HKCAAVQ's role in accreditation of Assessment Agencies for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

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26 August 2015

An Overview

- The only statutory accreditation body in Hong Kong

- Responsible for the quality assurance of non-self-accrediting institutions and programmes

- Self-financing, no recurrent Government subsidy

- Budgets and fee schedule approved by SED

Historical Development

1990	HKCAA was established
2007	• Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance (Cap. 1150) came into effect. The Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation has been renamed as **Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications**.
2008	• The Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance (Cap. 592) came into operation. The **Qualifications Framework (QF)** was officially launched on 5 May 2008.

Statutory Functions as the Accreditation Authority under Cap. 592

- Develop and implement the standards and mechanism for academic or vocational accreditations

- Conduct accreditation activities in regard to:
  - operators
  - learning programmes
  - Qualifications
  - assessment agency (for recognition of prior learning)

Accreditation Authority – Powers

- To grant the accreditation status to / withdraw the status from:
  - an operator
  - a learning programme and the qualification
  - an assessment agency
- To publish the accreditation result
- To charge accreditation fee
- To conduct accreditation activities outside HK (with SED's prior approval)

RPL in Australia

- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an assessment process that can lead to alternative entry pathways to qualifications.

- Applicants may apply to **Registered Training Organisations** (RTO) for an assessment of their existing or current skills and knowledge. This can lead to admission or credit in a particular program.

- RPL assessment can be based on previous formal study, work experience, informal study undertaken for personal or recreational interests, industry- or workplace-based learning, and life experiences

RPL in Australia

<u>Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) 1.5</u>

Assessment including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):

a)meets the requirements of the relevant **Training Package** or accredited course

b)is conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence

c)meets workplace and, where relevant, regulatory requirements

d)is systematically validated.

RPL in Australia

- Recognition of prior learning is simply a form of assessment of a learner's competence.

- Recognition of prior learning uses evidence from formal, non-formal and informal learning rather than from specific assessment activities directed by the RTO.

- This evidence is often combined with assessment activities sometimes known as 'challenge testing'. As such, recognition of prior learning must be conducted with the same rigour as any other form of assessment (source ASQA website).

RPL in Australia

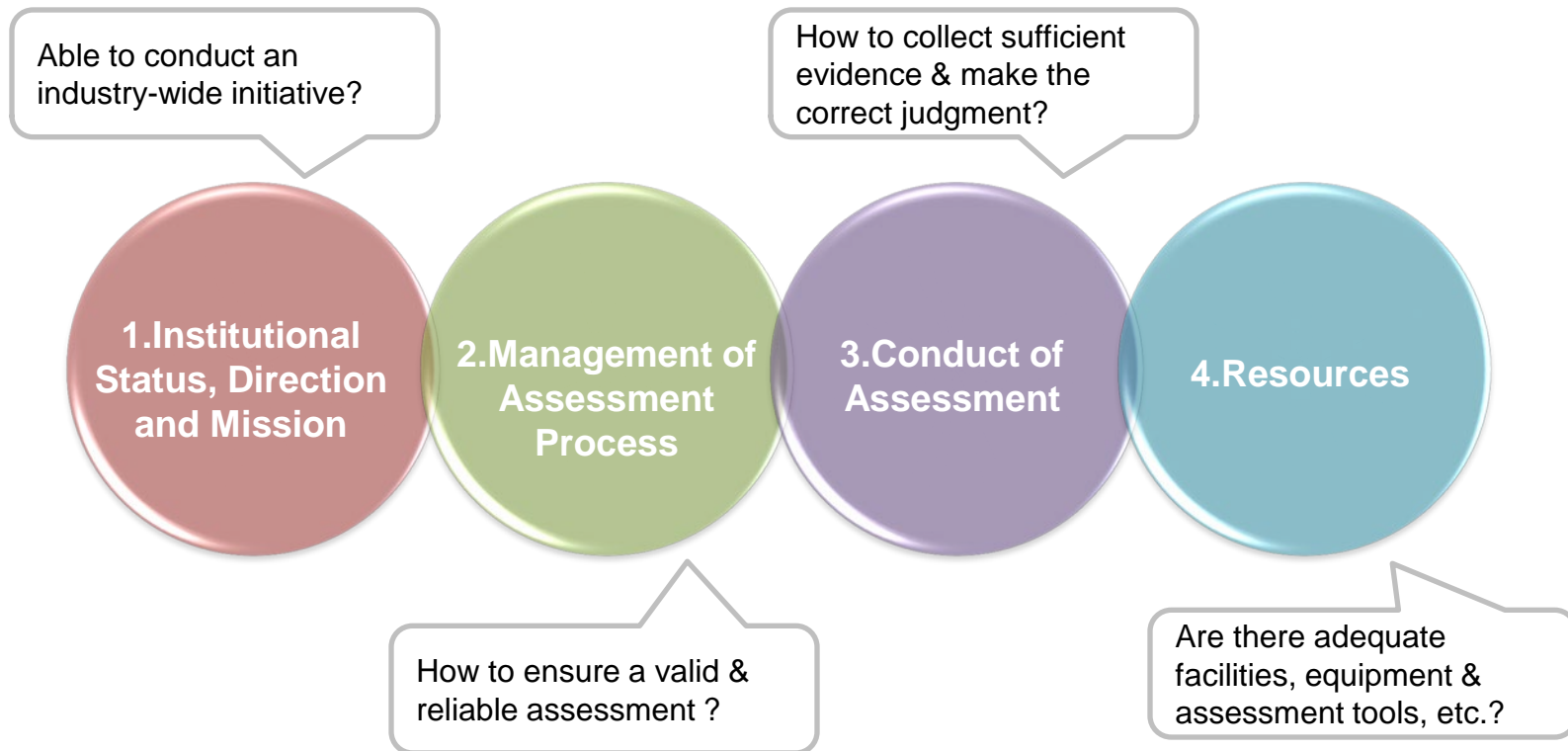|	Students with an RPL outcome		Total students		% of RPL	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
CHC40108 - Certificate IV in Aged Care	490	726	2 173	4 063	22.5	17.9
CHC30208 - Certificate III in Aged Care	601	840	15 489	22 040	3.9	3.8
CHC30708 - Certificate III in Children's Services	2 191	2 838	22 181	37 370	9.9	7.6
CHC50908 - Diploma of Children's Services (Early childhood education and care)	1 661	3 007	11 417	21 399	14.5	14.1
TAE40110 - Certificate IV in Training and Assessment	554	7 571	4 057	29 249	13.7	25.9

RPL in Hong Kong

- Conducted by accredited and approved **Assessment Agencies**

- **RPL Qualifications** – small clusters of **SCS** relating to specific job roles (506)

- Regular **re-accreditation** of Assessment Agencies

Accreditation Criteria for Assessment Agencies (AAs)

Able to conduct an industry-wide initiative?

How to collect sufficient evidence & make the correct judgment?

1. Institutional Status, Direction and Mission

2. Management of Assessment Process

3. Conduct of Assessment

4. Resources

How to ensure a valid & reliable assessment ?

Are there adequate facilities, equipment & assessment tools, etc.?

Source: Guidelines on Accrediting Assessment Agencies , HKCAAVQ

Criteria

1. Institutional Status, Direction and Mission

Standards

Governance arrangement: demonstrate probity, accountability, risk awareness & involvement of persons with knowledge in QF & RPL

▽

Able to manage existing operations and respond to development and change

▽

Has the support of industry & communicate well with ITAC and EDB

▽

Operates within the policies set by EDB in relation to RPL and QF

Typical Evidence

- Committees structure, appointment criteria and composition

- Anticipated number of applicants
- Operational plan (finance, physical resources, manpower, promotion, etc.)

- Communication/Reporting channels with different stakeholders to understand needs & obtain feedback

- Polices on compliance with RPL & QF requirements

Criteria

Standards

Typical Evidence

2.Management of Assessment Process

Develop, implement and review assessment policies and procedures

- Internal verification policy
- Result endorsement procedures
- Procedures in verifying employment records
- Conflicts of interest policy
- Appeal & complaint policies

Effective administrative and records management system and procedures

- Record keeping & confidentiality policies for questions paper, applicants' personal data, certificates, etc.

Appropriately qualified staff (e.g. assessment manager, internal verifier, assessors) to carry out different roles

- Recruitment criteria
- Induction training & CPD requirements

Design and develop assessment strategies that guide effective and efficient assessment arrangements for designated competency units

- Assessment methods for each UoC Clusters
- Question development & review process

Design and develop assessment tools for gathering and interpreting evidence

- Sample assessment questions and criteria
- Size of question bank
- Randomization of questions

Effective quality assurance system to ensure validity and reliability of assessments and continued compliance with accreditation criteria

- Quality indicators, measurement methods and review frequency
- Parties responsible for QA
- Plan for continuous improvement

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Criteria

3.Conduct of Assessment

Standards

Candidates are guided in gathering and presenting evidence & informed on the assessment process and criteria

Collection of quality evidence against specified competency standards

Sufficient evidence is gathered to make judgments about candidate's competence

Assessments are conducted in compliance with industrial safety regulations relevant to the industry

Typical Evidence

- Guidelines to applicants
- Feedback/Advice provided to applicants

- Measures to ensure fair assessment for applicants of different backgrounds *(e.g. identifying special needs of applicants via application form)*

- Templates/Checklist for assessor to collect evidence
- Measures to ensure consistency in marking standards *(e.g. training, guidelines to assessors)*

- Relevant safety regulations and compliance plan

Criteria

Standards

Typical Evidence

4. Resources

Has access to staff, facilities, equipment, assessment tools and materials

- Tour visit of assessment venues, facilities & equipment

Accreditation Process

~ 25 weeks

| Before Site Visit | During Site Visit | After Site Visit |

Panel Formation → **Panel to Review Documents** → **Panel to Provide Initial Comments** → **Meeting with AAs Representatives & Facilities Tour** → **Issue Interim Report** → **Issue Accreditation Report**

Panel usually consists of:

- Industry practitioners (e.g. employers, employees) who know the needs of the industry

- Experts who are familiar with the industry's competency standards

- Experts who can comment on the assessment mechanism

- QA experts

- Possible accreditation outcome:
  - Approval
  - Approval with pre-conditions and/or requirements
  - Non-approval
- Validity period will be stipulated for approval cases

- Contains accreditation decision
- Forms the basis for the Secretary for Education to consider appointment of accredited Assessment Agencies

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Common Challenges for Assessment Agencies

- Verifying employment records of applicants
  - Previous employer has gone out of business
  - Much effort needed to match information provided by employers against the UoCs

- Knowledge of QF and RPL
  - Members of governance committees, assessors, question writers are mainly industry practitioners
  - Need to formulate measures to ensure they have good knowledge of QF, especially for question writers

Accreditation of Assessment Agencies (as at Aug 2015)

Industry	Assessment Agencies	Year
1. Printing & Publishing	Vocational Training Council	2007 & 2010
2. Watch & Clock	Vocational Training Council	2007 & 2010
3. Property Management	Vocational Training Council	2010
4. Automotive	Vocational Training Council	2011
5. Jewellery	Vocational Training Council	2011
6. Logistics	Vocational Training Council	2011
7. Chinese Catering	Vocational Training Council	2012
Beauty and Hairdressing 8. Beauty Branch 9. Hairdressing Branch	Vocational Training Council	2012 2007 & 2010
10. Retail	Vocational Training Council	2014
11. Import & Export	Shipping Research Centre, Hong Kong Polytechnic University	2015
12. Elderly Care Service	Hong Kong Association of Gerontology	2015
13. Testing, Inspection & Certification	School of Science and Technology, Open University of Hong Kong,	2015

Thank You

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