

IVETSA

Criteria for Course Standards Accreditation

IVETSA

International Vocational Education Teaching Standards Accreditation

Operated by ASIA CENTRE FOR OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS
CURRICULUM ACCREDITATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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1 Purpose and scope

IVETSA evaluates course standards and their specified supporting design documents for clear learning purposes, coherent content and tasks, valid assessment and practicable delivery requirements. The criteria apply to vocational and related courses at an identified educational level and in a stated context.

An application may concern one course or an explicitly listed set of courses. Each course shall have an identifiable title, version, outcome set and scope. A set remains within the course-standards service category, and the outcome for each included course shall be traceable.

Related programme information may explain the course contribution and prerequisites. The course conclusion concerns the documents and evidence reviewed; it does not by itself evaluate the whole programme, the institution or an individual learner qualification.

New courses may be evaluated through complete design evidence. Where actual delivery or learner results are claimed, they shall be supported by relevant records. Differences in language, delivery mode or intended adopting institution shall be described and considered within the stated scope.

2 Evaluation principles and evidence

2.1 Applicability and interpretation

The seven areas are interpreted in the relevant discipline, educational level, learner context and mode of learning. “Shall” identifies a requirement. “May” introduces an option or example. Conditional requirements apply when the described circumstances are present.

Durations, credits, staffing ratios and other numerical requirements shall have an applicable basis and a clear counting convention. An external framework or occupational standard is identified by name and version, with its purpose and relationship explained. Cross-system comparison requires attention to meaning and conditions.

Core outcomes are essential to the stated occupational or educational purpose and completion requirements. They shall be identified in the design and reviewed for appropriate coverage. Alternatives may be accepted where their educational effect is supported by evidence.

2.2 Evidence and professional judgement

Evidence shall be traceable to the submitted standard, its version and supporting materials. Distinguish established facts, planned arrangements and anticipated effects. Identify inconsistencies across documents and explain the controlling version and material language differences.

Existing curriculum plans, course information, tasks and relevant rules may be referenced by attachment, section and page. A document may support more than one requirement. The examples in each area do not require a separate new document for every item. Applicants provide information and evidence; reviewers make the conformity judgements.

Reviewers shall consider the complete structure and coverage of essential outcomes. Detailed examination focuses on important content, tasks, assessment and resource dependencies. Sampling shall explain its coverage and limits; important uncertainty requires additional examination before a reliable conclusion.

Each finding shall identify the criterion, evidence, observation and reasoning. A preferred teaching method shall not become an undisclosed requirement. A favourable feature and an unmet requirement are recorded separately.

3 Seven evaluation areas

3.1 Course identity and learning needs

3.1.1 Course identity and review object

The course standard shall identify the title, code, version, educational level, course role and intended learners. Explain whether the course is standalone, part of a programme or included in a named set of courses. The title shall reflect the principal content and intended outcomes. Different versions or delivery modes shall identify common requirements and material differences.

A set of courses may be submitted together, but each title, version, outcome set and evaluation scope should remain identifiable. Programme information may explain the course role. The course evaluation should remain tied to the submitted courses and evidence, with any relationship to a wider programme explicitly described.

3.1.2 Course purpose and learning needs

The course shall explain the learning need, occupational tasks or further-learning requirements it addresses and its contribution within the relevant educational pathway. Evidence may include occupational information, preceding and subsequent course requirements, learner needs or professional input. It shall provide a reasoned basis for the selected content and context.

Foundational, general and theoretical courses may explain their support for subsequent professional learning without forcing a link to one job title. Applied courses should explain why the selected tasks are representative and which parts of the work learners are expected to perform after the course.

3.1.3 Prerequisites and learning arrangements

The course standard shall specify prerequisite knowledge, skills or experience, the expected duration, principal stages and participation requirements. Where differences in learner foundations may affect progress, provide appropriate preparation, diagnostic checks or support. The proposed difficulty shall be compatible with the learning opportunities available.

Prerequisites should relate to the actual demands of course activities rather than merely list course titles. Where prior learning is recognised, explain what is recognised, the evidence used and which outcomes still require demonstration within the course.

Evidence examples. Course information, purpose statement, relevant occupational or curriculum requirements, prerequisites and duration.

Review focus. Check clear identity, learning need and prerequisites, and consistency of title, level and intended use.

3.2 Course objectives and learning outcomes

3.2.1 Course objectives and assessable outcomes

The course shall distinguish its overall purpose from the specific outcomes expected at completion. Outcomes shall describe the actions learners can perform, the relevant subject matter and any necessary performance conditions. They shall guide learning activities and assessment and be appropriate to the level, duration and prerequisites.

The outcome set should cover the course priorities while remaining manageable for teaching and assessment. Broad verbs should be clarified through subject matter or performance expectations. Complex outcomes should be structured so that their constituent requirements can be assessed using appropriate evidence.

3.2.2 Outcome level and capability coverage

Course outcomes shall cover the knowledge, skills and relevant professional attributes required by the course purpose. They shall distinguish appropriate depths of understanding and performance, such as explanation, application, analysis or integrated judgement. Communication, collaboration, digital practice, professional responsibility and safety shall be expressed through relevant course tasks where applicable.

The same topic may be taught at different levels, but differences should be visible in task complexity, autonomy and quality expectations. Transferable capabilities should be connected to learning and assessment rather than remain statements without a corresponding activity.

3.2.3 Alignment of outcomes, content and assessment

The course shall explain how teaching units, learning activities and assessments support each outcome. Essential outcomes shall have sufficient opportunities for learning and verification. Alignment may be expressed through narrative, unit descriptions or a mapping table. Where one task supports several outcomes, its contribution to each shall be explained.

Alignment should help teachers plan learning and reviewers locate evidence. A change to an outcome, unit or assessment should prompt a check of the connected elements. The design should provide opportunities to learn what is assessed and use criteria appropriate to the intended level of performance.

Evidence examples. Objectives, outcomes, unit and task descriptions, and outcome–assessment relationships.

Review focus. Check assessable outcomes, an appropriate level and duration, and adequate learning and assessment for essential outcomes.

3.3 Learning units and course content

3.3.1 Learning units and content structure

The standard shall identify the principal units or modules and explain their learning focus, related outcomes, content boundaries and sequence. Content shall cover the course's principal objectives and provide a coherent progression, such as from foundations to application or from individual skills to integrated performance.

Courses may be organised by chapters, themes, tasks or projects; no single contents structure is prescribed. Project-based designs should make the necessary knowledge and skills visible within the project, so that important content has an identifiable place in learning.

3.3.2 Content depth and subject relevance

Content shall fit the stated level and course purpose, specifying the essential concepts, methods, operations or analytical requirements. Applied content shall relate to relevant working contexts. Theoretical content shall explain its analytical, explanatory or subsequent application value. Terminology, tasks and outcomes shall remain consistent.

The selection of content should distinguish essential foundations from extension material. A named tool or case should have a clear educational role. Equivalent methods and tools may be used where they preserve the intended capability, performance conditions and assessment requirements.

3.3.3 Teaching methods and learning activities

The course shall specify principal teaching methods, interaction, independent study and collaborative learning, linking these activities to intended outcomes. Online, face-to-face or blended elements shall have coherent guidance and resources. Important units shall provide opportunities to practise, receive feedback and improve.

Project, case and simulation approaches should explain what learners actually do and how teachers support them. Where AI or other digital tools are used, define the work learners must perform themselves, the permitted role of the tool and the checking of its outputs.

3.3.4 Time allocation and learning workload

The course shall state its total hours or workload and allocate time to units and activities. Explain credits and conversion conventions where used. The treatment of instruction, practice, independent study, projects and assessment shall be clear. Components shall reconcile with the total and be feasible within the course period.

Estimates should consider prerequisites, task difficulty and time for revision following feedback. Check the cumulative demand where assessments or major tasks coincide. Cross-system conversion should identify its basis and distinguish contact time from total learner workload.

Evidence examples. Syllabus, unit plans, learning activity descriptions, time and workload allocations, and learning resources.

Review focus. Check content coverage, alignment, teaching organisation and feasible workload.

3.4 Learning tasks and practical activities

3.4.1 Task design and learner outputs

The course shall provide appropriate exercises, cases, experiments, practical work, design or other applied tasks. Identify the purpose, starting information, principal activity and expected learner output. Theoretical courses may use analytical, argumentative or explanatory tasks. The form of activity shall fit the intended outcome.

A task specification should make clear what learners need to do, the resources available and the basic expectations for the output. Authentic or simulated materials may be used, provided that the conditions and constraints essential to the capability are retained.

3.4.2 Task progression and feedback

Tasks shall progress in difficulty and independence in line with the course sequence, with suitable demonstration, guidance, feedback and opportunities to improve. Essential capabilities shall have sufficient practice. Integrated tasks shall build on content that learners have had an opportunity to study and apply.

Explain who provides feedback, when it is available and how learners use it. A short course may use a compact sequence of staged tasks, but the design should still show progression from initial attempts towards the required level of performance.

3.4.3 Individual performance in collaborative work

Course tasks shall permit the identification of individual learning outcomes. Team assignments, shared designs and workplace projects shall define roles, evidence of participation and the assessment of individual performance. Explain the relationship between a collective product and each learner’s result.

Individual evidence may include process records, identifiable outputs, demonstrations or explanations. Work involving external resources or tools should make their contribution and permitted use visible, enabling assessors to judge the learner’s own capability.

3.4.4 Task conditions and safeguards

The course shall identify the equipment, software, materials, data or settings required for tasks and the conditions of use. Address relevant safety, privacy, copyright, ethical or other professional requirements. Define supervision and exception-handling responsibilities and feasible alternatives when essential resources are unavailable.

Safeguards should relate to the actual activities and remain proportionate to course complexity. Real data, accounts or client material may be used with appropriate permission; anonymised or simulated alternatives may also be used where they preserve the learning and assessment purpose.

Evidence examples. Task specifications, cases or projects, practical guidance, output requirements, task conditions and safeguards.

Review focus. Check outcome relevance, practice and feedback, identifiable individual performance and suitable conditions.

3.5 Assessment and course completion

3.5.1 Assessment tasks and outcome coverage

The course shall explain the evidence used to judge each learning outcome, identifying assessment tasks, methods, timing and purpose. Formative feedback and final assessment shall be combined appropriately. Important skills and applied capabilities shall have suitable performance evidence.

One question or project may assess several outcomes, but the basis for judging each should be clear. Review the completeness of coverage so that repeated testing of one topic does not leave essential applied capabilities without evidence.

3.5.2 Marking rules and consistency

The course shall define marking dimensions, weights or judgement rules, performance descriptors and minimum pass requirements. Practical work, projects, products and open-ended tasks shall have understandable criteria or rubrics. Multiple assessors shall have arrangements for shared interpretation and checking differences.

Marking rules should distinguish quality relevant to the intended outcome from general presentation conventions. Examples may clarify interpretation. Different valid solutions should be judged against the same target capability and quality requirements.

3.5.3 Course completion and reassessment

The standard shall specify course completion requirements, assessment components and the way results are combined. Identify outcomes or tasks that must be achieved individually. Explain absence, failure, resubmission and reassessment, and the effect of recognised prior learning on the completion decision.

Where essential capability is unmet, the rules should identify what must be improved and how it will be verified again. Credit or completion recognition should reflect achievement of the course requirements. Aggregation should preserve any explicitly stated non-compensable requirements.

3.5.4 Assessment fairness, feedback and review

The course shall communicate assessment expectations in advance and define identity or originality checks, record keeping, feedback and review of results. Reasonable adjustments and alternative assessments shall maintain the intended capability. Tool-assisted marking shall identify human checking and correction responsibilities.

Learners should be able to understand the basis of judgement and receive feedback relevant to further improvement. The review route should identify responsibility and handling arrangements. Retained task and assessment records should enable contested matters to be checked.

Evidence examples. Assessment plan, sample questions or tasks, rubrics, completion rules, and feedback and review arrangements.

Review focus. Check coverage, criteria, completion requirements and fairness, distinguishing aggregation from essential achievement.

3.6 Staffing and course delivery conditions

3.6.1 Teaching and assessment responsibilities

The course shall define responsibilities for teaching, task supervision, assessment and necessary technical support. Explain coordination where several teachers or external contributors are involved. Staffing arrangements shall consider learner numbers, grouping, supervisory intensity and assessment methods.

Essential activities should have a clearly responsible role, with continuity arrangements for staffing changes. Responsibilities may be defined by role rather than naming one individual permanently in a reusable course standard.

3.6.2 Teacher expertise and development

The standard shall specify the subject knowledge, practical capability, teaching ability and relevant qualifications needed for teaching and assessment. These shall match the course content and task complexity. Explain arrangements for updating knowledge, tools and teaching methods.

Industry mentors and part-time teachers should have the capability and teaching support needed for their assigned work. Updating should address the technologies, methods and assessment demands actually used in the course; attendance at development events is best supported by evidence of relevant capability.

3.6.3 Facilities, tools and practical conditions

The course shall identify the settings, equipment, tools, materials and software needed for essential activities. Specify necessary functions, capacity, learner access and maintenance. Resources shall support outcomes and assessment conditions, while allowing equivalent configurations that meet the same educational requirements.

Resource specifications should link to particular units and tasks and allow adequate time for practice. Where simulation is used, explain the capabilities it can develop and verify and any elements that require additional evidence or a different setting.

3.6.4 Learning resources and support

The course shall define suitable textbooks, references, cases, digital materials and learning support, including selection, permissions, updating and access. Resources shall fit learner foundations, the course language and educational level and support necessary independent study.

Learning materials should remain consistent with the course version, with responsibility for outdated resources and broken access. Online learning should explain interaction and technical support, with appropriate access arrangements for different learning needs where necessary.

3.6.5 External resources and alternatives

Where the course depends on external data, platforms, off-site settings or shared teaching, identify the provider, access conditions, responsibilities and alternatives in case of interruption. Essential resources shall have evidence of availability appropriate to the design stage, distinguishing existing commitments from future plans.

A change in an external arrangement should prompt a check of its effects on tasks, assessment and completion. Alternatives should support the same outcomes. Changes to assessment conditions should also be checked for validity and fairness.

Evidence examples. Teacher capability requirements, roles, equipment and resources, support routes and external access arrangements.

Review focus. Check support for actual tasks, explained capacity and configuration, and manageable external dependencies.

3.7 Course documentation and continuous improvement

3.7.1 Course documentation and version control

The course standard and supporting documents shall identify titles, versions, dates and responsibilities for development, review, authorisation and revision. Outcomes, units, hours and assessment rules shall be consistent across documents. Significant changes shall have reasons and traceable records.

Repeated delivery should identify the version used for each instance. Revision should include a check of learning materials, tasks and assessment documents so that teachers and learners receive consistent information.

3.7.2 Course feedback and improvement

The course shall explain how learner, teacher and relevant industry feedback is collected and how content, tasks, workload, assessment and resources are reviewed. Identify improvement responsibilities, triggers and alignment checks following revision. A new course may provide a practicable validation plan.

Delivered courses may use performance evidence, learner difficulties, marking variation or resource issues to identify priorities. Feedback should lead to specific actions and an explanation of how their effectiveness will be checked in subsequent delivery.

3.7.3 Language and cross-context adaptation

Where a course targets different countries, institutions or language contexts, explain adaptations to terminology, working situations, tools, resources and assessment. Versions shall correspond in their principal outcomes and completion requirements, with responsibility for resolving differences and reviewing substantive changes.

Translation should preserve disciplinary meaning and assessment requirements as well as the words. Where an adopting institution has different conditions, identify the changes and their effects on outcomes and assessment. An intention to promote the course should be accompanied by context-specific adaptation when a particular use is claimed.

Evidence examples. Version records, course review and improvement arrangements, feedback and revisions, and relevant language or adaptation material.

Review focus. Check version consistency, feedback into improvement and the evidence for cross-context use.

4 Judgement and pass requirements

4.1 Criterion-level judgement

Make a separate evidence-based judgement for each of the 26 requirements. Where a requirement contains several necessary elements, explain their respective fulfilment. Record the clause, evidence location, observation, reasoning and any remaining issue.

Judgement	Basis	Interpretation
Conforms	Sufficient evidence demonstrates coherent, reasonable and practicable satisfaction of the requirement.	Improvement opportunities may remain without an essential gap.
Partly conforms	Evidence supports a judgement, but part of the required design has a defined shortcoming.	Identify the unmet element and its effect.
Does not conform	Evidence establishes missing essential design, material conflict or inability to support the outcome.	Explain the substantive issue against the requirement.
Insufficient evidence	The available information does not support a reliable judgement.	Distinguish uncertainty from an established deficiency.
Not applicable	The scope does not trigger an explicitly conditional requirement.	Record the factual and scope basis.

Use conformity judgements rather than an aggregate score that offsets essential gaps. Improvement suggestions are identified separately and do not create additional pass requirements. Where evidence establishes a deficiency, record the substantive judgement instead of continuing to label the matter merely as missing information.

4.2 Applicability and pass requirements

All seven areas are reviewed. Whole-clause non-applicability is limited to 3.6.5 where no essential external dependency exists and 3.7.3 where the scope makes no cross-context or multilingual claim. Conditional elements elsewhere may be identified as not triggered, while the remaining requirements in that clause still apply. Missing information or incomplete design is not a reason for non-applicability.

A pass requires all applicable requirements to conform, material evidence gaps and necessary corrections to be resolved, justified non-applicability, and an unambiguous object and version. Revised judgements check both resolution of the original issue and the effects of change on connected requirements. For a course set, the conclusion for each course remains identifiable.

4.3 Overall outcome

Outcome	Conditions	Meaning
Pass	All applicable requirements conform and material uncertainties are resolved.	Applies to the identified version and scope.
Decision after revision	Defined design issues remain and can be addressed.	A conclusion follows revision and verification.
Deferred	Material information, scope or necessary conditions require clarification.	A reliable overall judgement is not yet possible.
Not passed	Evidence establishes material deficiencies, or agreed revision has not resolved them.	The version does not meet the pass requirements.

The overall conclusion is traceable to the criterion-level record, key evidence and revision verification. Material disagreements and their treatment are recorded. The stated coverage remains consistent with the documents actually examined.

5 Applicable version

The version used for a project is identified in its accepted service confirmation. Publication of a new version explains changes and transition arrangements. Application handling, correspondence, result delivery and subsequent use follow the relevant guide, rules and agreed service arrangements.