

# Quality assessment: practice and perspectives: Josie Misko



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# Quality assessment: practice and perspectives

- Purpose: Investigate teacher perspectives and practice on quality assessments (including recognition of prior learning)
- Areas of interest
  - Certificate III Community Services (aged care)
  - Certificate III Electro-technology (electrician)
  - Certificate III and above Business Administration
  - Certificate IV in Training and Assessment



## A range of research questions

- Quality assessments
- Validation and moderation
- Employer involvement
- Key assessment challenges for teachers and students
- Typical course durations
- Uptake and streamlining of Recognition of Prior Learning



# Methods



- Interviews: RTO practitioners and students
- Public and private sector (VIC, SA, QLD, NSW)
- Analysis of national data VET Provider Collection
- Analysis of data from Student Outcomes Survey
- Web search & mystery shopping exercises



# What are quality assessments?



- Practitioners can generally verbalise and explain what is required for quality assessments, including
  - validity, fairness, reliability and consistency
  - gathering sufficient evidence
  - Meeting criteria of relevant Training Packages



# Practical application provides more challenges

- validation and moderation confusion
- Upfront validation preferred
- Difficulty of obtaining employer involvement





# What is uptake of recognition of prior learning?

- Low uptake – 90% say no
- Higher uptake for Certificate IV in Training and Assessment
- Limited streamlining of RPL occurring
- High risk courses preclude RPL



# What are typical course durations, delivery arrangements, tuition fees?

- Cert III - Aged care, Certificate IV in Training and Assessment
- Calculations and investigations of national data
- Delivery and cost arrangements





# Certificate III Aged Care

- Commencement and completion data:
- Average duration 192 days
- median duration 147 days, bi modal
- Web search & mystery shopping
  - Shortest course 4 weeks full-time (9.00am till 3.00pm), Longest course 6 months (24 hours per week)
  - 50% of RTOs used face-to-face delivery in class, 33% of RTOs used online courses only, remainder – blended learning (online, class, distance)
  - Courses that were delivered fully on line, or using mixture of online, class and distance methods were expected to be completed within pre-determined number of months (12 to 18 months)
  - All had practical work placements but no uniformity in length of time (two 40 hour placements, or one 40 hour placement), generally no night shift expected
  - Different course durations for different delivery methods
  - Median cost was \$1950.



# Certificate IV in Training and Assessment



- Commencement and completion data VET statistics
  - Average duration 160 days , median duration 133 days
- Website search & mystery shopping
  - Shortest course 5 days full-time, Longest course 12 weeks full-time
  - Around 50% of RTOs used face-to-face delivery in class, around 33% of RTOs – blended learning (online, class, distance), 25% online only
  - Courses that were delivered fully on line, by distance method were expected to be completed within pre-determined number of months (generally 12 months)
  - Median cost was \$1895.



## When short durations make sense

- Strong prior knowledge
- Existing workers
- Specialist relevant occupations
- Adequate and reliable evidence

### FAST TRACK CLASSES



# Assessment challenges for teachers

- Making valid judgements
- Pitching assessment to right level
- Achieving consistency among assessors
- Keeping up with latest requirements
- Customisation and implementation
- Sources of evidence (including for RPL)
- Student knowledge, skills, motivation and application



# Student assessment challenges as perceived by teachers

- Low motivation and aspiration
- Deficient practical skills (e.g. manual handling (aged care))
- Application of business and financial concepts (business)
- Application of theoretical concepts and calculations (electrical)
- Lack of confidence, fear of assessments, inability to apply themselves



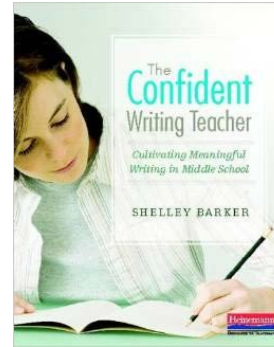
# Assessment challenges perceived by students



- No real challenges
- Between 83% and 90% of SOS respondents satisfied
- Knew they were to be assessed prior to assessment
- Assessment was a fair test of skills and a good test of what they had been taught
- Assessed at regular intervals throughout course
- Received useful feedback



# Conclusions



- Teachers are confident about their knowledge of quality
- Less confident of practical applications
- Confusion about moderation and validation
- Reticent to apply streamlined RPL processes: fear loss of reputation, and examinations through quality audits





# Next steps

- Expanding knowledge about assessments
- Sharing practical tools and activities
- Engaging employers in validating tools and assessments
- Implementing mentoring and buddying strategies
- Validating results with colleagues



## More

- [Misko, Josie; Halliday Wynes, Sian; Stanwick, John; Gemici, Sinan](#) 2014, **Quality assessments: practice and perspectives**, NCVER, Adelaide
  - <http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2709.html>

