

IVETSA

Criteria for Programme Teaching 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 programme teaching standards and their specified supporting curriculum-design documents for completeness, coherence, relevance and practicability. The criteria examine how occupational needs are translated into learning outcomes and supported by the curriculum, practical learning, assessment, staffing requirements and improvement arrangements.

The review object is a defined programme standard with an identified level, version, language and intended context. Related curriculum plans, course descriptions and design annexes are included as listed in the agreed scope. Alternative pathways or modes shall identify their common requirements and substantive differences.

The conclusion concerns the documents and evidence reviewed. Claims about actual teaching, resources in operation or learner achievement require relevant evidence and verification. Programme teaching standards accreditation does not automatically give each supporting course an independent course-standard accreditation. Independently submitted course standards use the separate course criteria.

A standard may be newly developed or revised after use. Design-stage evidence and implementation evidence are distinguished. The review identifies whether the design is sufficiently clear and coherent to support its intended use, while recording limitations affecting a particular application.

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 Programme identity and occupational needs

3.1.1 Programme identity and educational purpose

The standard shall identify the programme title, intended educational level, learner population, type of provision and intended context of use. Where a programme or occupational code is used, identify the classification system and its source. The title, code, level and proposed content shall describe a coherent educational offering. Distinct pathways shall identify their common foundation and their different purposes.

The description should distinguish initial occupational destinations from roles requiring further experience and from progression to further study. A reader should be able to understand the intended graduate profile without relying on a code alone. Changes in the curriculum should trigger a check that the title, classification and stated educational level continue to describe the provision accurately.

3.1.2 Occupational context and representative tasks

The standard shall identify relevant industries and occupations or occupational groups, explaining representative work tasks, working processes, tools and capability requirements. Industry evidence, occupational information and employer or professional input shall support these choices and address relevant changes in technology, services and occupational practice. The complexity of the tasks shall be consistent with the intended level.

Demand evidence should identify its date, geography and occupational coverage, and explain why the selected tasks are representative. In rapidly changing fields, distinguish durable capabilities from platform-specific or short-lived practices. The analysis should show how changes affect curriculum choices, rather than merely list new technologies or employment titles.

3.1.3 Entry requirements and learning pathways

The standard shall specify entry foundations, the expected learning period, stages of development and the route to completion. Entry expectations shall be compatible with the difficulty of the programme. Where learners enter with different backgrounds, define bridging learning and support. Recognition of prior learning or credit transfer shall identify eligibility, the basis for recognition and how essential capabilities are checked.

Bridging arrangements should identify the knowledge or skills to be developed, the way readiness is checked and the conditions for progression. Different admission pathways should lead to the same stated completion requirements. Prior experience and external certificates need to be examined for their relevant content and level before they are accepted as evidence of particular learning outcomes.

Evidence examples. Programme information; occupational profiles and task analyses; industry evidence; development or consultation records; entry and duration requirements.

Review focus. Check that the title and level agree, occupations translate into tasks and capabilities, demand evidence is relevant, and the proposed entry and learning pathway is feasible.

3.2 Educational objectives and learning outcomes

3.2.1 Educational objectives and the graduate profile

The standard shall state the overall educational objectives and describe the knowledge, skills and professional attributes expected on completion through a graduate profile or intended learning outcomes. Outcomes shall respond to major occupational tasks and development needs. They shall be assessable through appropriate tasks, products, operations or other performances, with conditions, quality expectations and independence stated where necessary.

Educational objectives explain the overall educational purpose; learning outcomes state what can be demonstrated at completion. Each outcome should provide a clear action, subject and relevant context. The set should be sufficiently specific to guide assessment while retaining a meaningful description of integrated occupational capability.

3.2.2 Occupational and transferable capabilities

Learning outcomes shall cover principal occupational capabilities and appropriate professional responsibility, communication, collaboration, digital practice, problem solving and continued learning. Where relevant to the programme, they shall also address intercultural work, safety-critical tasks, environmental effects and specific industry obligations. The required depth, autonomy and complexity shall fit the stated educational level.

Transferable capabilities should be expressed in the programme context: communication may involve handovers, technical explanations or client interaction, and digital capability may involve data handling and occupational tools. Their inclusion should be supported by identifiable learning activities and assessment opportunities. Generic statements in the graduate profile should be connected to what learners actually practise and demonstrate.

3.2.3 Outcome alignment and progression

The standard shall explain how courses, practical components and integrated tasks contribute to programme outcomes. Development shall progress from foundational knowledge and individual skills to integrated application. Essential outcomes shall have identifiable learning opportunities and methods of verification. Contributions may be expressed through narrative, course descriptions or a matrix, with gaps, unnecessary duplication and weak transitions examined.

An alignment explanation may distinguish introduction, reinforcement and final demonstration without requiring a particular matrix format. Every essential outcome should have responsible courses or components. Where electives create different pathways, verify that each permitted combination retains the learning and assessment needed for all compulsory programme outcomes.

Evidence examples. Educational objectives; graduate profile or completion outcomes; programme outcome list; course contribution statements; integrated task designs.

Review focus. Check that the profile is assessable, occupational and transferable capabilities are covered, and demand can be traced through outcomes to learning and assessment.

3.3 Curriculum structure and content

3.3.1 Curriculum structure and course roles

The standard shall explain the classification and role of foundational study, professional core courses, extension or elective learning and practical components. Course or module titles, outcomes, prerequisites, principal content and relationships shall be clear. The classification may follow the relevant education system and programme context, but each component shall have a reasoned contribution to the educational objectives.

The curriculum should distinguish compulsory, restricted-elective and elective requirements and explain permitted combinations. Shared or cross-departmental courses should identify the outcomes and assessment relevant to this programme. The curriculum plan and course information should use consistent titles, references and completion requirements so that learners and reviewers can follow the intended route.

3.3.2 Core courses and occupational task alignment

Core courses shall translate occupational tasks into requirements for knowledge, skills and professional attributes. Descriptions shall identify principal teaching content, expected performance and relevant tools or working conditions. An occupational task–capability–course–content relationship may be used. Course titles, task descriptions and teaching content shall agree; contributions shared by several courses shall identify their different roles and transitions.

A representative task description should explain its starting conditions, main activities, output and quality expectations. These elements help identify the necessary knowledge and skills. Core courses should cover important stages of occupational work. Where similarly named tasks or courses contain different content, the distinction should be explained; alignment should be supported by content rather than a tick alone.

3.3.3 Teaching organisation and currency

Course sequencing, prerequisites, integration of theory and practice and teaching methods shall support the learner starting point and development of capability. Projects, scenarios, work tasks or other appropriate approaches may be used, with activities, guidance and feedback explained. Online, blended and cross-institutional delivery shall identify responsibilities and transitions. Content shall reflect relevant changes in technology, practice and occupational requirements.

Teaching methods should fit the capabilities being developed and describe the balance of guidance, independent learning and collaboration. Where AI or other digital tools are used, explain their learning purpose, the work learners must perform themselves and the expected checking of outputs. Technology choices should support the intended learning and remain feasible within the proposed resources.

3.3.4 Hours, credits and learner workload

The standard shall specify total hours or workload, course allocations, practical components and distribution across the study period. State measurement conventions and conversion rules. A credit-based design shall reconcile the total with its components. Contact learning, practice, independent study, placement and assessment shall be counted consistently, without duplication. Required proportions shall have an applicable basis, and the overall pattern shall fit the planned duration.

Distinguish contact hours, total learning time and credits, including the duration of an hour and the basis used to estimate independent study. Totals and percentages in different documents should reconcile. Workload planning should consider periods when major projects, placements and examinations coincide, so that the proposed timetable provides realistic opportunities to complete the work.

Evidence examples. Curriculum plan; course structure and teaching schedule; core course and task descriptions; hour and credit tables; conversion conventions.

Review focus. Check coverage of the graduate profile, agreement between tasks and content, coherent sequencing and teaching methods, and consistent, feasible workload.

3.4 Practical learning and tasks

3.4.1 Practical learning across the programme

The standard shall explain the distribution, forms and purpose of practical learning, including individual skill development, integrated tasks and authentic or simulated working contexts appropriate to the discipline. Each component shall identify objectives, tasks, learner outputs, guidance and feedback. Difficulty and independence shall develop in step with the learning sequence.

Practical design should provide opportunities to practise, receive feedback and improve. It should identify how learners move from demonstration and guided work to independent performance. The number of practical hours or the name of a workshop is insufficient on its own: tasks and expected outputs should demonstrate the contribution to occupational capability.

3.4.2 Integrated tasks and individual performance

The standard shall include integrated tasks or equivalent outputs that require the application of major professional capabilities. Define task requirements, outputs and assessment criteria. Team projects shall identify individual roles, process records and the way each learner’s capability is judged. Live or externally commissioned projects shall retain clear learning objectives and appropriate guidance.

Integrated work should allow learners to select and apply methods, respond to constraints and explain decisions. Team work should provide proportionate individual evidence, such as process records, identifiable outputs, explanations or individual operations. Assessment arrangements should make each learner's contribution and achievement visible alongside the collective product.

3.4.3 Placements and workplace learning

Where placements or workplace learning are included, the standard shall describe occupational relevance, stages and duration, host conditions, institutional and workplace supervision, records and assessment. Define learning support, learner protections, the basis of any required insurance or equivalent protection, and arrangements for unsuitable tasks or settings. Programmes without a placement shall explain how occupational-context capabilities are developed and verified elsewhere.

Placement design should explain how learning tasks are agreed, how the institution monitors progress and who responds to unsuitable duties, inadequate supervision or safety concerns. Evaluation should relate to learning outcomes and usable performance evidence. Attendance and host confirmation may support a record, but they should be accompanied by evidence appropriate to the occupational capabilities being assessed.

3.4.4 Practical conditions and safeguards

The standard shall identify the equipment, facilities, materials, data and software needed for tasks and the conditions of access. Address relevant operational, health, safety, environmental, privacy and intellectual-property requirements. Define supervisory responsibilities, exception reporting and responses, and alternatives when essential resources are unavailable. Simulated or substitute settings shall continue to support valid learning and assessment.

Safeguards should be proportionate to the task and learner readiness, distinguishing essential conditions from desirable improvements. Tasks involving real clients, accounts or sensitive information should define authorised use and the minimum information needed. Anonymised or simulated material may be used where it preserves the capability and performance conditions that the task is designed to develop.

Evidence examples. Practical learning plan; task or project specifications; placement design; guidance and assessment arrangements; setting requirements and safeguards.

Review focus. Check progression and identifiable outputs, individual performance, educational purpose within placements, and the adequacy of settings, guidance and safeguards.

3.5 Assessment and completion requirements

3.5.1 Assessment coverage of essential outcomes

The standard shall explain which course assessments, practical tasks and integrated outputs verify each essential programme outcome. Specify content, method, timing and individual performance requirements. Formative and summative arrangements shall fit the capability being assessed. Operational, design and applied capabilities shall have suitable performance evidence, and component results shall support a reasoned completion judgement.

Assessment alignment should cover every essential outcome and explain the distinct role of each task. Integrated capabilities may require a combination of outputs, performance, presentation or explanation. The design should avoid double-counting the same performance while leaving other capabilities untested, and should state how the different evidence contributes to a completion judgement.

3.5.2 Assessment criteria and consistency

Assessment design shall specify criteria, weights or judgement rules, pass requirements and treatment of unmet requirements. Key practical and integrated tasks shall have descriptors or rubrics that distinguish performance levels. Where multiple or external assessors participate, define arrangements for shared interpretation, checking differences and review so that the same capability requirements are applied consistently.

Assessment rules should enable assessors to recognise essential performance and the minimum acceptable standard. Task examples or indicative marking decisions may clarify interpretation. Practical, design and open-ended work should allow valid alternative approaches; judgement should focus on the stated outcomes and criteria rather than irrelevant stylistic preferences.

3.5.3 Graduation and programme completion

The standard shall state the courses, hours or credits, practical experience, integrated work and other applicable requirements necessary to complete the programme. Show their relationship to the graduate profile. Credit transfer and recognition of prior learning shall identify eligibility and the essential outcomes still requiring verification. Essential occupational capabilities shall have explicit achievement conditions.

Completion rules should explain remedies and reassessment where a course, essential practical task or graduation requirement is unmet, and how repeated or recognised learning is counted. A consistent completion decision should be possible from the course, practical and outcome records. Any non-compensable capabilities should be explicitly identified so that an aggregate score cannot conceal their absence.

3.5.4 Fair assessment and feedback

The standard shall address advance assessment information, identity or originality checks, recording of outcomes, feedback and review of contested results. Explain absence, reassessment and resubmission. Reasonable adjustments and alternative assessments shall maintain the intended capability requirements. Where automated tools assist judgement, define their purpose, human checking and correction responsibilities. Assessment timing and workload shall fit the learning sequence.

Learners should understand expectations before assessment and receive feedback that helps them improve afterwards. A review route should address factual accuracy, the basis of judgement and the application of the rules. Adjustments for particular learning needs should explain what changes and how the intended assessment target is maintained.

Evidence examples. Assessment strategy; alignment of essential outcomes and assessment; tasks and rubrics; graduation or completion rules; recording and review arrangements.

Review focus. Check valid assessment of essential outcomes, consistent criteria, complete and checkable completion conditions, and clear feedback and review.

3.6 Staffing and teaching conditions

3.6.1 Staffing structure and responsibilities

The standard shall describe the staffing capabilities and responsibilities needed for teaching, practical supervision, assessment and programme development. Identify the roles of the programme lead, course teachers, practical supervisors and relevant industry mentors. Staffing requirements shall consider learner numbers, schedules, grouping and supervision intensity; numerical ratios shall identify their basis and counting method.

The staffing design should cover concurrent teaching, practical and off-site activities and identify substitute responsibilities when essential staff are unavailable. Adequacy should be judged against the required capabilities and supervisory work. A total headcount should be accompanied by enough role information to show that essential teaching and assessment responsibilities can be fulfilled.

3.6.2 Teaching expertise and professional development

The standard shall define subject knowledge, teaching ability, industry experience and applicable qualifications for different roles. Explain coordination and support for part-time or workplace teachers. Arrangements shall enable staff to update occupational knowledge, practical skills and teaching methods through appropriate professional activity. Capability requirements shall relate to the courses and supervisory work actually assigned.

Different disciplines may use different combinations of qualifications and experience, with a clear explanation of how they support teaching and assessment. Development arrangements should identify responsibility and priorities appropriate to changes in the field. Both occupational expertise and the ability to design learning, provide feedback and assess performance should be addressed.

3.6.3 Teaching and practical facilities

The standard shall identify the facilities needed for classrooms, laboratories, workshops and workplace learning. Connect essential equipment, tools, materials and software to learning tasks. State relevant capacity, availability, operating conditions, maintenance and safety requirements so that learners have sufficient practice opportunities. Integrated facilities or equivalent configurations may be used where their coverage of intended outcomes is explained.

Facility requirements should describe essential functionality, learner access and technical support, allowing equivalent equipment that meets the same educational need. Resource lists should be traceable to courses and practical tasks. Brand names and facility titles should be supported by an explanation of the functions, capacity and availability required for learning.

3.6.4 Learning resources and learner support

The standard shall specify appropriate textbooks, literature, cases, digital materials and technical support, including selection, permissions, updating and maintenance responsibilities. Resources shall suit the programme level and occupational context and support taught, practical and independent learning. Online delivery shall address access, interaction and service interruption. Guidance and reasonable support shall respond to learner foundations and needs.

Resources should be subject to content review and updating that can respond to technological change, outdated material and changes in permission. Support arrangements should state how help is obtained and who provides it. They should consider practical difficulties with specialist software, equipment and learning materials in different languages, where these are part of the programme.

3.6.5 External dependencies and continuity

Where the design relies on external facilities, platforms, data, projects or shared teaching, identify the provider, access conditions, responsibilities and fallback arrangements. Resources essential to core tasks shall have evidence of availability appropriate to the design stage. Distinguish existing commitments, permissions still to be obtained and future plans. This requirement applies where essential external dependencies exist.

Identify which external inputs are indispensable and which can be replaced by alternatives. Changes in an external arrangement should trigger a check of the effects on learning tasks, assessment and completion pathways. The standard should identify how an alternative is confirmed as educationally equivalent before it is relied upon.

Evidence examples. Staffing structure and capability requirements; role allocations; facility and resource specifications; materials management; support design; external access arrangements.

Review focus. Check coverage of essential work by appropriate expertise, educational function and capacity of resources, and maintenance and updating. Distinguish requirements in a standard from verified resources in operation.

3.7 Document control and continuous improvement

3.7.1 Document control and development responsibilities

The standard and supporting design documents shall have identifiable titles, versions, dates and relationships. Define responsibilities for development, academic review, authorisation for use and revision. External references shall be traceable to specific sources or versions. Explain how teacher, industry and other relevant input informs development, keeping genuine consultation records and reasons for significant changes.

Course titles, outcome identifiers and measurement conventions should remain consistent across related documents. The relationship between the controlling standard and its annexes should be clear. Revision records should identify what changed, why and who authorised it, while users can distinguish the current applicable version from material retained for traceability.

3.7.2 Feedback and continuous improvement

The standard shall define quality responsibilities and feedback channels covering curriculum delivery, practical supervision, assessment, resources and educational objectives. Appropriate methods may include teaching observation, learner and staff feedback, employer views and graduate follow-up. Explain review cycles or triggers, analysis and revision responsibilities, and checks that changes remain coherent across outcomes, curriculum, assessment and resources.

Feedback arrangements should identify the information needed, the way it is analysed and how improvement priorities are decided. Existing delivery may provide genuine graduate and adopting-institution feedback on educational relevance. A newly developed standard should specify a practicable validation plan, distinguishing future evidence from effects already demonstrated.

3.7.3 Cross-border and multilingual applicability

Where a standard explicitly targets another jurisdiction, cross-system progression or multilingual use, explain adaptation of content, terminology, level, teaching conditions and assessment. Occupational, linguistic and cultural requirements shall be connected to relevant learning tasks. Distinguish common requirements from local adaptations, identify correspondence between language versions and assign responsibility for resolving differences. Specific applicability claims shall have supporting evidence.

Adaptation should address substantive differences beyond translation, including occupational processes, measurement systems, resources and assessment conventions. Identify changes requiring renewed review of alignment. An intention to promote a standard abroad may describe its anticipated use; a particular adoption context requires evidence and arrangements relevant to the receiving institution.

Evidence examples. Version records; development and review arrangements; quality and feedback plans; revision records; relevant cross-border or language explanations.

Review focus. Check controlled versions, usable feedback into revision, practicable responsibilities, and evidence consistent with cross-border and multilingual claims.

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.