion.

Starting later is usually better

There may be pressure to begin the TAE as soon as possible after starting a new role. However, starting too early can be a significant source of stress and a reason for early departure among new trainers and assessors.

Beginning formal study before you have found your footing in the role means managing 2 significant challenges at once: learning the job and completing a qualification. For most people, this is harder than it sounds.

A delay of 3 to 6 months allows you to become familiar with your delivery context, your students, and your organisation's systems before adding formal study to the load. You will also get more out of the TAE when you can connect its concepts to what you are already experiencing in practice.

You are ready to start when:

- You are managing your delivery load without significant stress
- You have developed familiarity with key systems and compliance expectations
- You feel settled enough in the role to take on additional study
- A workload adjustment has been agreed with your manager.

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Returning to study after a long break

For many people entering VET from automotive and mining backgrounds, returning to student status can be a significant adjustment. They often arrive with years of technical experience and industry credibility but may not have studied formally for decades.

This experience is normal and very common. It does not reflect your ability or your suitability for the role. It reflects the genuine challenge of entering a second profession while still building confidence in a new workplace.

A few things worth knowing:

- The TAE draws on your existing industry knowledge. You are not starting from zero; your vocational expertise is an asset throughout the qualification.
- The concepts that feel abstract at first often make much more sense once you have been in the classroom for a few months. This is one of the strongest reasons to delay commencement.
- If you have not written academic assessments for a long time, give yourself time to adjust. Ask for help when you need it, from your provider, your mentor or an experienced colleague.
- feeling like a novice student while also being expected to perform as an expert trainer is a real tension. This tension passes as both your teaching practice, and your TAE progress develop together.

Understanding the TAE delivery options

The TAE can be completed through a range of delivery models. Your manager and organisation will have a view on what is available and preferred, but it helps to understand the options before that conversation.

If you work for a TAFE college

Your employer may deliver the TAE to their own staff. This is common and has practical advantages. Delivery is contextualised to the TAFE environment, and timing can be coordinated with your teaching load.

You may also have the option to complete it with an external provider if you prefer a different model.

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You are ready to start when:

Most private RTOs do not deliver the TAE to their own staff. You will need to enrol with an external provider, either a TAFE college or a private RTO that delivers the TAE.

Your organisation may have preferred providers. Ask your manager before searching independently.

Delivery models

Regardless of provider, TAE delivery typically follows one of the following models. Not all RTOs offer different options, so you will need to consider what is most appropriate for you.

Delivery model	What it involves	Best suited to
Face-to-face intensive	Concentrated blocks of delivery over several days or weeks, with multiple block sessions across a semester.	People who prefer immersive learning or who have limited capacity for ongoing weekly commitments. Requires time away from work in blocks.
Scheduled sessions	One or more days per week or fortnight over a semester or longer, with regular contact with a trainer and peer cohort.	People who benefit from regular structure and ongoing peer discussion. Requires consistent commitment and a stable delivery schedule.
Online with scheduled workshops	Primarily online content with regular virtual, face-to-face workshops. Combines flexibility with structured interaction.	People who need scheduling flexibility, including those in regional locations. Requires digital confidence. Check how often workshops occur before enrolling.
Online self-managed	Fully online and self-paced with minimal scheduled interaction. The student progresses through content independently.	Experienced self-directed students with significant scheduling constraints. Requires strong self-direction and prior study experience; less suited to those returning to study after a long break.

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Questions worth asking your manager

Before you enrol, make sure you have clear answers to the following questions.

1. When does the organisation expect me to commence the TAE, and is there flexibility on timing?
2. Does our organisation deliver the TAE internally, or do I need to enrol with an external provider?
3. Does the organisation have preferred providers? If so, why and what has the experience of others who have used them been?
4. What workload adjustment will be made to support my study? When will this be confirmed?
5. Will the organisation cover enrolment fees or contribute to study costs?
6. Who in the organisation can I talk to when I have questions about how TAE concepts connect to what I am doing in practice?

Who to talk to when concepts land or don't

Your TAE provider can support you throughout the qualification, explaining the content, guiding assessment tasks, and providing feedback on your work. What they cannot do is help you make sense of how TAE concepts connect to the specific context of your organisation, your students and your delivery practice.

That conversation is best had with someone in your own organisation, an experienced colleague, mentor or manager who knows your delivery context. When a concept from the TAE connects directly to something you are experiencing in the classroom, talking it through with someone who has been there is often more valuable than any formal study material.

If your organisation does not have a named mentor for you, ask your manager who you can go to in practice with TAE-related questions. Having that person identified before you start makes a significant difference.

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Finding current providers

Provider lists change. The most reliable way to find current registered providers is through the following:

- **VET qualifications (Diploma level).** training.gov.au lists all registered providers for nationally recognised qualifications. Search by qualification code (TAE50122) to find providers with the qualification on scope and then contact them directly to discuss delivery options.
- **Higher education qualifications (Graduate Certificate and above).** courseseeker.edu.au is the Australian Government's course search tool covering both VET and higher education. Search by keyword (for example, "adult vocational education") to find current offerings from universities and other higher education providers.

University websites are also worth visiting directly. Course availability, fees and entry requirements are regularly updated.

Learn more about the Trainer and Assessor VET Career Framework

Explore more practical tools, guides and resources supporting VET capability, wellbeing, industry engagement and career development