

Assigning SACE Levels to a VET Qualification – Guidelines

Introduction

The Recognition Arrangements for Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the SACE Policy and Procedures document outlines the principles, purposes, and key features of the recognition arrangements of successfully completed VET in the senior secondary certificate.

Policy statement

The SACE Board has recognition arrangements for VET in SACE.

Recognition arrangements for VET in the SACE will include recognition of:

- completed qualifications
- partly completed qualifications (for which a student has completed one or more units of competency).

The SACE Board determines whether the SACE credits earned for a particular VET qualification are recognised at Stage 1 or Stage 2 level.

The 'qualification' is the key unit on which the recognition of VET in the SACE is based. That is, a level of SACE is assigned to a qualification as a whole, not on the basis of an individual unit of competency.

The SACE Board will base its decisions on a set of criteria, and follow established procedures, when assigning a level of SACE to a VET qualification.

The levels that the Board assigns to qualifications are recorded on the Board's VET Recognition Register.

Criteria for assigning SACE levels to a VET qualification

When making decisions about the assigning SACE levels to a VET qualification, the SACE Board will:

1. be guided by the following principles:
 - that the amount and level of recognition of learning maintain and enhance the integrity of the SACE (*integrity of the SACE*)
 - that the recognition process focuses on the learning achieved (*achievement-focused*)
 - that the recognition process takes into account the nature, scope, and complexity of learning, and that judgments about the complexity of learning are made against evidence of learning (*evidence-based*)
 - that the recognition process is based on the principles of fairness, transparency, and consistency in the application of the procedures (*fair, transparent, and equitable processes*).
2. take into account the following criterion:
 - The nature, scope, and complexity of the learning in the qualification. As a whole qualification, what is the nature of the learning that is being targeted? What is the scope of the learning, and

how complex is the learning? The responses to these questions will take into account the following considerations:

- Comparability with nature, scope, and complexity of learning of related SACE-accredited subjects —

What comparisons in terms of nature, scope and complexity can be made between this qualification and other relevant SACE subjects? – e.g. how might the CII in Financial Services be compared with the subject Accounting at Stage 1 or Stage 2?

- Qualification outcomes —

Where is the completed qualification intended to lead? What are the job outcomes that the student is expected to be able to perform in the workplace after successfully completing the qualification? Is it an entry-level or prevocational vocational qualification, or a qualification leading to vocational outcomes, e.g. CIII in Automotive as part of an apprenticeship?

- Level of integration of related qualifications —

What is the extent to which the core of the qualification under question incorporates units of competency from related qualifications at higher or lower levels; and what is the extent to which the qualification is embedded in other qualifications, e.g. the extent to which CII is an essential part of the relevant CIII qualification?

- Recognition arrangements for VET qualifications towards other senior secondary certificates in other states and territories —

What are the recognition arrangements for this qualification towards the senior secondary certificates in other Australian states and territories?

3. pay attention to the qualification as constituting the unit of recognition, not individual units of competency.
4. keep the focus on the issue of standards for the purpose of recognition of learning, not other extraneous issues, e.g. delivery (e.g. institutional or workplace), access (e.g. qualifications that are supported by financial incentives), gender (e.g. qualifications that favour males or females).

Procedures for assigning SACE levels to a VET qualification

Since 2010, the SACE Board has taken advice on the level of recognition from recognition panels and/or based its determination on precedents. The revision of training packages and the need to apply criteria consistently across the large number of VET qualifications have pointed to a need to formalise a set of guidelines for undertaking this process.

Two procedures can be followed to determine what level of SACE can be assigned to a VET qualification:

- Procedure 1: using a panel process
- Procedure 2: referring to precedents.

The SACE Board will determine which of the two procedures will be followed, on a case-by-case basis.

Procedure 1: using a panel process

This procedure is used in the case of new or revised training packages, or where an RTO or other organisation requests a full reconsideration of the level assigned to a qualification or qualifications.

The qualifications will be considered by each of four committees in the following order:

1. VET in the SACE Recognition Panel
2. VET Recognition Register Advisory Committee

3. Accreditation, Recognition, and Certification Committee (ARCC)
4. SACE Board.

VET in the SACE Recognition Panel

The VET in the SACE Recognition Panel provides advice about the:

- qualifications within the relevant training package that should be given priority for inclusion in the VET Recognition Register, and
- the level of SACE at which each relevant qualification should be recognised.

The membership of the Recognition Panels will vary, but where appropriate will comprise at least one representative from an appropriate industry skills advisory organisation and the SACE Board. The Recognition Panels are formed and chaired by the SACE Board. Other possible members include representatives from the school sectors, Department of State Development), Industry, and Registered Training Organisations.

The Recognition Panel provides its advice to the VET Recognition Register Advisory Committee.

VET Recognition Register Advisory Committee

The VET Recognition Register Advisory Committee:

- reviews the advice made by the Recognition Panel(s) against the established criteria
- brings to the attention of the ARCC any proposed changes to the advice for recognition arrangements for VET in SACE made by the Recognition Panel(s), and the rationale for these changes.

The VET Recognition Register Advisory Committee usually meets to consider more than one qualification across training packages across more than one industry. The VET Recognition Register Advisory Committee seeks to ensure that the decisions about the assigning of levels of SACE to VET qualifications are made consistently and with integrity.

The membership of the VET Recognition Register Advisory Committee comprises representatives from:

- Department for Education
- Catholic Education SA
- Association of Independent Schools of SA Inc.
- Department of State Development
- TAFE SA
- Training and Skills Commission
- Business SA
- SACE Board (chair)

Accreditation, Recognition, and Certification Committee

The Accreditation, Recognition and Certification Committee, a standing committee of the SACE Board, advises and assures the Board on the policies and procedures for fulfilling its legislative, governance, and organisational responsibilities for the accreditation of SACE subjects, the recognition of other learning, and the determination of the requirements for achieving the SACE.

The Accreditation, Recognition and Certification Committee:

- reviews the proposed decisions for recognition arrangements for VET in the SACE made by the VET Recognition Register Advisory Committee, and makes a recommendation to the Board about what should be the recognition arrangements for particular VET qualifications.

The Accreditation, Recognition and Certification Committee comprises approximately 10 members and is chaired by a member of the SACE Board. Its members are selected from nominations sought from:

- the designated entities of the Board
- Board members.

The SACE Board

The SACE Board receives and considers a report and recommendations from the Accreditation, Recognition and Certification Committee about the recognition arrangements that should be put in place for particular VET qualifications.

The SACE Board will consider the advice provided to it by the Accreditation, Recognition and Certification Committee before making its decision. Following approval by the SACE Board of the levels of SACE that are assigned to a VET qualification, the SACE Board communicates its decisions to the educational and wider community using a variety of modes.

Procedure 2: referring to precedents

This procedure is used in the case where there has been a minor change to a qualification, or when it is clear that the qualification is similar in nature, scope, and complexity to other qualifications.

The qualification(s) will be considered by:

- an internal SACE Recognition Panel (comprising the SACE Project Officers and the Executive Manager, Curriculum and Assessment), and the decisions communicated bi-annually to the Accreditation, Recognition and Certification Committee and the SACE Board.

The internal SACE Recognition Panel will:

- research the makeup of the qualification
- take into account precedents in the recognition of similar qualifications from training packages
- take into account the criteria outlined above.

These decisions, once approved by the Executive Manager, Curriculum and Assessment, are added to the VET Recognition Register, and communicated to schools and the wider public.

VET Recognition Register

Once approved, recognition arrangements are published by the SACE Board on the VET Recognition Register. This Register shows, for each VET qualification listed, the:

- maximum and minimum number of SACE credits that students could expect to earn by completing the qualification;
- SACE level (Stage 1 and/or Stage 2) at which credits earned for the qualification will be recognised for SACE purposes.

The VET Recognition Register does not show every VET qualification available through the VET sector.

The SACE Board will recognise any VET that is listed on the training.gov.au website.