

Selecting Assessment Tools

By Dr. Marcus S Bowles

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1 Purpose:

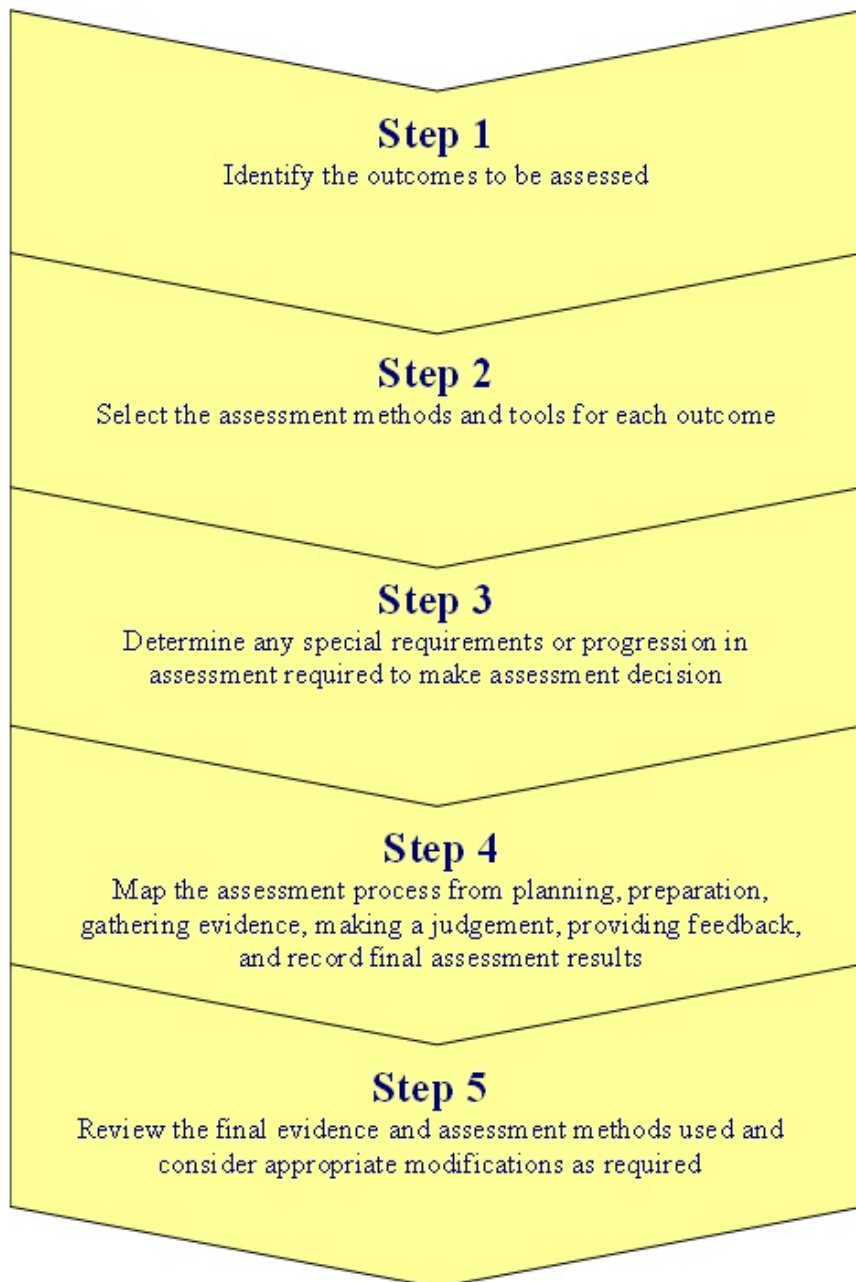
This booklet is designed for those seeking to quickly reference some examples of on and off the job competency assessment tools.

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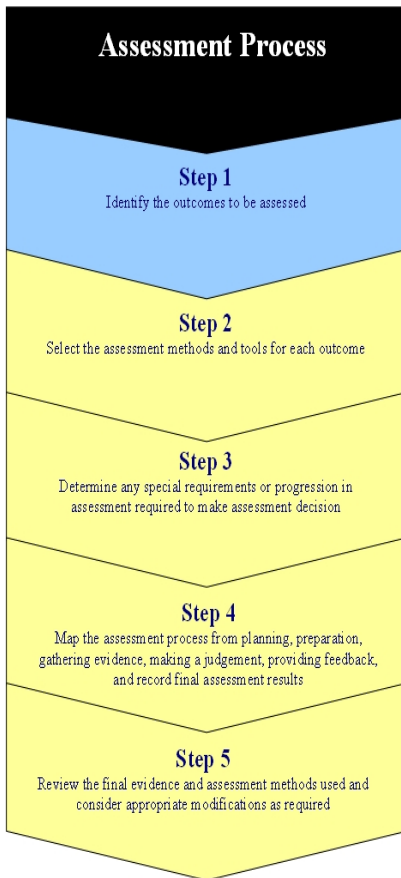
2 Structuring Compliant Assessment and RPL Processes

Figure 1 - A Conceptual Process for Competency-Based Assessment





2.1 Assessing competency outcomes



A formal process for assessing competence needs to be established to ensure competency-based training can be effectively implemented. The process outlined below is a simple synthesis of available models and current experience.

For the assessor, trainee or employees the competency assessment system must produce an increased:

- identification of critical skills and knowledge;
- consciousness of the level of performance required;
- ownership of their own learning experience and achievement;
- on-going identification of areas of weakness or strengths;
- identification of how learning achieved outside the School environment may contribute or reinforce School-based learning;
- capacity to reinforce and focus on areas of particular future career importance; and
- comprehension of the learning experience and context.

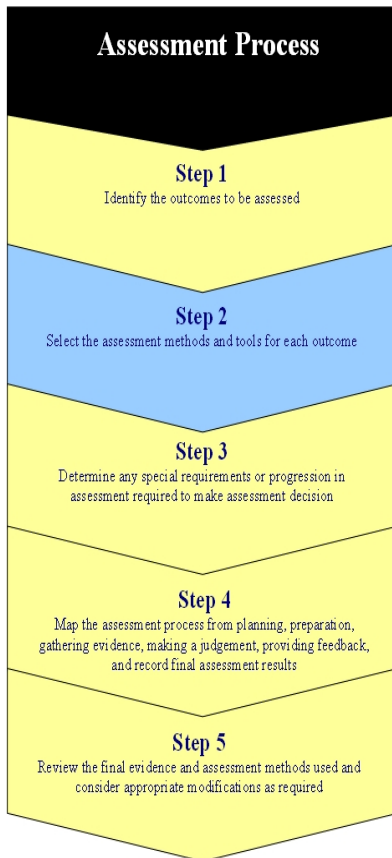
It is not the aim of this learning to analyse the pros and cons of a competency-based system. Competency-based assessment is certainly not a panacea for all workplace training problems. The various vested (often legitimate) interests seem to make this an area of broad debate but many of

the problems listed above are pre-existing issues. In fact, competency-based assessment does enable a more focussed approach often ensuring learning is relevant to the workplace.



2.2 Assessment Methods - Selecting Categorised

There are three main categories of assessment



Direct Observation

Observing the assessee's perform in a real or simulated workplace context

Direct Questioning

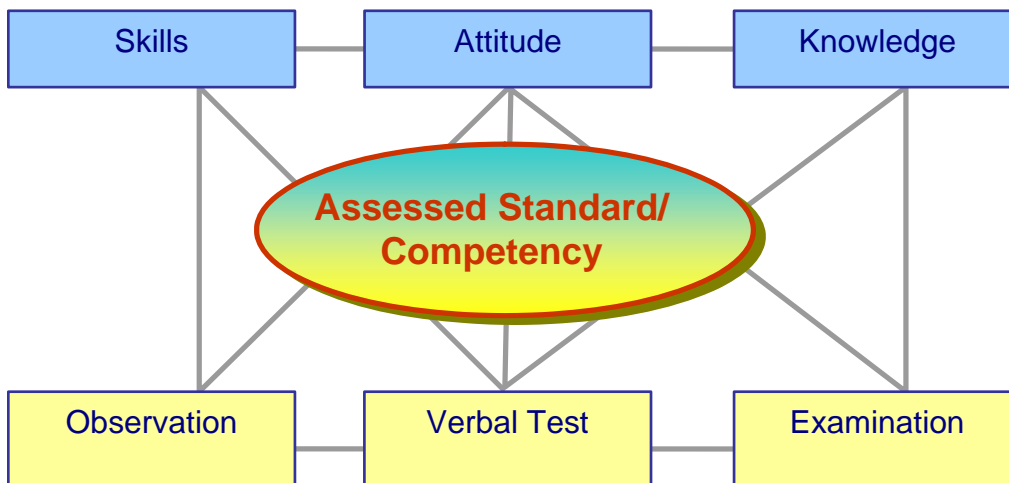
Assessee completes a written or verbal test to demonstrate competence

Examination

Assessee must perform a set of tasks or respond to questions under agreed conditions

Assessment does not have to focus on just written tests or opinions of experts observing performance.

The selection of assessment is very closely related to the knowledge, skills or attitude component of the standards being assessed.



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Skill + Knowledge + Attitude

Performance Context

= Learning & Performance Standard



3 Assessment Methods - Selecting From 12 basic methods of assessment

To provide a simple to use basis for conducting Competency-Based Assessment 12 methods of assessment are proposed:

Table 1 - 12 Basic Methods of Assessment

1. Peer assessment linked to performance criteria
2. Self Assessment linked to agreed criteria
3. Self-assessment against broad self-development criteria
4. Organisational or management audit tools
5. Facilitator assessment against specifications and requirements from identified customer scenario
6. Skills Tests
7. Knowledge Tests - Examinations, tests, projects, assignments, etc.
8. Peer assessed small-group work and participation
9. Group assessment techniques
10. One-on-one critique - Observation, Interview, and feedback
11. Diary of events, documentation, log book, etc.
12. Special Recognition of Current Competency or Recognition of Prior Learning Assessment - Capability evidence, attestation, performance related evidence.

All assessment criteria used in any approach listed above would have to be conveyed to the trainee prior to assessment. The criteria for assessment would have to be available within a handout that would be available for the trainee to view. These are the critical assessment criteria to be achieved during the learning session to satisfy the learning outcomes and thence the competencies at the level of performance required for employment.

**Table 2 - Cross Referencing Methods and Categories of Assessment**

METHODS	Suitability for use with Three Core Categories[#]		
	Observable, technical	Verbal Test	Examination
1. Peer assessment linked to performance criteria	*		*
2. Self Assessment linked to agreed criteria		*	
3. Self-assessment against broad self-development criteria		*	*
4. Organisational or management audit tools		*	*
5. Facilitator assessment against specifications and requirements from identified customer scenario	*	*	*
6. Skills Tests	*		*
7. Knowledge Tests - Examinations, tests, projects, assignments, etc.		*	*
8. Peer assessed small-group work and participation	*		
9. Group assessment techniques	*		*
10. One-on-one critique - Observation, Interview, and feedback	*	*	*
11. Diary of events, documentation, log book, etc.	*		*
12. Recognition of Attainment or Recognition of Prior Learning Assessment	*	*	*

[#] Under normal conditions



3.1 Assessment Methods - Selecting For Group and/ or Individual Assessment

There is a need to also differentiate between assessment methods that may work for an individual but fail to provide sufficient basis for judging performance when applied in a group or team environment. Some tools can, however, better isolate competencies performed by a team or by individuals working in cooperation with others.

Table 3 - Cross-Referencing Assessment Method with the Performance Areas Being Assessed (indicative groupings)

METHODS	Suitability for use with Five Core Categories [#]				
	Observable, technical	Verbal Test	Examination	Group Learning	Self-directed/ individual learning
1. Peer assessment linked to performance criteria	*		*	*	
2. Self Assessment linked to agreed criteria		*			*
3. Self-assessment against broad self-development criteria		*	*		*
4. Organisational or management audit tools		*	*	*	
5. Facilitator assessment against specifications and requirements from identified customer scenario	*	*	*	*	*
6. Skills Tests	*		*		*
7. Knowledge Tests - Examinations, tests, projects, assignments, etc.		*	*		*
8. Peer assessed small-group work and participation	*			*	
9. Group assessment techniques	*		*	*	
10. One-on-one critique - Observation, Interview, and feedback	*	*	*		*
11. Diary of events, documentation, log book, etc.	*		*		*
12. Recognition of Attainment or Recognition of Prior Learning Assessment	*	*	*		*

[#] Under normal circumstances



Using the above chart assists the assessor to link the assessment criteria - learning outcomes that must tangibly be shown to have been achieved by each trainee and the type of performance to be assessed. For example a learning outcome may stress the capacity to "Switch on a Computer". The performance outcome is an observable technical skill. However, within this learning outcome may be a requirement to "Describe the features of a Software Package". This performance outcome is knowledge related.

The assessment of knowledge is essential if the trainee is to move towards assessment of the 'full' competency "Switch on a Computer". Basically it is not possible to assess an individual's attainment of the full competency unless the underpinning knowledge was evidenced.

To ensure all parts of the required performance outcomes are assessed (holistic assessment) we may need to separate formative and summative assessment points.

The Chart below illustrates how the 12 Assessment Methods can be sorted into the performance areas and also identified for their capacity to assist in summative or formative assessment.

Assessment can be used to assist and support learning by giving feedback and confirm current progress towards attainment of a complete competency standard. This is often called **Formative Assessment** (partial - progress towards the full Unit of Competency).

Assessment can also assist the learners and their supervisors determine current and future training needs. This is often called **Diagnostic Assessment** (seeking areas of development).

The most familiar use of assessment is to determine if a level of competency has been achieved to permit recognition to occur. This is often called **Summative Assessment** (whole - has the full Unit of Competency been achieved).

Level of Assessment	ASSESSED PERFORMANCE AREAS (By Numbers)				
	Observable, technical	Verbal Test	Examination	Group Learning	Self-directed/ individual learning
Formative	1, 2	2	1	9	3
	3, 8	3	3	8	2
	9	4	5	5	5
	11	7, 10	7, 9	1	10
Summative	6	5	5, 7	5	2
	5	7	4, 6	4	6, 7
	10		3	8	10
			10, 11		11

The above is only indicative of how to use assessment methods in particular contexts (i.e. using peer assessment as a formative assessment point in observational performance areas).



3.2 Assessment Methods - Selecting the Most Appropriate Assessment Tool

The more experienced trainers, with particular learning techniques or methodologies, might add additional assessment methods to those listed above.

Table 4 - Assessing performance against learning outcomes

1. Set qualitative rather than numerical standards of performance;
 2. Establish and communicate the assessment method and the evidence required to be deemed competent;
 3. Assess the formative learning and the summative learning that leads to integrated performance;
 4. Refer to essential learning outcomes and industry elements of competency to choose examples of performance which are characteristic of the level of competence;
 5. Refer to assessment criteria to specify the properties that characterise performance as competent;
 6. Establish and communicate the number of competent performances required if consistent performance is an assessment issue;
 7. Establish and communicate where strengths in one are compensate for weaknesses in another area; and
 8. Establish and communicate how candidates that fail to achieve the level of competence may revisit particular assessment points or criteria.
-

The Table below lists the features of particular tools used when conducting different Competency-Based Assessment Methods. [For instance, if on-the-job training was required and assessment was also to be conducted in a summative, knowledge performance area one may choose to combine a practical test assessed by using a checklist and followed up by a structured spoken test identifying underpinning knowledge.]



Table 5 – Choosing a tool for different competency-based assessment methods

FEATURES TOOLS	On-The- Job	Off- The- Job	Observation -Technical	Verbal Test	Examination	Group	Individual
1. Role Plays	*	**	**	**	**	***	**
2. Essays		**		*	***		***
3. Assignments		***	*		***	*	**
4. Short Answers	**	**	*	*	***	**	**
5. Multiple Choice	**	***			**		**
6. True - False		**		**	***		**
7. Complete Data sets		**		**	**		**
8. Oral/ Spoken Responses	***	**	**	***	**	*	***
9. Interviews	*	***		***	**		***
10. Projects (Plans & Log Books)	**	**	**		*	**	***
11. Field Work	**	***	***	**	*	**	**
12. Practical Tests (Checklists)	***	*	***		**	*	***
13. Self-Assessment Exercises	**	**	*		***		***
14. Peer Assessment Critiques	**	**	**	*	***	***	*
15. Linking Statements to Reasons	*	***		***	*		**
16. Case Study Analysis		***		*	***	***	**
17. Matching Sets of Data	*	***	*	*	**	*	**
18. Self Report/ Assessment	**	**	*	***	**	*	***
KEY							
* = Not specifically designed for this but with extensive customisation could be used.							
** = Appropriate for use but with careful design							
*** = Appropriate approach with previous examples of successful use							



4 Examples of Assessment Method & Tools¹

This Section covers examples that may guide someone seeking to design an assessment tool to support one of the basic Assessment Methods.

1. Peer assessment linked to performance criteria

Peer assessment is intended to provide a formative assessment point that is not tied to the trainer's immediate control. This assessment method also encourages greater feedback and dialogue between peers as to an individual's performance and/or common strengths and weaknesses. Peer assessment should be used to encourage feedback that is positive but critically focussed. The opportunity should also be used to encourage a sense of team harmony and shared learning.

Be aware that the method has some draw backs.

- May encourage some trainees to be overly critical of an individual and not focus on the assessment criteria;
- Can create an effect where an individual in the minority may meet the assessment criteria but be criticised for doing it "differently" from the group;
- Peer assessment tends (through evaluation of its use) to limit marking ranges to 55-75 per cent of full award level; and
- Some trainees do not feel comfortable being assessed by their peers, or feel 'above' such critical feedback.

Trainees need to be fully counselled on the technique and its draw backs to ensure it is effectively used and received by those being assessed.

Ensure checklists are used and, where possible have peer assessment columns used in conjunction with self and/or facilitator's assessment.

Ensure feedback and debriefing exercises are integrated at the end of a peer assessment session; especially where peer assessment is used by itself.

See Examples under 6 and 7.

¹ This section is based on the Bowles, M. May 1992, *Assessing Skills, Knowledge and Development*, Premier and Cabinet, Tasmanian Government, Hobart.



2. Self Assessment linked to agreed criteria

Self assessment is an excellent formative exercise to focus the individual onto the assessment criteria to be covered. Some of the immediate limitations regarding self-assessment are:

- Trainee's tend to place themselves at an average, or normal level of competence rather than stand out as highly competent or incompetent;
- Self disclosure is often hard for trainee's lacking assertiveness or from a less assertive cultural background;
- Trainee's may not have the ability to describe and articulate their performance and achievements
- Trainee's may have the competency described but not understand the level or specific requirements stated; and
- Trainee's should always be given the opportunity to confirm or challenge their perceptions.

To alleviate many of the concerns confronting self-assessment methods remember to:

- Limit the scope of self-assessment to well understood skills or knowledge areas;
- Ensure the assessment criteria are understood and their relationship to a complete task or job duty are known;
- Complement self-assessment with formative or other assessment methods;
- Ensure strengths of the individual are reinforced and define succinctly how training delivery will overcome weaknesses; and
- Explain and inform trainee's of the reasons for each self-assessment exercise.

Module: Project Management - Organising an In-Store Special Promotion

Below is a list of activities that might be considered important when undertaking this self-directed project.

Rank each activities according to the following guide:

1 = Not something I feel I would be good at.

2. = Not something I have especially had experience in but would expect to be able to complete.

3 = Something I have undertaken before and do not expect any problems.

Activities	1	2	3
Keep a diary of events & allocate personal time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write a Detailed Proposal paper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arrange and attend interviews with Department managers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare a presentation to store management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
etc..	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



3. Self-assessment against broad self-development criteria

Self-assessment using broad assessment criteria is a useful way to expand the self-assessment method to encompass a critique of the trainee's own styles or techniques against masters or examples provided.

The comments and suggestions in self-assessment also apply in the use of self-assessment against broad criteria.

Module: **Communicating in the Workplace**

Below is a list of techniques that are present in the memo provided. Assess your own use of these techniques.

Rank each activities according to the following guide:

1 = Not something I have ever used.

2. = Not something I have especially had experience using but could include this in future written communications.

3 = Something I have applied in my own work

Activities	1.	2.	3.
Use of short sentences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of key introduction sentence in paragraph	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
etc..	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: The example will be provided for group consideration and discussion after the assessment forms have been circulated.

The next example is taken from a workplace training designers' course; if you are a trainer it may be of interest for you to complete the self-assessment form.





TRAINER SELF-DEVELOPMENT AUDIT

Name:

Date:

Competencies		Not Applicable	High development need	Minor development need	Competent
1. IDENTIFY LEARNING NEEDS					
1.1.	Assist students/trainees to select training/educational programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.2.	Identify learning needs of individuals/groups.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.3.	Identify learning plans that meet the needs of individuals/groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.4.	Identify learning strategies that meet the needs of individuals/groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.5.	Identify training needs of individuals/groups.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.6.	Identify training plans that meet the training and development needs of organisations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.7.	Assist individuals to develop career plans that meet their needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.8.	Identify the training or educational requirements of a particular context	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. DESIGN AND DEVELOP LEARNING INTERVENTIONS					
2.1.	Modify training/education programs to achieve identified objectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.2.	Design training/education curriculum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.3.	Design training programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.4.	Design instructional training/educational programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.5.	Design technology based instructional programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.6.	Identify learning resources to support the design and delivery of programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. FACILITATE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT					
3.1.	Deliver training/education curriculum to individuals/groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.2.	Present demonstrations and information to facilitate individual and group learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.3.	Assist individuals/groups to manage their own learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. ASSESS SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE					
4.1.	Conduct assessments of the relevant skills and knowledge held by individuals - prior to training/education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.2.	Conduct assessments of the relevant skills and knowledge held by individuals - during/ post training/education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. EVALUATE LEARNING					
5.1.	Identify aspects of training/education for evaluation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.2.	Evaluate training/education provision.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



SELF-DEVELOPMENT AUDIT (Continued)

Competencies		Not Applicable	High development need	Minor development need	Competent
6.	ORGANISE AND MANAGE LEARNING				
6.1.	Assist in the planning and the administration of the training/educational activity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.2.	Contribute to the strategic planning process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.3.	Establish and maintain quality assurance mechanisms for the provision of training/education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.4.	Manage the training/education activities of staff.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.5.	Manage the training/education operations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.6.	Develop and manage a project proposal.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.7.	Establish and manage a project team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	COMMUNICATE IN A RANGE OF LEARNING CONTEXTS				
7.1.	Communicate in a range of contexts.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.2.	Utilise channels of communication within an organisation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.3.	Consult and collaborate with colleagues to deliver or provide an appropriate level of training, education or expertise	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.4.	Liaise with government agencies, industry and community groups to support the delivery of training/education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.5.	Liaise with particular groups within the workplace to support the delivery of training/education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Further instructions

Place a 1 (number one) on your major development priority.

Place a 2 (number two) on second development priority.

Place a 3 (number three) on your third development priority.



4. Organisational or management audit tools

It may be helpful for a trainee to apply broad audit or analysis tools to their Department, store or parts of the organisation. These audit tools can serve as indicative of how a trainee has been able to analyse and assess an organisation in such areas as:

- culture
- service climate
- Quality systems
- customer satisfaction levels
- management styles
- market segment or profiling, etc

These tools are used as broad exercises to be undertaken by individual trainees. The analysis and synthesis of such information may be undertaken as a group or individual exercise. Usually the complexity and depth of analysis will vary from low level for entry up to very complex and in depth audits for senior store managers.

It should be made clear to trainees that the presentation of the audit results is a confirmation of a learning exercise that is intended to give them an insight into aspects of organisational management. The below is derived from the Deming survey of Quality Management practices. A commentary relating to score ranges would be added to focus the survey.

To identify a more in depth picture of where the organisation is at this CONFIDENTIAL exercise is designed to grade the organisation in the following categories ranking them from 1 to 4. For each of the 8 lines list a response from 1 Most like the traditional description to 5 most like the transformational description. Using 2, or 3 would be indicate where the organisation is moving towards or from traditional to a transformational development. A full range of responses can therefore be used from 1 to 4 with only ONE number per line being recorded in the score column. A total can then be derived from the score column.

Exercise:

ORGANISATIONAL SURVEY			
Attitude on	Traditional	Transformational	Score
1. QUALITY	Profit focus	Customer focus	
2. FOCUS OF CONCERN	physical/tangible/product service provided to a customer	The functions relationship to the total well being of the customer	
3. DETECTION OF PROBLEMS IN SERVICE DELIVERY	Evaluation of overall management and service delivery budget	Process review that includes and encourages feedback from service users and providers	
4. CONTROL	Service deliverers	Process to deliver services	
5. PROBLEMS WITH customers	Acceptable limits	Target for zero. Any problems are undesirable	
6. PRO-ACTIVE MANAGEMENT	Assure end service within acceptable cost range	Process monitoring and continually auditing service deliverer's feedback on young people's changing needs.	
7. PRODUCTION	Report and high level management decision to respond or modify	Workplace response and feedback from service deliverer	
8. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE	Downward/ Directive	Participative at all levels	
TOTAL			-----/32

After completion of the exercise ask the individuals to note their scores in the score boxes and then discuss the significance of the score ranges.

- Total Score =
- 8-12 (✓) Tick one box.
 - 13-22
 - 23-29 [NB: Definitions of these score ranges would be added to support the assessment context]
 - 29-36





5. Facilitator assessment against specifications and requirements from identified customer scenario

The use of management memos/ briefs or scenarios is an effective summative form of assessment that can be used by Purity Supermarkets'. Scenarios can be tailored to include the specifications and final assessment requirements. Formative assessment methods can be ordered to compliment the overall learning experience.

It is important to note that this form of assessment permits **expert personnel** to participate in maintaining the enterprise's standard of performance in filling the requirements stated in the scenario. Experts may be involved by:

- Acting as a mentor for an individual or small group;
- Providing individual or group feedback in interviews;
- Sitting on an assessment panel;
- Providing real workplace issues or problems for the trainee(s) to solve on their behalf;
- Opening their workplaces for tours; and/or
- Providing expert assessment or examples of contemporary industry practices.

An example of such a scenario based on specifications. An external expert may be used to facilitate the session or comment on each group's strategies.



INDIVIDUAL AND SMALL GROUP EXERCISE:

DEVELOP A BASIC STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING SERVICE AT THE POINT OF SALE

BY YOUR SELF:

What are the three key expectations YOU believe customers have when they reach the point of sale?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

IN A SMALL GROUP DISCUSS AND LIST:

Compare and discuss your individual response to the above question.
Agree on three key customer expectations a store should ALWAYS endeavour to meet.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Establish when you CANNOT deliver each of these expectations?

List a strategies for delivering one or all of the above three expectations; have regard for barriers that may need to be overcome.

REPORT TO THE CLASS ON THE IDENTIFIED STRATEGY



6. Skills Tests

Skills tests fundamentally revolve around the applied use of learnt skills to achieve a desired performance standard. For instance the interpretation of information on a product label, and accurately replacing it in the store can provide an immediate indication of the trainee's skill level.

Module Title: Product Knowledge

Name of Student: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

First Observer: _____

Second Observer: _____

Task: Undertake in a real or simulated workplace situation the interpretation of a product's label and replace it in the correct location in a store

Note This may apply to a set number of products.

PRODUCT 1	OBSERVER 1		OBSERVER 2	
	yes	no	yes	no
Interpreted the product label accurately according to required standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expiry date was checked prior to placement in the store	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Product was located in the correct aisle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Product was placed correctly on the shelf	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
etc..				

OBSERVER 1 COMMENTS:

OBSERVER 2 COMMENTS:

TRAINEE'S COMMENTS:

Skill tests can also include a comprehensive checklist of actions against agreed assessment criteria.



Module Title: Product Knowledge

Name of Student: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Assessor: {Name}

Marking Criteria:

1 = Has not demonstrated or explained the assessment criteria

2 = Has achieved competence in the applied use of the assessment criteria but in an unconscious manner or is unable to explainable reasons for it use

3 = Has achieved competence in the applied use of the assessment criteria and can explain its use and different applications

Learning Outcome 1: Effectively use product knowledge to assist sales

(NB: example provided for the sale of potatoes role play)

	1.	2.	3.
Correctly determined product type	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Correctly relayed characteristics of product to customer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Determined correct preparation and cooking features of the product	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promoted product features to assist sales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
etc..			

ASSESSOR'S COMMENTS:

Assessor Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

The above assessment tool would be used in conjunction with a role play or similar activity.





7. Knowledge Tests

Knowledge tests are probably the most generally used and known assessment tool for non-technical training and education. Knowledge test include:

- Short tests
- Written or oral exercises
- Oral interviews (on such things as critical or interpretive relevance of creative works)
- Essays
- Written interpretations (on such things as of briefs)
- Exams
- Multiple choice questionnaires
- Checklists against agreed knowledge or points of understanding

Interviews are a particularly flexible tool to assist trainees focus on the assessment criteria, exchange information, clarify points of understanding, and promote demonstrations or further instruction on specific points. Interviews may also be conducted with more than one interviewee or interviewer present.

Essays and written tests can be presented in a variety of ways but they should reflect the knowledge components within the assessment criteria or be tied to evidence required to ensure performance is underpinned with knowledge and understanding.

The most common form of knowledge tests are the presentation of written work marked against as a percentage. This is NOT acceptable under the rigid application of competency-based training whereby the test should confirm the individual's ability to either competency complete or not complete a task.

Pragmatically, the assessor may choose to ascribe or describe levels of competence that distinguished between not competent, competent, competence with a level of excellence.



An example of a short knowledge test:



ORAL QUESTIONING EXERCISE:

WORKPLACE SAFETY INCIDENT – ACTION EXERCISE

Questions to be asked during an observation assessment exercise associated with “Work safely in a food retail store”

Ask the assessee the following questions and the record the actions they recommend.

INCIDENT/ACCIDENT	Action
Loading jack left in aisle	_____
Customer slips on produce in your department	_____
Spillage identified on floor of another department	_____
Blood splashed onto open wound	_____
Consistently cut your hands on a particular shelf	_____
HIV+ customer needs resuscitation	_____
Customer’s blood swallowed accidentally during first aid	_____
Cut own hand while slicing produce	_____
Need to unload a truck when mechanical systems do not work	_____
Need to cut meat when mesh glovers are not available	_____



8. Peer assessed small-group work and participation

Small group work is an excellent method for building peer feedback and for mutual support and advancement during a learning experience. A small group's dynamic should be encouraged to ensure the mix of creative and problem solving skills build on or add to the capacity of any one individual.

Module Title: Product Knowledge

Name of Student: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Assessor: {Name}

Marking Criteria:

1 = Has not demonstrated or explained the assessment criteria

2 = Has achieved competence in the applied use of the assessment criteria but in an unconscious manner or is unable to explainable reasons for it use

3 = Has achieved competence in the applied use of the assessment criteria and can explain its use and different applications

LEARNING OUTCOME NUMBER 3: Analyse product labelling systems to correctly respond to customer enquires

Assessment Criteria:

**Column 1
SELF**

**Column 2
PEER**

**Column 3
FACILITATOR**

**Column 4
COMMENTS**

**Column 5
SELF RATING**

3.1.	Product specifications translated confidently and fluently to customer
3.2.	Features and benefits of product related to customer needs and wants
3.3.	New product evaluated and demonstrated to supervisor
3.4.	Products demonstrated accurately to customer
	etc

9. Group assessment techniques

When a number of trainees work together to produce an outcome, assessment may have to be conducted on the group achievement. Group assessment may take the form of peer assessment, self-assessment and/ or input from the facilitator (as for the last section).

It may be possible for particular tasks to be allocated to individuals within the group. Marking may also be divided across different roles and responsibilities within the group.

So long as clear criteria are set for assessment and the verification process or evidence is known to all parties a number of assessment methods can be used.

It is suggested peer assessment in a large group be conducted by someone with familiarity with the task to be completed. Ideally they should have co-responsibility for an outcome. In some cases trainees from another group completing similar roles may be used to conduct assessment from a more objective view point.



SMALL GROUP SHORT EXERCISE:

Design an in-store communication strategy to assist in conveying the following message to customers about an agreed product.

- Materials used
- Where and how it is made
- Expected outcomes from using the product
- How it is produced
- Care for product
- Appearance/ special features
- Comparison to similar products
- Stock availability

Note: The above exercise may be structured for a product whereby a public communication media or strategy is not appropriate. It may also be used for a number of small groups to devise an innovative strategy for a single product. Their efforts can then be compared and contrasted.



10. One-on-one critique - Observation and feedback

Observation and assessment using one of the pro-formas detailed already (see section 8, 6 etc) can be a simple method for the Facilitator, visiting experts or even peers to systematically monitor a trainee's performance against a checklist of assessment criteria.

Systematic observation and monitoring helps to structure feedback and correct performance mistakes. In many cases the resolution of creative problems involve unstructured or intuitive interpretations of a scenario. While these actions are often not based on broad behaviours that can be described in outcome terms it is often possible for facilitators to assess such actions through observation or during one-on-one interviews.

This can be a particularly effective method when used in conjunction with checklists and oral knowledge tests.



11. Diary of events, documentation, log book etc.

The requirement to log time or produce documentation such as project plans, costing, or traffic documentation helps to record information and to compare expected results with actual. In many cases the final product produced by a trainee will not be as important as the progress through the learning experience.

Documentation also helps to form a learning contract between the facilitator and the trainee. The requirement to produce such documentation can serve to confirm the trainees self-directed learning experience and focus on what they hope to achieve, and how.

Recording entries into diaries or log books may also help to attest to the trainees progress and to provide criteria for discussion and reflection during and after the exercise.

As so much of the service industry is dependent on time and cost management the keeping of logs and documents can also serve to track the trainee through a full process from receiving a project task/ job list to task completion. This may transcend a number of modules of learning.



12. Recognising Current Competency or Recognition of Prior Learning Assessment during a module

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) under the Australian National Training Quality Framework is a formal process whereby a person's skills and knowledge acquired through previous training, work, or life experience may be used to grant status or credit in a subject, module, or course.

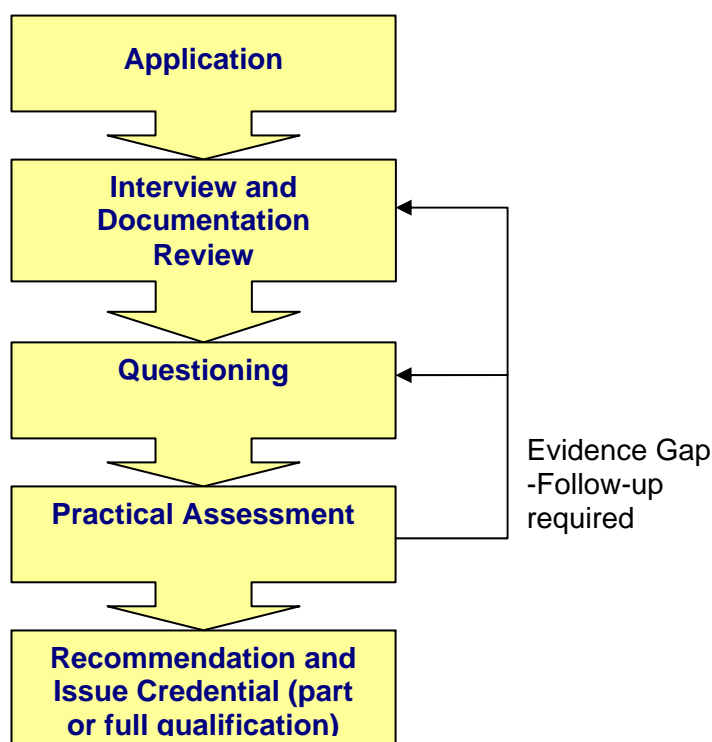
Recognition of prior learning refers to *the acknowledgment of skills and knowledge held as a result of formal training, work experience and/or life experience.*

Basically, if people can show they have the competencies to the stated standard, it does not matter how they acquired them, they should be able to have them recognised. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may also been known in Australia as:

- Recognition of Current Competency (RCC)
- Assessment of Prior Learning (APL)
- Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)
- Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA)
- Recognition of Attainment
- Recognition of Current Capability

In the RPL process evidence is collected against the skills and knowledge requirements for the unit of competency or its constituent elements. If recognition is granted then the candidate can be credited with the equivalent parts of a course (statement of attainment), or even an entire qualification.

Standard RPL Process



Where a gap exists the RPL assessor may require more verification, improved third party supporting reports, further observation assessment, or even more training be completed.



Types of Evidence for RPL

In order to be found competent in each unit the candidate applies for they must provide evidence sufficient for judgement by an independent assessor. Evidence can vary with the skills and knowledge for which recognition is being sought.

1. Qualifications

This evidence is the most unambiguous and easy to present. Qualifications presented may also include those from schools, Registered Training Organisation (RTO), tertiary institutions or other providers that hold equivalency to the units of competency (i.e. the extent to which a person's acquired knowledge or skills satisfy the competency requirements). Other training providers such as in-house, community and various unaccredited providers may also grant awards that the applicant can presents as evidence of learning in the field of endeavour covered by the unit of competency.

2. Observation

This evidence requires the presentation of an independent report by a qualified observer confirming the applicant has individually or collectively achieved the competency outcomes, performance criteria, and/or demonstrated the skills and knowledge to the standard specified. Such reports hold greater validity when they come from independent individuals with the verified expertise to make such judgements (i.e. a person competent to assess the unit of competency being observed).

3. Written testimonial or report

This requires the submission of written evidence by the applicant that may specifically demonstrate the applicant's knowledge. Such written reports usually cover and confirm how work and life experience have contributed to a competency being attained. They may also be research or academic papers that confirm the applicant's knowledge on the subject matter.

4. Portfolio of evidence

This requires the submission of workplace documents or other documentary evidence that supports the applicants completion of the outcomes stated in the unit of competency.

Preparing an Observation Report

The following is provided as a guide on how you may prepare an observation report.

Purpose of the task:

- Through this observation candidates must be able to provide evidence that they can successfully complete the unit of competency.
- The evidence guide and in some cases the performance criteria relating to the elements of the unit of competency should become the criteria used to align observed performance. The observer or assessor, where they hold competency standards relevant to being an assessor and the unit of competency being assessed, should indicate where the candidate has been observed completing the criteria to both the required standard (satisfactory) and on a consistent basis.

Instructions for the observation component:

- The observer may make comments and add feedback to the candidate during and after the session. These comments are also important parts of the evidence gathering requirements.
- While the criteria form the 'checklist' for the observer they also have scope to add comments and add further criteria they may feel is relevant.



- The observer/assessor and the candidate being assessed should sign off and date the observation report for it to be considered valid.

NOTE: The candidate may wish to provide the contact details for the observer/assessor in case the RTO wishes to confirm either detail relating to the assessment or the observer's relationship with the candidate.

OBSERVATION ASSESSMENT for the {State the Qualification}			
Candidate name:			
Unit of competency:			
Observers name (if unqualified):			
Assessors name (if qualified):			
Workplace:			
Date of assessment:			
Length of training session:			
Observation			
Using the Unit of Competency evidence and/or performance criteria list and confirm if the candidate has consistently, and to a satisfactory standard demonstration skills and knowledge that may relate to:	Competent	Not Yet Competent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feedback to candidate:			
The candidate's overall performance was:			
Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Not Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/>			
Signature of Assessor/Observer:			
	Dated: / /200		
Signature of candidate/assessee:			
	Dated: / /200		



Preparing a Portfolio

As the candidate works through the relevant unit of competency they must collect documentation or work samples that 'prove' what you do or have done. Examples of the type of evidence you collect and package into a portfolio can include:

- Sample of work completed (i.e. Materials or resources developed).
- References or testimonial by people other than the applicant.
- Letter of Validation.
- None educational or other certificates (i.e. First aid, insurance, etc.).
- Awards (i.e. Design awards, teaching excellence, etc.).
- Correspondence.
- Surveys, student feedback and such like.

The list is indicative rather than exhaustive.

You should consider using a Portfolio Cover sheet for each unit of competency to ease its collection and verification by the RPL assessor.

Name:	Date submitted:
I declare this evidence to have been produced by the undersigned. Candidate's signature:	
Portfolio evidence presented for unit of competency:	
List evidence in order:	
Assessor to complete Evidence is: Valid Sufficient Authentic Current <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Assessor signature:	
Dated: _____/_____/200_	



Providing third party verification in a portfolio

This is an example of a template that can be used by an assessor or candidate to secure third party testimony as to performance of skills and knowledge in relation to a unit of competency. In many cases RPL will usually involve the candidate providing testimony or current work and a portfolio of evidence that is collected using a variation of the form provided below.

Name:		Date submitted:	
I declare this evidence to have been produced by the undersigned. Candidate's signature:			
Third party testimony for unit of competency: <i>{List unit of competency title}</i>			
Testimony			
Confirm if the candidate has consistently, and to a satisfactory standard demonstration skills and knowledge that may relate to:	Competent	Not Yet Competent	N/A
<i>{List tasks of elements or skills and knowledge from unit of competency}</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feedback to candidate:			
The candidate's overall performance was: Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Not Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/>			
Signature of Assessor/Observer:	Dated: / /200		
Signature of candidate/assessee:	Dated: / /200		