

Recognition Arrangements for Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the SACE Policy

The SACE has been designed to support government policies and legislation that aim to prepare young people for living in a changing world and to help them to make a successful transition from school to further education and training, and employment.

The SACE gives students flexibility in their studies, as well as opportunities to gain recognition for knowledge and skills that they have acquired through a wide range of formal education and training, and other learning processes.

A key feature of the SACE is the capacity it offers students to include vocational education and training (VET) in their study programs.

Strategic purposes

The recognition arrangements for VET in the SACE, as set out in this policy document, have the following strategic purposes:

- to increase the responsiveness of the SACE and senior secondary schooling to the needs and interests of individual students
- to enable students to plan and undertake study programs consistent with their post-school ambitions and aspirations
- to encourage more students to complete the SACE
- to support students who seek to achieve other nationally recognised qualifications and skill sets at the same time as they are studying for the SACE.

Recognition principles

The SACE Board's recognition principles, outlined below, underpin the recognition arrangements for VET in the SACE:

1. That the amount and level of recognition of learning maintain and enhance the integrity of the SACE. (*integrity of the SACE*)
2. That the recognition arrangements enable students to personalise the components of the SACE and at the same time maintain coherence in the SACE. (*coherence in the SACE*)
3. That the recognition arrangements promote diverse pathways but do not duplicate the pathways provided by the SACE. (*not duplicate pathways*)
4. That the recognition process focuses on the learning achieved. (*achievement-focused*)
5. 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*)
6. That the certification of student achievement is based on satisfactory completion and achievement of relevant standards and competencies. (*satisfactory completion and achievement of course standards*)

7. That the quality assurance processes of learning providers in guaranteeing the integrity of student results are respected. (*quality assurance*)
8. That the integrity of assessments of students' learning depends on the interconnected responsibilities of the students, school leaders, SACE Board, and other learning and training providers with relevant accreditation responsibilities. (*interconnected responsibilities*)
9. 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*)

Legislative and policy framework

Relevant legislation

This policy has been framed in the context of the following South Australian legislation:

- The *SACE Board of South Australia Act 1983*, which governs the operation of the SACE Board and provides the legislative principles that underpin this policy.
- The *South Australian Skills Act 2021*, which governs the operation of the South Australian Skills Commission and, in particular, its role in regulating apprenticeships and traineeships, including school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.
- The *Education (Compulsory Education Age) Amendment Act 2007*, which provides the legislative framework for the compulsory participation in education of young people up to the age of 17 in South Australia.

Government policies and strategies

This policy is also cognisant of, and supports, state and national policies that aim to ensure the successful transition of young people from school to further education and training, and employment.

SACE Accreditation, Recognition, and Certification policy

The SACE Accreditation, Recognition, and Certification Policy defines a framework for the recognition of learning that contributes to the SACE and enables students to acquire knowledge and skills through formal education and training or informal learning experiences in a variety of situations.

The SACE Board recognises VET that is within the scope of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), including units of competency, qualifications and skill sets (see the following section).

Policy statement

The purpose of recognition arrangements for VET in the SACE

The purpose of the recognition arrangements for VET in the SACE is to help students to build coherent and meaningful pathways in the SACE through VET. These arrangements encourage students to complete skill sets, and to complete, or make significant progress towards completing, VET qualifications.

The skill set and qualification is thus the key means of organising recognition of VET in the SACE and helping students to plan and pursue their pathways.

VET that is recognised for SACE purposes

The Board will recognise VET that:

- is listed on the training.gov.au website as the national register of information on Vocational Education and Training in Australia

- is delivered and assessed by, or under the auspices of, registered training organisations (RTOs), which are registered to deliver and/or assess the VET that is to be recognised
- is delivered and assessed in accordance with the VET Quality Framework
- can be certified on a transcript, statement of attainment, or qualification issued by an RTO.

Recognition arrangements

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

- completed qualifications¹
- partly completed qualifications (for which a student has completed one or more units of competency).
- skill sets²

Reporting against VET qualifications

Students who want to include VET as part of their SACE are encouraged to carefully choose VET units of competency that are appropriate to their needs and interests, and that will advance their plans for post-SACE study and/or work.

Many students will work towards completing one or more VET qualifications as part of their SACE. Other students may choose units of competency that fall short of a full qualification but still provide a meaningful set of skills or complement other subjects they are undertaking for their SACE.

Students must choose units of competency for specific qualifications and they or their school must advise the SACE Board of the qualifications they are undertaking.

The SACE Board will record students' VET achievements against one or more VET qualifications that the student and/or the student's school nominated for this purpose.

Reporting against VET skill sets

Students who undertake skill sets are encouraged to undertake all VET units of competency within the skill set as defined in the appropriate nationally endorsed training package/accredited course.

Students or their school must advise the SACE Board of the skill set they are undertaking.

The SACE Board will record the students' VET achievements against one or more VET skill sets that the student and/or the student's school nominated for this purpose.

Alignment of VET with the SACE

To complete the SACE, students must achieve 200 SACE credits, 150 of which can be gained through the recognition arrangements for VET in the SACE.

The remaining 50 SACE credits are derived from Exploring Identities and Futures (10 credits) ±, Activating Identities and Futures (10 credits) †, the literacy requirement (20 credits), and the numeracy requirement (10 credits).

Students can use a maximum of two qualifications at Certificate I level to gain credits towards the completion of the SACE.

± Applies to Personal Learning Plan until December 2024.

† Applies to Research Project in 2024 and 2025.

¹ For the purposes of this policy the term 'qualifications' includes qualifications established in nationally endorsed training packages and qualifications assigned to courses accredited under the AQF by state and territory accrediting authorities.

² For the purposes of this policy the term 'skill sets' includes skill sets established in nationally endorsed training packages and skill sets assigned to courses accredited under the AQF by state and territory accrediting authorities.

There is no limit to the number of qualifications at Certificate II level or higher that students can use to gain credits towards the completion of the SACE.

Students can use a maximum of two skill sets to gain credits towards the completion of the SACE.

SACE credits

Students will earn 5 SACE credits for the successful completion³ of 35 nominal hours of VET and 10 SACE credits for the successful completion of 70 nominal hours of VET, up to the maximum credit allocation for a qualification,⁴ for:

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

The SACE Board will determine whether the SACE credits earned for a particular VET qualification or skill set will be recognised at Stage 1 or at Stage 2 level. The SACE Board will take advice on the level of recognition from recognition panels and/or base its determination on precedents.

In most cases a VET qualification (i.e. all the units of competency that make up the qualification) will be recognised at either Stage 1 or Stage 2. However, specific units of competency from some Certificate II or Certificate III qualifications will be recognised at Stage 1 whereas other units of competency from the same qualification will be recognised at Stage 2. In general, successfully completed VET towards Certificate IV and higher level qualifications with a specific industry qualification outcome will be recognised at Stage 2.

VET skill sets (i.e. all the units of competency that make up the skill set) will be recognised at either Stage 1 or Stage 2.

The levels that the Board assigns to qualifications and skill sets will be recorded on the Board's VET Recognition Register (see below) and in Schools Online.

Students who have accumulated insufficient nominal hours rated at Stage 1 level to generate 5 credits (i.e. fewer than 35 nominal hours) can bank these hours until they have accumulated at least 35 nominal hours for this particular qualification and/or skill set.

Students who have accumulated insufficient nominal hours rated at Stage 2 level to generate 5 credits (i.e. fewer than 35 nominal hours) can bank these hours until they have accumulated at least 35 nominal hours for this particular qualification and / or skill set.

Excess hours in a qualification or skill set do not contribute to excess hours in another qualification or skill set (i.e. they cannot be added up between qualifications or skill sets).

Students can count a unit of competency only once for the purpose of contributing to SACE completion.

VET Recognition Register

The SACE Board will publish the VET Recognition Register to show, for each VET qualification and skill set listed, the:

³ Students must be deemed 'competent' in a unit of competency to be awarded the appropriate SACE credits; i.e. 'Academic Pass' does not signify 'competence'.

⁴ The maximum credit allocation is based on the maximum possible nominal hours for the core and number of elective units of competency as specified in the training package packaging rules for the qualification or skill set. This maximum number of nominal hours is then divided by 7 and rounded down to the nearest lot of 5 credits. The maximum number of credits that the student can earn will be listed on the VET Recognition Register.

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

The VET Recognition Register will not show every VET qualification or skill set available through the VET sector. However, the SACE Board will recognise any VET that is listed on the training.gov.au website. For a qualification or skill set that is not listed on the VET Recognition Register, schools can refer to Schools Online for details of the number of SACE credits that the completed qualification, or units of competency from the qualification, or skill set, could earn, and the SACE stage(s) to which it has been assigned. Other providers can contact the SACE Board for this information.

The VET Recognition Register will be available publicly.

Reporting students' VET achievements in the SACE

Students' VET achievements will be formally certified by transcripts, statements of attainment, and/or nationally recognised qualifications (for completed qualifications) and skill sets awarded by RTOs.

The SACE Board recognises VET achievement that contributes to the SACE and reports it on the SACE Record of Achievement.

When a school reports students' VET results to the SACE Board:

- it must specify the VET qualification or skill set under which each unit of competency is to be recorded; this must be able to be verified by, and match the documentation provided by, the RTO that delivered the VET, or under whose auspices the VET was delivered and assessed.
- each unit of competency will be recorded only once for each student.

For each qualification / skills set for which a student has recorded completed units of competency, the SACE Board will report, on the student's SACE Record of Achievement, the:

- name of the qualification or skill set
- number of SACE credits earned for the units of competency, reported against each qualification or skill set
- SACE stage at which the credits will be recognised
- year in which the SACE credits were reported to the SACE Board.

Once reported on the SACE Record of Achievement, credits granted by the SACE Board for qualifications or units of competency against qualifications or skill sets cannot be revoked.

The SACE Board will put in place procedures that will support the integrity of the results against the appropriate qualifications and skill sets. The SACE Board will work in collaboration with schools and public and private providers of VET to attest to the veracity of the enrolment and results information conveyed to the Board.