

TAEASS502

Design and develop assessment tools

Release 2



Learner guide

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Aspire Version 1.2



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TAEASS502 Design and develop assessment tools Release 2

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Start date:

Phone number:

Email:

Work location

Name:

Address:

Postal address:

Workplace supervisor name:

Phone number:

Fax:

Email:

Registered Training Organisation (RTO)

Name:

Address:

Postal address (if different):

Phone number:

Fax:

RTO contact name:

Mobile:

Email:

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Before you begin

This learner guide is based on the unit of competency *TAEASS502 Design and develop assessment tools*, Release 2. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at: www.training.gov.au.

How to work through this learner guide

This learner guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the learner guide you need to read, and which activities you need to complete. The features of this learner guide are detailed in the following table.

Feature of the learner guide	How you can use each feature
Overview	This section provides general information about the vocational education and training sector and its essential components (such as training packages), which will underpin your learning.
Introduction	The introduction covers the key concepts relevant to this particular unit of competency, including the terminology that will be used throughout this learner guide.
Learning content	Read each topic in this learner guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
Templates	Templates are referred to throughout the guide. These are samples of working documents similar to those found in a training organisation. Completed templates may be useful as evidence for portfolio assessments. Ask your trainer for sample templates provided with the <i>Trainer's and assessor's guide</i> for this unit.
Examples	Examples of completed documents that may be used in a workplace are included in this learner guide. Examples highlight learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
Activities	Activities give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which activities to complete.
Summary	Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.

Foundation skills

As you complete learning using this guide, you will be developing the foundation skills relevant for this unit. Foundation skills are the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills and the employability skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life.

The following table outlines specific foundation skills noted for your learning in this learner guide.

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Accesses, and interprets, procedural and compliance information, and assessment documentation
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Prepares assessment tools and documentation that incorporates language and format appropriate to the audience ▶ Amends tools in response to feedback
Oral Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Participates in communication in order to clarify the purpose and requirements of assessment tools, and to trial assessments
Navigate the world of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Recognises, and follows, explicit and implicit protocols, policies and procedures, and meets expectations associated with own role ▶ Identifies, confirms and takes responsibility for adherence to organisational, legal and ethical requirements
Interact with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Actively seeks to clarify the perspectives and experiences of others as part of the work role
Get the work done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Uses systematic, analytical processes in complex, non-routine situations, gathering information, and identifying and evaluating options against agreed criteria ▶ Organises work according to defined requirements, taking responsibility for decisions and sequencing tasks to achieve efficient outcomes ▶ Seeks new ideas and opportunities, drawing on the diverse perspectives of others to gain insights into current practice and ideas for change

What do you already know?

Use the following table to identify what you may already know. This may assist you to work out what to focus on in your learning.

Topic	Key outcomes	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 1: Determine the focus of the assessment tool	1.1 Identify a target group of candidates, purposes of the assessment tool, and the contexts in which the tool will be used	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1.2 Access relevant benchmarks for assessment and interpret them to establish evidence required to demonstrate competence	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1.3 Identify, access and interpret industry requirements and relevant contextualisation guidelines	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1.4 Identify other related documentation to inform assessment tool development	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 2: Design the assessment tool	2.1 Select assessment methods that support the collection of defined evidence, taking into account the context in which the assessment will take place, and meeting the principles of assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2.2 Enable candidates to show or support their claim for recognition of current competency through selected assessment methods	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2.3 Consider different assessment instruments for the selected assessment methods to generate options for collection of evidence	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2.4 Consider how the assessment instruments will be administered	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident

Topic	Key outcomes	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 3: Develop the assessment tool	3.1 Develop specific assessment instruments that support the collection of evidence that meets the rules of evidence	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3.2 Define and document clear and specific procedures instructing assessor and candidate on the administration and use of assessment instruments	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3.3 Consider the requirements of assessment system policies and procedures, and address storage and retrieval needs, and review, evaluation and version control procedures as part of this process	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 4: Review and trial the assessment tool	4.1 Check draft assessment tools against evaluation criteria and amend as required	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4.2 Trial assessment tools to validate content and applicability	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4.3 Collect and document feedback from relevant people involved in trialling	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4.4 Make amendments to the final tool based on the analysis of feedback	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4.5 Appropriately format, and file, finalised assessment tool according to assessment system policies and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident

Assessment

When you have completed your learning, you will be asked to complete an assessment. You need to understand what will be required of you for assessment as you work your way through this learner guide: your trainer/assessor will provide you with the relevant details. This learner guide does not include a final assessment. Your training organisation may be using Aspire's Assessment and RPL resource for this unit.

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to design and to develop assessment tools used to guide the collection of quality evidence, including their application in formative, summative and recognition of prior learning (RPL) assessment. You will need to provide the following:

You will need to:

- ▶ develop at least three assessment tools that support different assessment methods, and address at least one unit of competency each. Each assessment tool must:
 - include the instruments for collecting evidence, reflecting the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence, and related instructions to the assessor/s and candidates
 - show how the contextual needs of different environments are addressed
 - report on the trial and review of each assessment tool, including proposed changes.

You will also need to demonstrate knowledge of:

- ▶ the principles of assessment and how they are applied when developing assessment tools
- ▶ the rules of evidence and how they have been incorporated in the tools developed
- ▶ different assessment contexts and their relationship to developing assessment tools
- ▶ the dimensions of competency and how they are incorporated in the development of assessment tools
- ▶ the contextualisation of units of competency and contextualisation guidelines
- ▶ the components of training packages relevant to the development of assessment tools
- ▶ different assessment methods, their purposes and uses
- ▶ evaluation methods appropriate to the trial and review of assessment tools
- ▶ the principles of reasonable adjustment
- ▶ workplace health and safety (WHS) responsibilities associated with assessing competence, including:
 - requirements for reporting hazards and incidents
 - emergency procedures
 - procedures for the use of relevant personal protective equipment
 - sources of WHS information.

Always refer to your assessor for information about the number, type and detail required in the assessment materials you will be required to complete. Developing an evidence portfolio

An evidence portfolio is a useful way to demonstrate to your assessor how you have developed the skills, knowledge, attitudes and abilities that contribute to competence. Samples of your work that are developed as a part of the activities can be used as evidence for assessment.

Your trainer/assessor may also ask you to provide samples of documents or completed templates to demonstrate your progress in this unit. Some of these could be submitted as part of an evidence portfolio. Always follow the specific directions and guidance of your trainer/assessor to determine what documents your portfolio should include and how they should be presented.

Here are some examples of what your portfolio might contain:

- ▶ Your responses to specific activities as indicated in each section of the learner guide
- ▶ Personal reflections on your progress via an ongoing learning journal
- ▶ Recorded comments from your supervisor, peers or clients about how you have applied skills and knowledge
- ▶ Documents or completed templates* you have developed such as assessment plans, assessment tools, training session plans or checklists
- ▶ Samples and an analysis of relevant forms, documents and other material used in a training and assessment environment

*Throughout this learner guide, reference is made to specific templates that you can use for activities or for your portfolio. Ask your trainer for template samples; Aspire has included relevant templates in its Trainer's and assessor's guide for this unit.

Overview

Understand vocational education and training

There is a great deal more to the VET system and the delivery of training and assessment than the information provided in this Overview. Each learner guide for the units offered in the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment provides activities and examples to demonstrate the application of your VET knowledge.

To work effectively in the vocational education and training (VET) system, you need to understand its essential components, particularly training packages and how to use them in a training delivery and assessment role.

VET develops skills and knowledge for work through a national training system that seeks to provide consistent training across Australia. The primary purpose of VET is to equip people with the skills, knowledge and attributes they require to be 'work ready' and to operate effectively in employment. The Australian VET system comprises two fundamental elements that help ensure quality and consistency in training: training packages and the VET Quality Framework (VQF), which includes the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Training packages

Training packages are the foundation of Australia's VET system. A training package is a set of nationally endorsed qualifications, units of competency and assessment requirements developed for a specific industry, sector or workplace. Copies of individual training packages can be viewed at: <http://training.gov.au>.

Training packages also provide the structure for competency-based training. A competency-based approach judges outcomes against specific standards established in the endorsed components of a training package. Endorsed components are the various units of competency, the qualifications within which they sit and assessment guidelines that describe the industry's desired approach to assessment and qualifications.

Training packages are developed by Service Skills Organisations (formerly by Industry Skills Councils) to meet the training needs of an industry or group of industries. Training packages are maintained in line with the National Skills Standards Council's Standards for Training Packages to ensure training packages are of high quality and meet the workforce development needs of industry, enterprises and individuals. These standards apply to the design and development of training packages for endorsement by the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (formerly the role of the now dissolved National Skills Standards Council (NSSC)).

Units of competency

Units of competency are the nationally agreed statements of the skills and knowledge required for effective performance in a particular job or job function. In other words, a unit of competency is a set of skills and knowledge that form part of a person's job role, and represents a discrete workplace outcome.

Units of competency are packaged as groups into qualifications and qualification levels in each training package. Each qualification has a descriptor that provides guidelines on how the unit is practically applied, who would use it and the unit's relationship to any applicable licensing, legislative or certification requirements.

Training packages do not prescribe how training is to be delivered. They provide guidance on assessment and the methods of assessment that may be appropriate for each unit of competency. Registered training organisations (RTOs) are responsible for how training and assessment occur.

An RTO can also issue qualifications derived from training packages or accredited courses, or statements of attainment to recognise the completion of a unit of competency from a qualification or accredited course.

The VET Quality Framework

The VET Quality Framework (VQF) is a set of standards and conditions used by the Australian Skills Quality Authority to assess whether an RTO meets the requirements for registration. The *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (Cth) established the National VET Regulator (NVR) and underpins the VQF.

The VQF comprises:

- ▶ the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- ▶ the Australian Qualifications Framework
- ▶ the Fit and Proper Person Requirements
- ▶ the Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements
- ▶ the Data Provision Requirements.

Training that leads to the award of an accredited qualification must be delivered and assessed by an RTO that satisfies the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015. The Standards include the Essential Standards for Initial Registration and the Essential Standards for Continuing Registration. There are eight standards to which RTOs must comply.

You should familiarise yourself with the VQF and the compliance requirements it places on RTOs; this compliance directly affects the work you do as a trainer and an assessor.

Australian Skills Quality Authority

Course accreditation agencies such as the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) set regulations and standards for the VET sector to ensure course quality is maintained through the effective regulation of training providers and accredited courses. It does this mainly through the VQF. (Note: Victoria and Western Australia have not referred their powers of regulation to ASQA and continue to be subject to their respective state regulators if they operate solely within their state.)

ASQA works with other regulatory, funding and policy bodies to ensure the training provided is of high quality and meets the requirements of industry-developed training packages, so VET graduates have the required skills and competencies for employment.

Any RTO operating solely in Victoria and/or Western Australia is regulated by those states' regulators (not ASQA), and must comply with the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) Essential Conditions and Standards for Registration. The VQF Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations derive from the AQTF standards.

Throughout this learner guide, reference is made to both sets of Standards, presented as VQF/AQTF.

The Australian Qualifications Framework

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), a component of the VQF, is a policy framework that defines the standards for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It specifies the learning outcomes for 16 nationally recognised qualifications. The following diagram represents the 10 levels of the AQF.



Reproduced with permission of the AQF council, from AQF Second Edition, January 2013, p. 19.

An RTO must issue qualifications and statements of attainment that align to the AQF and meet the requirements of the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy and the endorsed training packages within that RTO's scope of registration.

Training and assessment

The primary role of RTOs in the VET system is to deliver accredited training and assessment-based units of competency and qualifications. You may be employed by an RTO to facilitate classroom, online or blended learning; to deliver workplace-based training and assessment on-site to enterprise staff; or to coordinate and support enterprise trainers, coaches and mentors in their roles.

Alternatively, you may be an enterprise trainer whose role is to facilitate learning and carry out assessment in the workplace, perhaps based on national units of competency or internal enterprise standards. The work you do may or may not lead to a recognised qualification.

When working with training packages and before providing training or assessment services, there are two aspects of competency and units of competency that you need to understand:

- ▶ How to identify and 'unpack' the key features of a unit of competency
- ▶ The dimensions of competency and their role in ensuring that competency incorporates all aspects of work performance

Explore a unit of competency

You should unpack a unit of competency and consider each part of the unit to form a picture of what a competent person looks like, how assessment should occur and what evidence is required.

The following table summarises the components of a unit of competency, as defined in the TAE Training and Education Training Package Implementation Guide.

Component feature	What it relates to
Unit of competency	
Title	The title describes the unit outcome.
Unit application	This field describes how the unit is practically applied, who would typically use it and the unit of competency's relationship to licensing, legislative or certification requirements.
Prerequisite units	This is an optional field that specifies any unit/s in which the learner must already be competent prior to achieving competency in this unit.
Unit Sector	This field is used to categorise units of competency in relation to industry sectors or types of work.
Elements of competency	Elements of competency describe the outcomes of the significant functions and tasks that make up the competency. Elements describe actions or outcomes that are demonstrable and assessable.
Performance criteria	Performance criteria specify the required performance in relevant tasks, roles, skills (including foundation skills) and the applied knowledge that enables competent performance.
Foundation skills	This field describes the language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills that are essential to performance.
Range of conditions	This is an optional field that specifies different work environments and conditions that may affect performance. Range is restricted to essential operating conditions and any other variables essential to the work environment, so it is quite different from the previous range statement.
Unit mapping information	This field specifies the code and title of any equivalent unit of competency.
Links	This field provides a link to the Companion Volume Implementation Guide.
Assessment requirements	
Performance evidence	Performance evidence, as the name implies, specifies what individuals must do to show that they satisfy the performance standards in the unit of competency.

Component feature	What it relates to
Knowledge evidence	Knowledge evidence, as the name implies, specifies what individuals must know in order to carry out the work tasks described in the unit of competency safely and effectively.
Assessment conditions	This field describes mandatory conditions for assessment; for example, details of equipment and materials; contingencies; physical conditions; relationships with other people; and time frames. It also specifies assessor requirements.
Links	This field provides a link to the Companion Volume Implementation Guide.

Explore dimensions of competency

Reviewing the dimensions of competency is an important part of unpacking a unit of competency. The dimensions of competency relate to all aspects of work performance in both routine and non-routine work situations. A competent person can successfully apply their skills and knowledge to work activities in a range of contexts.

The following table explores the four dimensions of competency in more detail.

Dimensions of competency	Meaning
Task skills	The candidate must perform the individual skills required to complete a work activity to the required standard.
Task management skills	The candidate must manage a number of different tasks to complete a whole work activity, such as working to meet deadlines.
Contingency management skills	The candidate must use problem-solving skills to resolve issues that arise when performing a work activity.
Job/role environment skills	The candidate must perform effectively in the workplace when undertaking a work activity by working well with all stakeholders and following workplace policies and procedures.

Incorporate foundation skills

Foundation skills are the non-technical skills that support an individual’s participation in the workplace, the community and in education and training. In training packages, the foundation skills can incorporate the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills described in the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF), and the employability skills described in the Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework (CSfW).

Foundation skills underpin competent performance and are identified in each unit of competency in a foundation skills table. The foundation skills should be considered an integrated part of the unit for delivery and assessment purposes.

FSK Foundation Skills Training Package

The FSK Foundation Skills Training Package was developed to work in combination with other training packages to support the development of learners' core skills, so they can achieve their vocational training goals. Trainers have an opportunity to use material developed, such as those developed by Aspire Learning Resources, to deliver foundation skills to learners. RTOs have an opportunity to deliver training and qualifications in foundation skills units to support their students.

IBSA's Building Strong Foundations resource provides information about using the Foundation Skills Training Package. You can access Building Strong Foundations at this website:

- ▶ www.ibsa.org.au

The Foundation Skills Training Package Implementation Guide also contains an explanation of the use of this training package. You can access it at this website:

- ▶ <https://vetnet.education.gov.au>

Assessment methods

The competency-based assessment system relies on an assessor making a judgment about a person's competence against performance benchmarks in a unit of competency, using methods such as criterion-referenced assessment, standards-based assessment or evidence-based assessment. An assessment candidate should be judged as either competent or not yet competent according to whether they demonstrate that they can meet the specified standards.

The recognition process

The recognition process allows candidates to provide evidence that their previous training, work or life experience aligns to the skills and knowledge described in a qualification or unit of competency.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is one form of this process. Recognition can also include recognition of current competency and credit transfer.

Evidence of competency may include work samples, journals, certificates of achievement and third-party testimonials. In addition, candidates may be asked questions, observed undertaking set tasks or asked to demonstrate the authenticity of their work.

RTO staff must be able to provide clear, accurate information on assessment and recognition processes to candidates. Your obligations could therefore include:

- ▶ advising and assisting a candidate/learner to apply for recognition
- ▶ determining the type of recognition for which the candidate/learner should apply
- ▶ assisting the candidate/learner to complete relevant documents
- ▶ processing recognition applications in a timely manner.

Candidates may apply for recognition before the learning program commences. In other cases it may become apparent as a learner progresses through training delivery that they have the skills, knowledge and competence to satisfy the assessment requirements for a unit of competency or a cluster of units.

Introduction

Design and develop assessment tools

What is assessment?

Assessment is a crucial part of any learning and development program as it lets the trainer and learner know whether the learner has been successful in gaining the skills and knowledge required by the program they have undertaken. The learner may also have their previous training, work or life experience assessed against the skills and knowledge outlined in a qualification.

Assessment involves reviewing a range of evidence presented by the learner and judging whether the evidence they have provided is sufficient, valid, current and authentic evidence of their competence to successfully undertake a particular task:

- ▶ Sufficient – there is enough appropriate evidence to ensure that all aspects of competency have been satisfied and that competency can be demonstrated repeatedly.
- ▶ Valid – the evidence provided is relevant to the unit of competency; the evidence measures what it is supposed to measure.
- ▶ Current – competency requires demonstration of current performance, so evidence provided must be from either the present or the very recent past.
- ▶ Authentic – the evidence presented for assessment is the candidate's own work.

Assessment in a vocational education and training system is competency based, meaning that assessment is made against established benchmarks and a person is considered either 'competent' or 'not competent' according to whether they have demonstrated that they can meet the specified standards.

Assessment should be conducted on a number of occasions over a period of time and in different situations.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is the term used to describe assessment conducted throughout the learning process. For example, you may be responsible for delivering learning to a community in a remote location; learners could complete the activities and email them to you for review. You can then provide the learners with written feedback with the objective of improving their learning.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment is the final assessment on which an assessor will determine the learner's competence or successful completion of the learning. This kind of assessment usually occurs at the very end of a learning program.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

The recognition process is where learners provide evidence that their previous training, work or life experience aligns to the skills and knowledge described in a qualification or unit of competency. Evidence of competency may include work samples, journals, certificates of achievement and third-party testimonials. In addition, learners may be asked questions, be observed undertaking set tasks or be asked to provide authenticity of their work.

Recognition of current competence

Recognition of current competence is the acknowledgment of competencies currently held by a person, acquired through training, work or life experience. For example, a person who currently holds a licence to operate a specific piece of equipment may need to be assessed as part of the renewal of their licence to ensure they have maintained their competence.

What is an assessment tool?

An assessment tool is used to guide the collection of quality evidence in the assessment process. It is a term that encompasses:

- ▶ the specific instruments for collecting evidence; for example, templates, questions, evidence checklists or recognition portfolios
- ▶ assessment methods; for example, observation, projects or presentations
- ▶ the procedures to be followed in conducting the assessment; for example, instructions to the assessor and the candidate.

An assessment tool also includes the following components:

- ▶ the learning or unit/s of competency to be assessed
- ▶ the target group
- ▶ context and conditions of assessment
- ▶ tasks to be administered to the student
- ▶ an outline of the evidence to be gathered from the candidate
- ▶ evidence criteria used to judge the quality of performance (that is, the assessment decision-making rules).

This term also takes in the administration, recording and reporting requirements, and may address a cluster of competencies as applicable for holistic assessment.

The following table outlines the key components of a quality assessment tool. It may be useful to refer to when working through this learner guide.

Areas	Components of a quality assessment tool
Assessment context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A description of the target group and purpose of assessment ▶ A description of the characteristics of the candidate that may impact on the assessment such as language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) levels, age, education and work experience ▶ A description of the learning environment, such as workplace, classroom-based or online ▶ An outline of how commercial assessment materials will be contextualised
Competency mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A description of the relationship between individual parts of the assessment instrument and the unit of competency; you must demonstrate the linkages between components of the assessment and the elements, performance criteria, performance and knowledge evidence and assessment requirements identified in the unit of competency
Materials and resources required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Outlines any materials and resources that may be required to complete assessment
Tasks to be administered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Tasks the candidate must complete are outlined in an assessment plan. For example, respond to questions; undertake a role-play; write a report; prepare meeting minutes; do a presentation; complete a project; or present a portfolio of work samples and third-party reports. ▶ The assessment method must be appropriate to collect the required evidence; for example, direct observation; structured activities, oral questioning. See 'Reasonable adjustment'.
Evidence required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Evidence is what is needed to demonstrate competency; for example, a portfolio of written work samples such as minutes, reports, correspondence; a checklist recording observations during a role-play; a performance appraisal report; third-party reports; or certificates for completed courses.
Information to the assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Clear and comprehensive instructions for conducting the assessment, the resources they may need to organise and how to contextualise the unit of competency ▶ An outline of specific conditions that apply to the assessment; for example, access to reference material during assessment; assistance that may be sought from other people during assessment; the type and amount of supervision that may be provided during assessment; time limits and the number of attempts the candidate may make at a particular aspect of a task or activity ▶ Instructions for saving, filing and storing assessment material and results
Decision-making rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Includes the rules that the assessor will follow in judging competence

Areas	Components of a quality assessment tool
Reasonable adjustment	<p>The individual needs of the candidate must be considered when selecting evidence-gathering methods and instruments. This is called reasonable adjustment and it means choosing alternative assessment methods or tools to meet the individual needs of candidates. Groups that may need reasonable adjustment in assessment include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ candidates from rural/remote areas ▶ candidates with disabilities ▶ candidates with low levels of education ▶ candidates with low literacy or numeracy ▶ Indigenous candidates ▶ candidates from non-English-speaking backgrounds ▶ older candidates. <p>Adjustments are considered reasonable if they still allow for a valid and reliable assessment within the resource capabilities of the RTO. It is essential that the assessment continues to satisfy the requirements of the evidence guide and assessment requirements specified in relevant units of competency.</p>
Recording requirements	<p>The type of information that will be recorded in regard to the outcomes of assessment including how that information will be stored</p>
Information to the candidate	<p>A specific task or activity designed to produce quality evidence that the candidate must complete and present to the assessor in order for a judgment of their competence to be made</p> <p>Clear and accurate instructions relating to how the candidate should complete the assessment activity</p>

Access and equity

An assessment system and its processes must make sure that no-one is disadvantaged because of their age; gender; language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) abilities or cultural background. Therefore, in planning and conducting an assessment, assessors must meet specific legal and ethical obligations as well as quality standards regulated by the Australian Skills Quality Authority.

What this learner guide covers

This unit *TAEASS502 Design and develop assessment tools*, describes the skills and knowledge required to design and to develop assessment tools used to guide the collection of quality evidence, including their application in formative, summative and recognition of prior learning (RPL) assessment.

It applies to experienced practitioners responsible for the development and/or delivery of training and assessment products and services.

What you will learn

You may be employed as, or wish to be, an assessor, learning resource or product developer or a training and assessment consultant. In all instances, the ability to be able to design and develop assessment tools is a valuable part of your role.

In this learner guide you will learn how to:

- ▶ determine the focus of the assessment tool
- ▶ design the assessment tool
- ▶ develop the assessment tool
- ▶ review and trial the assessment tool.

Essential learning points

The information in this learner guide is based on an understanding of the following concepts and issues.

Assessment tool

You need to be familiar with the components that make up an assessment tool:

- ▶ The target group and conditions for assessment
- ▶ The evidence required
- ▶ The instruments to be used for gathering evidence – such as profiles of acceptable performance measures, proformas and specific questions or activities
- ▶ The methods for collecting the evidence – such as evidence and observation checklists, checklists for the evaluation of work samples and candidate self-assessment materials
- ▶ Information and instructions for the assessor or candidate relating to the use of assessment instruments and the conditions for assessment

Contexts of assessment/RPL

It is important that you identify and understand the specific environment in which the assessment will be carried out, how the assessment will be carried out and the opportunities there will be for collecting evidence in a number of situations over a number of occasions.

You also need to be able to interpret the units of competency and know how they may be contextualised for each candidate and their work environment.

Benchmarks for assessment

A thorough knowledge of the benchmarks that will be used to assess a person's competence is essential; in most cases these will be units of competency from training packages. Particularly, take time to study the assessment requirements in the unit of competency including the knowledge evidence, the performance evidence and the assessment conditions.

Organisational, legal and ethical requirements

All assessments must be conducted according to the policies and procedures of the candidate's workplace and the RTO (where appropriate), as well as legislation that requires assessments to be carried out according to specific procedures and specific standards to be met. A key feature of this is the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 and specifically, Standard 1 relating to assessment; anti-discrimination and industry codes of practice that includes confidentiality and privacy requirements. You will learn about these through your reading, with practice and by asking experienced practitioners when you are in doubt.

Contextualisation guidelines

Assessment methods and instruments can be modified to suit particular candidates and their work environments. You will read how to contextualise units in the training package or accredited course you are using. For example, an assessment will need to refer to the specific equipment the candidate uses, the people they work with and the policies they have to follow.

Related documentation

You need to be familiar with a range of documentation when you are designing, developing and trialling assessment tools. They help you know what you are required to do and provide suggestions and support. Make sure you can access and interpret the assessment requirements from the Implementation guide for this training package, the units of competency, WHS requirements and workplace procedures.

Assessment instruments

Be familiar with the range of assessment instruments you may be required to use, depending on the type of assessment. These are discussed in full in this learner guide. Ask your supervisor to show you examples.

Procedures

A crucial aspect of designing assessment tools is to provide clear instructions about the procedures assessors have to follow to administer the assessment tool and candidates have to follow to complete the assessment. This is a skill that is perfected with practice, by reading what experienced people write, and by participating in validation sessions.

Assessment system policies and procedures

Following policies and procedures in relation to assessment data and information management is an organisational and legal requirement. You need to know how to address and record access and equity provisions, record and report assessments, conduct an RPL process and report any complaints. Study the procedures and your legal obligations before you begin to design and develop an assessment tool so you are following the correct procedures from the start.

Evaluation criteria

The assessment system seeks to ensure that the evidence gathered is valid and fair to all candidates and obtains the required evidence. Your supervisor will explain the procedures you have to follow when trialling assessment tools and gather the evidence using assessment instruments that can judge the quality of the performance. The assessment tool must be appropriate to the target group, context and selected assessment methods, be effective in relation to the units of competency and the language and literacy must be appropriate for intended audience.



Topic 1

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 1A Identify a target group of candidates, purposes of the assessment tool, and the contexts in which the tool will be used**

- 1B Access relevant benchmarks for assessment and interpret them to establish evidence required to demonstrate competence**

- 1C Identify, access and interpret industry requirements and relevant contextualisation guidelines**

- 1D Identify other related documentation to inform assessment tool development**

Determine the focus of the assessment tool

The process of designing and developing assessment tools begins with a critical analysis of the assessment context. You need to identify the target group for the assessment, the benchmarks that will be used to judge performance and the various organisational factors that impact on the assessment process. It is important to remember that, as competency-based assessment occurs (wherever possible) in actual workplaces, you need to understand the systems, policies and procedures of workplaces and training organisations.

1A Identify a target group of candidates, purposes of the assessment tool, and the contexts in which the tool will be used

The process of designing an assessment tool begins with an analysis of the target group of candidates, and an understanding of why the assessment is being undertaken and the environment in which it will be conducted.

You also need to develop critical thinking skills to interpret the assessment context in order to determine the focus of the assessment tool.



Identify the target group

Before you design and develop assessment tools, you need to identify the target candidates and the reason for the assessment. Your professional relationship will largely determine how you source this information. For example, if you are an assessor in a training organisation, or a learning and development team in a workplace, you will have first-hand knowledge of the candidates. If you are preparing assessment tools for a wide range of training organisations, or developing assessment tools for a training organisation to use with their own candidates, you need to discuss the characteristics of the target group with trainers and assessors, the training organisation manager and possibly a sample of candidates. A learner profile document can be prepared that summarises the particular needs of the group. Ask your trainer for a sample 'Candidate profile' template. Aspire has included relevant templates in its *Trainer's and assessor's guide* for this unit.

Assessment tools must align with the individual needs of candidates; activities must be contextualised to the learner's environment and be adjusted to ensure access and equity.

Prepare a target group profile

Develop a target group profile that records the key characteristics of the group in order to ensure that the assessment tools are appropriate. Training organisations usually develop assessment plans for individual learners or groups of learners. Assessment plans may provide a profile of the candidate/s. Ask your trainer for a sample 'Assessment plan' template.

Assessment plans may provide information on:

- ▶ the person's position; for example, trainee, apprentice, worker or classroom learner
- ▶ the purpose of assessment; for example, to receive a qualification, enhance opportunities for employment, secure a promotion, or to have their skills, knowledge and previous experience recognised
- ▶ characteristics that impact on assessment; for example, issues like language, literacy or numeracy; social and cultural issues; disabilities; remote locations; and past experiences of learning and education.

Considerations for target groups

The following table summarises the things you should consider when developing and designing assessment tools for specific target client groups.

Target group: Workplace

Considerations:

- ▶ Are they a workplace trainee or apprentice?
- ▶ Do they require recognition of current competence and prior learning?
- ▶ Are there opportunities for them to gather assessment evidence in the workplace?
- ▶ The purpose of assessment – formal qualifications, organisation-specific courses, licences, induction to the workplace

Target group: Community groups

Considerations:

- ▶ Language, literacy and numeracy issues
- ▶ Social disadvantage; for example, a low socioeconomic group
- ▶ Previous negative experiences in school or adult education
- ▶ Location, such as remote, rural or isolated
- ▶ Disabilities that may influence learning
- ▶ Learning opportunities to gather assessment evidence in a workplace
- ▶ Support required to gather evidence of prior learning

Target group: International students

Considerations:

- ▶ They may be located in Australia or overseas
- ▶ English may be their second language
- ▶ Assessment tools may need to be contextualised to suit a specific location or workplace

Target group: Apprentices and workplace trainees

Considerations:

- ▶ Assessment may be blended (workplace and group learning environment)
- ▶ The workplace supervisor will need to be involved
- ▶ Language, literacy and numeracy support may be required
- ▶ Disabilities that may influence learning
- ▶ They are usually younger, less-experienced workers and may be recent school leavers
- ▶ Check current information of regulations regarding the assessment of apprentices at the Australian Apprenticeships website at:
 - www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au

The assessment context

The assessment context can be described as being made up of the following:

Assessment context:

- ▶ The physical and operational factors
- ▶ The assessment system within which assessment is carried out
- ▶ Opportunities for gathering evidence in a number of situations
- ▶ The purpose of the assessment
- ▶ Who carries out the assessment
- ▶ The period of time during which it takes place

Identify the assessment context

The objective is to understand the various factors that will impact on the assessment tool so you can provide realistic opportunities for candidates to gather evidence.

To identify the assessment context where the proposed assessment tool is to be implemented, you need to access the following.

Information for determining the assessment context

- ▶ Policies and procedures of the organisation where the assessment will be conducted
- ▶ Interviews of trainers and assessors
- ▶ Review documents such as enrolment forms, assessment plans, training packages and information distributed by relevant professional associations and industry groups

Establish the environment

When developing assessment tools, establish the environment where assessment will occur. The location of the assessment will impact on the resources used and the people involved. It will also impact on whether special assessment methods need to be employed, such as role-plays or appropriate case studies, to address the individual unit of competency, training package implementation guidelines and access and equity issues.

The assessment plan document is useful for providing information about the where the assessment will be conducted.

The assessment environment may be:

- ▶ in the candidate's workplace; this is the desired location specified in most training packages
- ▶ off the job; for example, in a computer laboratory to conduct assessment of software skills
- ▶ in a group learning environment
- ▶ in a simulated work environment such as a 'model office'; if an actual workplace is unavailable, training packages stipulate that a simulated workplace must be provided
- ▶ online
- ▶ a combination of the above.

Opportunities for collecting evidence

The assessment requirements of an individual unit of competency specify that evidence should be gathered on more than one occasion and in a variety of forms. To satisfy these requirements, assessment tools must provide the opportunity for candidates to provide evidence from their workplace or simulated environment in the form of work samples and third-party reports. They may also supplement this with evidence gathered off-site in a formal learning environment using an instrument such as a summative final assignment.



Evidence to support RPL

Candidates may wish to have their existing skills, knowledge and competence formally reviewed against standards, such as the units of competency in training packages, to determine whether they satisfy the requirements for a qualification. This process is referred to as recognition of prior learning (RPL). Learners must match their previous training, work or life experience with the required skills and knowledge outlined in a qualification and supply appropriate evidence to verify competency. The assessor will then assess this evidence against the criteria for the qualification, as they would for any assessment.

While types of evidence are the same for any assessment, evidence of competency that specifically support the RPL process may include the following. The assessor then needs to assess this evidence against the criteria for the qualification.

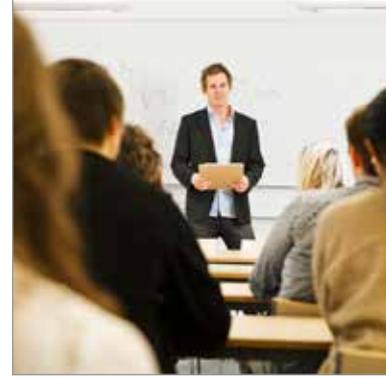
Evidence to support RPL includes:

- ▶ work samples
- ▶ journals
- ▶ certificates of achievement
- ▶ third-party testimonials
- ▶ responses to questioning
- ▶ observations of undertaking set tasks
- ▶ proof of authenticity of their work.

Who carries out assessment?

Assessors in a competency-based assessment system are responsible for judging evidence presented by a candidate. They determine whether they are competent or not and whether they are eligible to receive a qualification.

Assessors may be employed as a professional trainer or assessor in a registered training organisation (RTO) that provides training and assessment to learners who wish to achieve nationally recognised qualifications.



A significant amount of training and assessment also occurs in workplaces. This training and assessment is also provided by RTOs. In some cases, an organisation engages the services of an external RTO that arranges for training to occur in the learner's workplace, or the learner may participate in group learning in either a classroom or using online technology. Assessment is the responsibility of the RTO and is managed in coordination with the learner's workplace supervisor.

Assessment may also be conducted in a workplace that is an RTO that provides workplace training and assessment for their staff. The organisation's learning and development team train and assess workers in various sections of the organisation.

The assessor must be qualified to assess. That is, they must have recognised competencies or a qualification such as the TAE40116 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment as well as relevant vocational competencies in the industry in which they are assessing, at least to the level being assessed.

Units of competency and work activities

The foundation of competency-based training and assessment is real work activity. The work performed in actual workplaces does not usually fall into discrete categories that reflect individual units of competency. Rather, a combination of elements or whole units of competency represents a whole job role. It is crucial that you form a picture of how a competent worker performs a whole work role or function, then select the most logical and time-efficient way to gather the evidence for the candidate to demonstrate competency, by combining the relevant elements or units to form a comprehensive assessment activity. However, how you assess is determined by the nature of the units of competency. In some instances, the work function may be broken down into a number of assessment tasks, or you may simply observe the candidate against the criteria.

Units of competency describe how work is performed in a range of work locations. In some situations, factors may impact on which aspects of competency may be assessed in the workplace.

Factors that may impact on assessment in the workplace

- ▶ An organisation's policies and procedures may restrict the candidate's use of specific types of equipment and materials and may not allow unqualified workers to undertake certain tasks. So, as an alternative, you may determine that the assessment tool should be implemented in a simulated environment or role-play to gather specific pieces of evidence.
- ▶ Workers may undertake a course of learning to improve their future job prospects or career progression. The units of competency in their course may be at a higher AQF level than is required for their current job role. This will limit the evidence they can gather for some performance criteria.

Units of competency and learning activities

Assessment is not always directly linked with learning. Assessment for current competency and RPL are examples of assessment of evidence that has been collected by the candidate that is not related to a program of learning for which evidence of learning (formative assessment) is available.

Where the assessment is related to structured learning, learners are usually required to complete learning activities to practise skills and apply knowledge as part of a training program. In many cases, trainers/ assessors review the completed learning activities and give the learner feedback that helps them identify gaps in their skills and knowledge and to revise goals for the remainder of their training program. Completed learning activities may be used for formative assessment in those cases where they are mapped to the benchmarks that are being used to judge performance.



Identify the purpose of assessment tools

The purpose of an assessment tool is to guide the collection of quality evidence that will be used to make a judgment of the learner's competence. It includes the specific instruments for collecting evidence, as well as information about assessment methods and the procedures to be followed in conducting the assessment and recording and reporting the outcome.

The assessment tools you develop must be appropriate for the purpose of assessment. It is important that you understand the different assessment instruments and procedures used in specific contexts. These are outlined here.

Assessment instrument	Purpose	Reason for using the assessment instrument
Templates and proformas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To provide candidates with real-life documents/forms to complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To provide a method of capturing the required evidence ▶ To gather standardised evidence that supports reliable assessment decisions ▶ To assist candidates who do not have access to appropriate workplace documents
Third-party reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To authenticate evidence provided by the candidate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To use as a testimonial from an employer or supervisor ▶ To use as a component of an RPL evidence portfolio
Specific questions or activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ For candidates being assessed for a qualification or the RPL process ▶ To determine language, literacy and numeracy needs of candidates ▶ For licensing or regulatory requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To confirm the candidate's understanding ▶ To focus on particular aspects not covered by other methods ▶ To encourage responses in the candidate's own words
Evidence and observation checklists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ For licensing or regulatory requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To record evidence of the candidate using the skills required ▶ To assist the candidate to satisfy the rules of evidence ▶ To support assessors in ensuring that they record observations that satisfy the rules of evidence
Checklists for the evaluation of work samples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To provide a framework/criteria against which the work samples can be assessed to ensure they meet the benchmarks for competency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ For RPL candidates ▶ Appropriate where the assessment requirements requires the candidate to submit specific types of work samples

Assessment instrument	Purpose	Reason for using the assessment instrument
Recognition portfolios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Submitted for assessment for recognition of current competence or recognition of prior learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Candidates must include in their recognition portfolios evidence that demonstrates competence for each of the critical aspects of assessment ▶ May be used for individual units of competency or complete qualifications ▶ Must satisfy the rules of evidence
Candidate self-assessment materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Usually included in portfolio assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Often included in portfolio assessment ▶ A component of recognition assessment
Profiles of acceptable performance measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To establish benchmarks for performance to enable a judgment of competency to be made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To promote reliability in judging competence ▶ To promote the candidate's understanding of how decision-making rules will be applied to judge their competence and to support them in preparing materials that they can present for assessment ▶ As part of arrangements for moving from vocational to higher education

Importance of instructions

You also need to acknowledge the importance of the instructions to the assessors and candidates that must be included in the assessment instrument. These form part of the assessment tool and are crucial in establishing and providing a clear framework for the use of the instruments and the conditions under which the assessment is to be conducted. This information includes suggestions to adjust the assessment for people with language or disability issues, for resources required, instructions for using assessment methods and instruments and the importance of following WHS regulations.



Example

Identify a target group of candidates, purposes of the assessment tool, and the contexts in which the tool will be used

In the following example, a qualified assessor determines the focus of the assessment tool for use in MEM31215 Certificate III in Engineering – Industrial Electrician.

Phillip is a qualified assessor with ISkill, an RTO that specialises in the training and assessment of apprentices in the construction industry. The RTO's training manager has asked Phillip to write assessment tools for the Certificate III in Engineering – Industrial Electrician because they have applied to have this qualification added to the RTO's scope for delivery and assessment.

Phillip begins the process of reviewing the existing assessment tools and sources information from the RTO's assessment policy and procedures. He checks for information about the assessment strategies that the RTO uses to assess apprentices. He also confirms with the course manager the specific units of competency that apprentices will be enrolled in. He then accesses the National Register website (<http://training.gov.au>) and prints the various units of competency that will be used as benchmarks for assessment. He also refers to the implementation guide for the MEM Manufacturing and Engineering Training Package and reads this document to make sure he follows the guidance advice.

Phillip also checks for information on the Australian Apprenticeships website (www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au) to ensure his knowledge of regulations regarding the assessment of apprentices is current.

Marisa, a trainer/assessor with the RTO, is a specialist in the area of language, literacy and numeracy (LLN). Phillip arranges a meeting with Marisa to discuss with her the strategies he should use to ensure he provides sufficient information in the assessment tool about reasonable adjustment for apprentices with LLN issues. Marisa will need to review the individual units of competency and information in the MEM Manufacturing and Engineering Training Package to identify the levels of LLN that are relevant to the level III qualification.

Phillip uses word processing software to collate the information that he is gathering to help him determine the focus of the assessment tool.

Context of assessment	Comment
Target group of candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Apprentices enrolled in Certificate III in Engineering – Industrial Electrician ▶ Workplace supervisor will contribute to assessment ▶ LLN support may be required ▶ Disabilities – need to check information provided on enrolment forms ▶ Usually younger, less-experienced workers; likely to be recent school leavers
Assessment environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Workplace (primarily) ▶ Classroom
Opportunities for collecting evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Training log ▶ On-the-job assessment ▶ Completion of quizzes in a classroom environment
Recognition of prior learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Candidates will be interviewed at enrolment to determine whether they may be able to provide evidence to support application for RPL
Responsibility for carrying out assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Qualified assessor ▶ Workplace supervisor will contribute to assessment
Relationships between units of competency and work activities and learning activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ There is a direct relationship between the work activities and the units of competency to be assessed. This relationship will be detailed in the training plan for each apprentice. It is expected that candidates will be able to gather a significant amount of evidence in their workplace. ▶ The candidates will be enrolled in units of competency that are relevant to their job role.
Purpose of assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Certifying competence through a qualification
Assessment instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Observation checklist ▶ Third-party report ▶ Questioning ▶ Work samples

Example**Identify a target group of candidates, purposes of the assessment tool, and the contexts in which the tool will be used**

A resource developer, Susan, is engaged to develop assessment tools for learners completing a SIR20216 Certificate II in Retail Services learning program. She decides that she does not have time to thoroughly research the assessment context. The learning program is being conducted over eight weeks and assessment tools need to be available for assessors in week 7.

Susan prepares a comprehensive bank of assessment tools that relies on observing learners applying their recently developed skills and knowledge in retail stores.

The assessors have to arrange for observation checklists and third-party reports to be completed.

At the meeting where Susan hands over the assessment tools, they find that the tool is not appropriate for the assessment context. The learners in the program are young people who have left school midway through the year and are undertaking an accelerated retail course to secure employment in the busy Christmas retail period. As the learners are not employed, the assessment tool is unrealistic and impractical. Susan is asked to revise the assessment tool to suit the assessment context.



Activity 1

To determine the focus of the assessment tool that you intend to design, this table outlines the items that need to be considered before the development process begins. Complete the table using a mock RTO and target group, with details on the factors that need to be identified to meet the needs of the target group undergoing training. Refer to the 'Assessment plan' template mentioned earlier in this section.

Target group and context information	Details for the assessment plan
Name of the training organisation	
Purpose of assessment	
Assessment environment	
Opportunities for collecting evidence	
Party that will be conducting assessment	
Relationships between units of competency and work activities and learning activities	
Characteristics of target candidates	
Purposes of the assessment tool	

[Click to complete Activity 1](#)

1B Access relevant benchmarks for assessment and interpret them to establish evidence required to demonstrate competence

A key component of designing an individual assessment tool is identifying the specific benchmarks that will be used to judge the candidate's competence. In this section, you develop the critical thinking skills necessary to interpret units of competency in order to identify benchmarks that underpin assessment judgments.

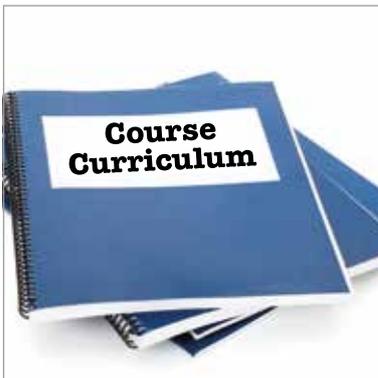


Benchmarks for assessment

The benchmarks that are used for judging evidence for assessment are determined by the type of training/assessment conducted by the training organisation.

In a competency-based system, assessors who are employed by RTOs use assessment tools that gather evidence as prescribed in the critical aspects of assessment prescribed in units of competency from national training packages.

Other training organisations may use publicly available units of competency as benchmarks for assessment; however, unless they partner with an RTO, the candidates will not receive a nationally recognised qualification or statement of attainment.



Assessors may also be required to judge the candidate's performance against the learning outcomes or performance criteria that are identified in course curricula, enterprise or industry standards or products specifications.

It is crucial that you clearly establish with relevant parties the benchmarks that you are to use as the basis of the assessment tool you are developing. It is also crucial that you document how each aspect of the assessment process gathers evidence of each of these assessment requirements.

Establish the evidence required

Confirm the evidence required from the benchmarks you are using from either the unit of competency, course curricula or product specification document.

Your objective is to include in the assessment tool the evidence-gathering methods that have the greatest potential to provide quality evidence that satisfy the principles of assessment. (These principles are discussed in full later in this guide.)



Interpret a unit of competency

Individual training packages are developed by the relevant Skills Service Organisations (SSOs) in consultation with a range of stakeholders. The training package specifies the skills and knowledge required to perform effectively in the workplace. The units of competency (UOC) are packaged as groups of units into qualification levels represented by various qualifications in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Be familiar with each component of the unit of competency (UOC) so you can identify the benchmarks and what evidence needs to be gathered. In many training packages the performance evidence provides specific assessment criteria that must be met.

Units of competency

The components of a unit of competency are described here:

Component feature	What it relates to
Unit of competency	
Title	The title describes the unit outcome.
Unit application	This field describes how the unit is practically applied, who would typically use it and the unit of competency's relationship to licensing, legislative or certification requirements.
Prerequisite units	This is an optional field that specifies any unit/s in which the learner must already be competent, prior to achieving competency in this unit.
Unit sector	This field is used to categorise units of competency in relation to industry sectors or types of work.
Elements	Elements describe the outcomes of the significant functions and tasks that make up the competency. Elements describe actions or outcomes that are demonstrable and assessable.
Performance criteria	Performance criteria specify the required performance in relevant tasks, roles, skills (including foundation skills) and the applied knowledge that enables competent performance.

Foundation skills	This field describes the language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills that are essential to performance.
Range of conditions	This is an optional field that specifies different work environments and conditions that may affect performance. Range is restricted to essential operating conditions and any other variables essential to the work environment, so it is quite different from the previous Range statement.
Unit mapping information	This field specifies the code and title of any equivalent unit of competency.
Links	This field provides a link to the Companion Volume Implementation Guide.
Assessment requirements	
Performance evidence	Performance evidence specifies what individuals must do to show that they satisfy the performance standards in the unit of competency.
Knowledge evidence	Knowledge evidence specifies what individuals must know in order to carry out the work tasks described in the unit of competency safely and effectively.
Assessment conditions	This field describes mandatory conditions for assessment; for example, details of equipment and materials; contingencies; physical conditions; relationships with other people; time frames, etc. It also specifies assessor requirements.
Links	This field provides a link to the Companion Volume Implementation Guide.

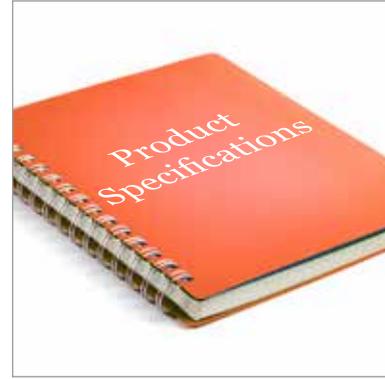
Performance specifications

Private organisations or enterprises and industry associations may develop their own organisational benchmarks to assess the competence of those working in a specific work location or job role. These types of standards are developed by private organisations that identify a need for specific standards that relate to their own operations. The standards may relate to work health and safety (WHS), sophisticated manufacture or logistic processes, or work locations that involve very specific working environmental conditions. For example, you may be asked to develop an assessment tool to assess the performance of apprentices operating outdoor power equipment. The learners' understanding of promoting safe working practices will be assessed using specific organisational standards developed by specialist WHS representatives.

When developing assessment tools for use in a specific enterprise or business, contact relevant people such as the Human Resources Manager, the Quality Manager or learning and development specialist, to obtain printed or electronic information about the learning outcomes and standards you will use to judge performance. Be aware that this information is commercially sensitive and you need to ensure the confidentiality of any benchmarking information that is shared with you.

Benchmarking using product specifications

There are industries and workplaces where workers are required to produce products that satisfy specific criteria. These criteria may relate to design specifications, the client brief, Australian quality standards or safety requirements. You may be asked to develop an assessment tool that gathers evidence used to judge whether the candidate is competent to produce a product or part of a product that satisfies product specifications. Liaise with operational staff such as line managers or team leaders, the Quality Assurance Manager or Human Resources Manager for information about the product specifications and any relevant quality standards.



The assessment requirements for this type of unit of competency require an assessment instrument that involves observing the candidate's work practices and examining product samples. Prepare a series of questions that can be used to gather additional evidence during the production process of the candidate's competence in regard to the knowledge evidence.

Types of assessment

You need to be familiar with the following types of assessment before you go ahead with developing assessment tools. An understanding of the various types of assessment underpins learning in this unit of competency.

Criterion-referenced assessment and standards-based assessment

This type of assessment assesses against fixed criteria or standards. Fixed standards or performance criteria are a set of established benchmarks that may include:

- ▶ units of competency from relevant training packages
- ▶ national implementation guides of relevant training packages
- ▶ performance standards and evidence requirements of learning and development activities
- ▶ requirements of legislation, codes of practices, standards and guidelines
- ▶ organisational requirements or product specifications.

Norm-referenced assessment

Norm-referenced assessment judges candidates against others in the cohort. Those with the best performance receive the highest grades. Norm-referenced assessment is not suitable for use in competency-based training as it does not measure a person's performance against a standard or criterion.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is the term used to describe assessment conducted throughout the learning process. This can include the activities you provide learners during each session to allow them to practise skills or to apply knowledge; or they may be discrete tasks that learners need to successfully complete before they can move on to the next stage of learning.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment is used to determine the learner's skills and knowledge in a comprehensive manner; that is, it will take into consideration the entire learning program rather than a single part of it. Summative assessment is the final assessment on which an assessor will determine the learner's competence or successful completion of the learning. Usually, this kind of assessment occurs at the very end of a learning program.

Example

Access relevant benchmarks for assessment and interpret them to establish evidence required to demonstrate competence

Crysalis Training provides training and assessment for workers in the hair and beauty industry. Bethany has been asked to develop an assessment tool for the unit of competency *SHBHCUT001 Design haircut structures*. She has carefully analysed the context of assessment and determined that the target candidates will consist predominantly of apprentices who will be assessed in their workplace and in a classroom environment.



Bethany has accessed the National Register website and downloaded the unit of competency. At this stage of the assessment tool design process, she is focused on understanding the evidence requirements of the unit of competency. She refers to the training package implementation guide to make sure she has considered all the necessary information. After carefully reading the assessment requirements she establishes that a judgment of competence will be made when the candidate is able to 'consistently illustrate cutting plans for a range of haircut structures'. Candidates must be able to demonstrate the ability to visualise components of finished haircut structures and produce two-dimensional graphic representations showing interior and exterior design lines, soft or hard lines, starting point of haircut, sectioning and parting patterns, angles of lift in degrees and distribution of hair. Assessment must be conducted by a qualified assessor assisted by a technical expert such as a qualified hairdresser.

Bethany decides that she will need to design an assessment tool that includes formative and summative assessment. Her initial plan is to use portfolio assessment requiring the candidate to include five diagrams of hair designs; questioning to assess knowledge evidence (conducted by the qualified assessor or technical expert); and observation of performance (reported by the technical expert).

Bethany's next step is to refer to the RTO's assessment system to ensure that the assessment tool she is designing complies with the organisational, legal and ethical requirements.

1C Identify, access and interpret industry requirements and relevant contextualisation guidelines

You have a responsibility to ensure that the assessment tools you design and develop support the training organisation's assessment system, policies and procedures. You must also consider the implications of the various organisational, legal and ethical frameworks that must be complied with in regard to assessment.

Locate your organisation's workplace policies and procedures documents for information about the organisational, legal and ethical requirements you need to comply with. The RTO manager, compliance manager or quality manager will be able to clarify their contents for you.

Assessment policies and procedures

All assessment tools implemented by a training organisation must comply with the assessment system, policies and procedures.

The Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 defines assessment systems as being a coordinated set of documented policies and procedures (including assessment materials and tools) that ensure assessments are consistent and are based on the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence.

Standard 1 specifies that RTOs must keep written policies and procedures for ensuring quality training and assessment consistent with its scope of registration and scale of operations. An assessment policy underpins quality assessment by the RTO. It provides a framework of terminology, rights, responsibilities, obligations and objectives. While individual RTOs are encouraged to develop and implement assessment policies that address their specific operational requirements, it is essential that assessment policies are also designed to satisfy VQF/AQTF obligations.

Often the assessment conditions in the 'Assessment requirements' document of a unit of competency states that evidence must be collected in an actual workplace.

This raises a number of issues to consider, such as the impact of workplace policies



and procedures for conducting workplace assessment; copying workplace documents for a portfolio; producing work samples during business hours; the availability of workplace supervisors to gather evidence or authenticate evidence; and the availability of resources when designing assessment tools that rely on workplace assessment. This demonstrates the importance of industry engagement and consultation that is required in the Standards (standards 1.5 and 1.6).

You also need to check the current information that applies to conducting assessment for workplace trainees and apprentices. For example, be aware of the current information about the role and responsibilities of workplace supervisors, maintenance of training logs and scheduling of assessment activities.

Industrial relations systems and processes, awards and agreements

You require a general understanding of the framework that relates to industrial relations and working conditions. Be aware, and consider the impact, of legislation, awards, workplace agreements and individual contracts on the conduct of assessment. For example, consider the cost of conducting workplace assessment; the role and responsibilities of workplace supervisors and specialist staff; the organisation's access and equity policies; and the potential to gather evidence during business hours.



Licensing and legal ramifications

Various industry and professional bodies require workers and contractors to hold specific licences to perform specialist functions. In some cases, legislation actually enforces the licensing system. The licence may be obtained by completing training and being assessed against the benchmarks established in licensing guidelines. In many cases, potential licence holders are required to be assessed using the benchmarks established in units of competency. For example, real estate agents employed to sell real estate, and bookkeepers and accountants who prepare business activity statements must hold the relevant licence to do so. In each case, obtaining a licence requires being assessed as competent against the benchmarks established in units of competency.

Workers who need to perform high-risk work activities such as constructing scaffolding and rigging need to obtain a licence from their relevant work health and safety authority, such as WorkCover in New South Wales. The various competency certificates require assessment based on a range of units of competency.

In those cases where you are responsible for developing assessment instruments that will be used to judge competence for issuance of a certificate, you need to work closely with subject matter experts who have expertise and knowledge in the relevant area. Undertake research to confirm that you understand the specific requirements of the licence; for example, the issuing of certificates of competency for vessel operations and maintenance in the seafood industry is the responsibility of the relevant regulatory authority in each state or territory. Regulatory authorities may set additional requirements to the completion of units of competency listed in the various options for particular certificates, such as a specific amount of sea time and completion of an oral exam.

An assessment instrument for licence candidates may include a log and an oral questionnaire to satisfy the additional requirements of the regulatory authority.

Reporting, recording and retrieval systems

RTO managers are required by the VQF/AQTF to achieve specific standards in regard to the management of information relevant to candidate's enrolment, learning and assessment (including recognition). If you are familiar with these requirements, then the assessment tools you develop will satisfy the RTO's compliance obligations, gather quality evidence and achieve the best possible outcomes for candidates.

The assessment instrument must include instructions on the recording and reporting of assessment. Refer to the RTO's policies and procedures for advice on their specific requirements.

When developing training and assessment, RTOs must:

- ▶ meet the requirements of the training packages and VET accreditation courses
- ▶ be responsive to industry and learner needs
- ▶ ensure delivery by appropriately qualified trainers and assessors with the right support services, facilities and equipment
- ▶ implement the Standards for RTOs 2015
- ▶ provide regular reports on AQTF quality indicators.

Review of assessment tools

The assessment tools you develop must be reviewed as part of the training organisation's quality review process and be included in assessment validation activities.

Validation is the process that RTO managers use to ensure their assessment system complies with quality standards as outlined in The Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, Standard 1. They need to know that the assessment system, tools and methods used by the organisation produce valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence to enable reasonable judgments to be made, and that the assessment methods they use to gather evidence are consistent with the requirements of the unit/s of competency and of industry.

The review process is also a quality improvement process. An important part of improving quality involves industry representatives reviewing assessment tools for appropriateness and accuracy; for example, there could be more cost effective or practical ways of conducting the assessment or clustering assessment from different units.



Human resources and legal requirements

Organisations develop human resources policies and procedures to promote the interests of employees, achieve the organisation's strategic priorities and objectives, and ensure compliance with relevant legislation, regulations and codes of practice. In those cases where assessment is to be conducted in a workplace, it is crucial to consider the impact of human resources policies and procedures on the opportunities to gather evidence.

In particular, research the aspects of the organisation's human resources system (in the following pages) when developing assessment tools. The organisation's human resources manager will be able to clarify any information about human resources policies and procedures that remain unclear.

Anti-discrimination

RTO managers must comply with legislation that relates to anti-discrimination and equal opportunity in both their own business operations and when conducting assessment in a candidate's workplace. This means that assessments you design must not discriminate against anyone on the basis of their gender, age, religion, ethnicity, family situation or sexual preference.

You must also support the RTO and other organisations you work with in their policies of promoting equitable access to learning and assessment opportunities.

Everyone should aim to promote cultural inclusivity in your workplace, group learning environments and when assessing clients in culturally diverse environments.

The assessment tool must include reasonable adjustment for people who have special needs including disability or issues with language, literacy and numeracy. The assessment tool must not discriminate against people by using stereotypical images or language; for example, when writing case studies for use in assessment instruments you should be careful to challenge stereotypes of gender, ethnicity and disability. Be aware of particular issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, including cultural, historical and current issues impacting on these people.

The training package implementation guides offer advice and guidance in areas such as access and equity.



Equal employment opportunity

Ensure you are familiar with the organisation's policies for equal employment opportunity. Describe women in a range of roles in case studies, scenarios for games and simulations, and consider the physical attributes of women when designing assessment activities. For example, if you are designing an assessment task for a unit of competency in the construction training package you should be mindful that not everyone is of equal strength and has the capacity to perform a task that requires heavy lifting. It would not be fair to include tasks in the assessment instrument that would be more competently performed by a stronger person.

Job role, responsibilities and conditions



Check the job description of a sample of assessment candidates to identify likely opportunities they have to gather evidence.

Evaluate sample job descriptions and information from workplace supervisors, team leaders and human resources specialists to identify the most effective assessment environment, timing of assessment and assessment activities that offer the greatest opportunity to gather quality evidence. For example, you may find that workers do not routinely perform all the tasks

described in the performance criteria. You may decide to develop an assessment instrument that relies on observation in the workplace, completion of a short written case study, and a self-assessment to satisfy the evidence requirements of the unit.

Also consider appropriate assessments for candidates in remote locations, those studying off the job and RPL candidates who may not have access to a current workplace.

Relevant industry codes of practice

A code of practice is a set of professional standards or guidelines agreed on by members of a particular profession or issued by an official body or a professional association to its members. The purpose of these standards is to promote ethical practice and assist members to comply with the legislative obligations that impact on their particular industry. For example, assessors working in the mental health or disabilities services sector need to comply with the relevant national standards that have been developed for workers in these areas.



The internet is a useful tool for accessing industry codes of practice. The name of the relevant code is usually identified in the assessment requirements or knowledge evidence of the unit of competency. Many organisations have a compliance manager or quality manager who may be able to help you interpret the relevant code and understand how it looks in action.

Confidentiality and privacy requirements

Assessors are required to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). This legislation impacts on the information that is collected from candidates, how that information may be shared with others, how it is stored and, ultimately, archived or destroyed by the organisation.

Confidentiality also relates to assessments submitted by the learner that include references to another person; for example, a client in a mental health or children's service or 'commercial in confidence' information from the workplace. This needs to be addressed in the design of the assessment task; for example, via an instruction to the candidate to remove personal information from evidence they are submitting.

Copyright and plagiarism

In Australia, copyright law is governed by the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth), which is designed to protect creative works from being used without the agreement of the owner. In an assessment context, this means you have to ensure compliance in two areas.

You must comply with the Act when developing and sourcing training and assessment material. RTOs should have in place procedures that are designed to ensure that



trainers and assessors comply with the Act. Most RTOs use respected and reliable product developers to ensure the assessment materials they use are original and do not breach this Act. For example, if you are developing an assessment tool that includes a case study, you need to ensure you create an original case study or seek permission to use a case study from an existing source. Check whether you are to include copyright details in any assessment tools or instruments you develop.

You should also confirm whether the training organisation requires assessment tools to include instructions advising them to check that material submitted from a candidate as evidence is their own work and does not contravene the Copyright Act. RTO managers often invest in tools such as specialised software used to detect plagiarism in evidence submitted for assessment by candidates. The RTO's policy in regard to referencing and plagiarism should be included in the assessment instructions given to candidates.

Work health and safety (WHS) considerations

Assessors have a duty of care to candidates and must take all reasonable steps to ensure that assessment activities promote the health and safety of those involved in assessment. All training packages incorporate industry-specific requirements for WHS in their advice to RTOs and other users of the training package.

WHS issues that you must consider when developing assessment instruments are summarised in the following table.

WHS considerations	How to interpret and apply
<p>Ensure WHS requirements and specified benchmarks are accounted for within evidence requirements and assessment materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A unit of competency may require learners to apply knowledge of work health and safety legislation to demonstrate competence. ▶ Check assessment requirements of the unit of competency, training package implementation guides, licensing information and the knowledge evidence section of the unit of competency for relevant WHS information. ▶ Consider how you will gather quality evidence. ▶ Include a verbal questionnaire that is administered during a demonstration by the candidate; for example, when operating a piece of equipment or when preparing a room for a meeting. ▶ Include specific WHS criteria on observation checklists. ▶ Include key WHS points for comment on third-party reports.

WHS considerations	How to interpret and apply
Ensuring assessment methods and tools incorporate appropriate measures to maintain the health, safety and welfare of candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop assessment instruments that do not compromise the safety or health of candidates; for example, do not expect the candidate to perform a procedure that may cause them harm; be aware of the necessity to have safety equipment handy in the case of an emergency. ▶ Ensure assessment instructions inform candidates they are to wear personal protective equipment (PPE); include the wearing of PPE in observation checklists and third-party reports; develop a questionnaire to gather evidence where correct use of PPE is specified in the assessment requirements. ▶ Include appropriate WHS instructions for assessments that require lifting heavy objects or using large machines, etc. ▶ Sequence assessments to ensure the learner is competent in a particular skill or demonstrates the knowledge before being assessed in a more complex and potentially hazardous task.
Hazard identification and risk control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Include instructions that remind assessors that they should conduct a hazard inspection and contribute to a risk assessment before conducting assessment. ▶ Ensure assessments are carried out in an environment free from distraction, noise, poor air quality and lack of space. ▶ Check the manufacturer's instructions to ensure safety equipment or devices are available. ▶ Where the assessment instrument requires the candidate to use technology and equipment, include a reminder in the instructions to the assessor and candidate to check that the equipment is in correct working order.
Sources of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The assessment requirements of the units of competency you are planning to assess includes advice about any regulations, licences or specific WHS knowledge that candidates are required to have, to demonstrate competence. Seek appropriate expert assistance in understanding the details of these units and how they apply to the candidate's workplace and assessment context.

Understand contextualisation

Contextualising training and assessment refers to taking generic learning and assessment objectives and tailoring them to meet the specific needs of a learner or workplace. Contextualisation is usually made in regard to the equipment used, personnel involved and workplace policies and procedures.

All training packages provide advice about contextualisation and emphasise the fact that any contextualisation carried out must maintain the integrity of the overall intended outcomes of the unit of competency.

When the unit of competency has been contextualised for delivery, you will need to similarly contextualise the assessment instrument. Assessment instruments that have been contextualised should be quality reviewed by the RTO's assessment validation team prior to assessment.

Course and assessment developers may:

- ▶ add or amend a unit of competency to suit particular delivery methods, candidate profiles, specific equipment requirements or meet local needs, but they must not remove or add to the number or content of elements and performance criteria
- ▶ add specific industry terminology to performance criteria where this does not affect competency outcomes
- ▶ add more detail to the evidence requirements or resources as long as the additions retain the scope of the competency.

Example

Identify, access and interpret industry requirements and relevant contextualisation guidelines

Max is a qualified assessor with Quality Training Solutions, an RTO that provides training and assessment for a range of children's services courses. He has been given the task of preparing an assessment tool for a unit of competency for CHC40113 Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care.

Max reads the RTO's scoping documents for this qualification. He then begins the process of designing the assessment tool by sourcing the unit of competency from the National Register website. He also accesses information from the RTO's assessment system policies and procedures to confirm the assessment strategy and the context of assessment. He speaks to the RTO manager about the characteristics of the candidates for assessment in this unit. He understands that it is likely that a number of candidates may wish to apply for RPL. As well, many of the candidates are from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Max carefully reads the various components of the competency and establishes that the assessment tool must be designed to gather evidence that the candidate is competent to 'plan to define activities, environment and resources that are developmentally appropriate to enhance children's leisure and play'.

Jasmine, the RTO Compliance Manager discusses with Max the importance of ensuring that the assessment tool complies with the RTO assessment strategy for this qualification, as well as legislation, regulations and codes of practice that are implemented in the children's services industry. Jasmine reminds Max that the children's services industry is a heavily regulated.

Max uses a table to record the information he gathers regarding the organisational, legal and ethical requirements of conducting assessment for the unit.

Framework of organisational, legal and ethical requirements	How the assessment tool will satisfy these requirements
Assessment system policies and procedures	<p>Assessment will be conducted primarily in the candidate's workplace using an assessment portfolio.</p> <p>The workplace assessor will be asked to complete an observation checklist of the candidate performing the skills required. A questionnaire will be administered to gather evidence of knowledge evidence. A case study will be provided to candidates who are not currently employed in children's services.</p>
Assessment validation policy and procedures	The assessment tool will be validated prior to and post implementation.
Human resources policies and procedures (including anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity)	<p>An assessment instrument needs to ask candidates to gather evidence that they promote access, equity and human rights issues in relation to their area of work. For example, evidence needs to be provided that they are able to work in a culturally diverse environment.</p> <p>The assessment instructions must ask assessors to take into account relevant access and equity issues.</p> <p>Assessors who are required to conduct assessment in the candidate's workplace may be required to complete a working with children check.</p>
Confidentiality and privacy policies and procedures	The assessment tool needs to include specific instructions advising candidates and assessors not to include any information that could be used to identify children in the evidence included in the portfolio. Candidates need to comply with their workplace policies and procedures in regard to photographing or recording children playing.
WHS system	WHS is particularly important when working with young children. Instructions to candidates and assessors will include advice regarding the correct use of PPE, and conducting hazard identification and risk assessment when gathering evidence for assessment.
Industry codes of practice	The assessment tool needs to assess the candidate's competence in regard to knowledge evidence that includes application of workplace policies and procedures.
Copyright and plagiarism	<p>Candidates need to receive instructions regarding authenticating the evidence they submit for assessment.</p> <p>The completed assessment tool will be copyright and not able to be copied without the permission of personnel within the RTO.</p>
Contextualisation guidelines	The assessment tool is not to be contextualised in this case.

Activity 3

The design of the assessment tool must be in accordance with the RTO’s assessment framework, including policies and procedures, regulations, compliance regime, legislation and codes of practice.

Review an RTO’s assessment plan and relevant workplace documents and record, on this table (in dot points) how you will confirm that the assessment instrument, instructions and procedures satisfy the RTO’s organisational, legal and ethical requirements.

Framework of organisational, legal and ethical requirements	How the assessment tool will satisfy these requirements
Assessment system policies and procedures	
Industrial relations system	
Licensing	
Assessment validation policy and procedures	
Human resources policies and procedures (including anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity)	
Confidentiality and privacy policies and procedures	
WHS system	
Industry codes of practice	
Copyright and plagiarism	
Contextualisation guidelines	

Click to complete Activity 3

1D Identify other related documentation to inform assessment tool development

In addition to the organisational, legal and ethical requirements that you considered in the last section, there is a range of other related documents you need to source and interpret during the design phase of the assessment tool.

In this section, you will examine these other documents with the purpose of identifying their impact on assessment processes and, in turn, how they influence the design of assessment tools.



RTO assessment strategy and implementation guide

If you are working for an RTO, check its assessment strategy to determine its approach to assessment, the preferred means of collecting evidence and any processes or procedures you need to follow when developing assessment tools.

Read the relevant implementation guide in the training package before proceeding with the design of assessment tools. The training organisation may require you to include specific information in the assessment instructions that come from the implementation guide.

Units of competency – assessment context and evidence required to demonstrate competency

Assessors in a competency-based environment are required to interpret the various components of units of competency to identify the benchmarks that are used to judge competence. You need to use critical thinking skills to interpret the unit of competency requirements.

The assessment context section of the assessment requirements gives you information that is crucial to the assessment tool design process. You need to interpret this section and visualise how you can create this assessment context for candidates in a range of situations.



A unit of competency usually requires assessment to be conducted in an actual or simulated workplace. Assessment tool designers need to write assessment instruments that satisfy this requirement for candidates who may not be employed, who are completing their learning program online or undertaking learning in an area that is not related to their current job. In these situations, the assessment tool should include instructions that seek to replicate the conditions of an actual or simulated workplace by addressing each of the aspects in the context of assessment section of the assessment requirements document.

Resources for assessment

Read the assessment conditions to identify any specific resources that should be available to the candidate during assessment. It is the assessor's responsibility to ensure that these resources are available. The types of resources required will vary significantly as they reflect the performance criteria of the unit. In some cases, the resources described may be generic; for example, requiring access to workplace policies and procedures and technology. However, many units of competency are prescriptive in the pieces of legislation; types of documents; pieces of technology, plant and equipment; and Australian or international standards or regulations that candidates require access to during assessment.



Assessment method

When designing the assessment tool, you need to address all aspects outlined in the assessment context and recommend the most appropriate method for the situation; for example, you may consider simulations, observation checklists, questions, role-plays and/or a case study for candidates who do not have access to an actual workplace.

Assessment activities

You need to consider the assessment activities identified in accredited modules or in support material.

Accredited courses address skill requirements for industry, enterprises and the community where these are not covered in nationally endorsed training packages. Accredited courses may include units of competency or modules. Modules are developed when the course developer is able to demonstrate that there is no need to develop a unit of competency. Modules comprise learning outcomes at a specific level of knowledge. It is important to note that modules may only be written for learning outcomes that are not vocational in nature. This means that the skills and knowledge required to achieve the learning outcomes do not relate to the standard of performance required in a workplace. Access training.gov.au to find examples of accredited courses that include modules.



You also need to ensure that you have correctly interpreted the learning outcomes required in the module to develop assessment tools. Familiarise yourself with the accredited course information documents, including any implementation guides, before you begin developing the assessment tool.

Various publishers and training organisations develop materials to support learning and assessment in competency-based training. The assessment tools that you design may include assessment instruments published by these resources developers. Make sure the training organisation validates the assessment instrument before implementation to ensure it satisfies the compliance and quality requirements of the RTO. Consider including instructions in the assessment tool for candidates to complete various learning activities in learner guides or online for formative assessment during their learning program.

Australian Core Skills Framework

The Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) describes levels of performance in the five core skills of learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy. It can be used to identify the skill level of a unit of competency or to check a person's performance against prescribed benchmarks and identify where their core skills need to be improved. For example, you can use the ACSF to compare the core skills required for a specific qualification with an assessment of the person's current skills.



It is useful to contact a specialist LLN practitioner for advice when developing assessment tools that are targeted for use by candidates with LLN issues. The specialist can assist you to ensure that the assessment tool is aligned to the appropriate LLN levels for the relevant AQF qualification.

Organisational requirements for work performance

In most cases you will need to include instructions that evidence collected for assessment should demonstrate that the candidate performed activities in accordance with organisational requirements. Check the assessment requirements for specific information that indicates a particular standard of organisational performance. For example, a unit of competency for data transcription may state a particular rate of data entry and accuracy. You need to incorporate this advice in the assessment tool and reflect this in the assessment method.

Ensure you are familiar with the types of policies, procedures and work practices that impact on the assessment instrument you are designing.

Requirements that impact on the assessment instrument

- ▶ Anti-discrimination; for example, assessors must ensure that all candidates have access to the relevant resources
- ▶ Culturally inclusive work practices; for example, assessments should reflect the diversity of people in the workplace and acknowledge any specific cultural work practices within the assessment
- ▶ Environmental protection; for example, assessments should take into account an organisation's specific environmental practices, such as disposing of hazardous materials appropriately during assessment activities
- ▶ Sustainability; for example, assessment should provide the opportunity for candidates to show how they conserve resources
- ▶ Ethical behaviour; for example, assessments must not encourage candidates to act unethically
- ▶ Maintaining privacy and confidentiality of information; for example, assessments should give candidates the opportunity to demonstrate how they maintain privacy of the information they deal with

- ▶ Work health and safety; for example, assessments must be designed so candidates and workers are not placed at risk when completing an assessment task
- ▶ Standard operating procedures; for example, assessment should be contextualised to refer to workplace operating procedures
- ▶ Human resources; for example, assessors should refer to human resources policies when deciding to conduct workplace assessment outside regular business hours

Product specifications

In some cases, a unit of competency states that the candidate must present a specific number of samples of their work for assessment. Alternatively, you may interpret the unit of competency and decide that the most appropriate form of assessment is an examination of at least one product produced by the candidate.

Consider what forms of additional information are needed to assess that the candidate demonstrated their competence in regard to the process that they applied in the production stage. Ask the candidate to supply a design or project brief, working papers, feedback they received during the production stage, drawings or plans they developed, documentary evidence in a video recording and third-party reports.

Consider also whether you need to use written or verbal questioning to gather supplementary evidence of underpinning knowledge.



Example

Identify other related documentation to inform assessment tool development

This example shows how an assessor used a range of documentation to inform his design of an assessment tool.

Toby is employed as a professional writer for Training Link, an organisation that publishes learning and assessment products for several training packages. Training Link sells their products online to RTOs. The company has been successfully marketing training and assessment products for the Retail Services Training Package for several years, and has recently decided to develop additional products for SIR30116 Certificate III in Community Pharmacy.



Toby has been given the task of developing the assessment tools. While he is familiar with the Retail Services Training Package, Toby realises that he will need to research the specific requirements of the Community Pharmacy qualification. He uses the training.gov.au website to access the Retail Training Package. He then downloads the Community Pharmacy qualifications, units of competency and implementation guides.

Units of competency

Toby reviews the various units of competency that he has been asked to develop assessment tools for. He identifies that he will need to gather information regarding the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and Medicare. He also becomes aware that pharmacy workers must comply with rigorous WHS standards and regulations, particularly in regard to the use of PPE, disposing of waste and storing particular substances. It is important that Toby reads and understands the information that relates to each of these areas in order to contextualise the assessment tools, provide appropriate advice for reasonable adjustment, and to ensure that the assessment instrument used to gather evidence of the performance evidence and knowledge evidence is appropriate to the community pharmacy work environment.

Assessment requirements

Toby understands from the assessment requirements that the qualification provides the skills and knowledge for an individual to be competent to work in a community pharmacy. Of particular interest to Toby is the information regarding the role of the pharmacy registering authorities (state and territory Pharmacy Boards) in defining the role of the community pharmacy/dispensary assistant. He decides he will need to conduct further research to ensure that the assessment tool gathers evidence that reflects the standards that are relevant to the candidate.

LLN requirements

Toby also arranges to meet with Lex, an LLN expert, who regularly assists Training Link. Toby is concerned about ensuring that the assessment tool includes instructions that are appropriate for the LLN level of the target candidates. He is mindful that the units of competency are in a level 3 qualification and that the candidates may be required to read and interpret complicated workplace protocols and safety data sheets. He will need Lex to assist him in reviewing the instructions to candidates to ensure there is alignment between the needs of candidates and the requirements of the Retail Services Training Package.

Feedback from industry representatives

Toby speaks with his colleagues to find a contact in the pharmacy industry he can meet with. He needs to get feedback and arrange some quality checks before he proceeds any further. He wants to speak to an expert about the specific community pharmacy skill needs of staff working in a retail workplace and at the same time he will ask for some feedback on the documentation he has developed so far.

Activity 4

Read and interpret a range of documents to identify their impact on assessment processes and, in turn, how they influence the design of assessment tools. Complete only those items that are relevant to the benchmarks that are the focus of your assessment tool.

Summarise your analysis in a table similar to this one.

Document	How the assessment tool will satisfy these requirements
Training package implementation guides	
Units of competency requirements for assessment methods and context, and resources for assessment	
Assessment activities in accredited modules or support materials	
Australian Core Skills Framework	
Organisation requirements for demonstration of work performance	
Product specification	

[Click to complete Activity 4](#)

Summary

1. Before you can design and develop assessment tools, you need to familiarise yourself with the RTO scope documents in particular the learning and assessment strategy. This provides information about the target candidates and the organisation's approach to training and assessment and preferred means of collecting evidence for the qualification.
2. Your professional relationship will largely determine how you source information about the target candidate group. It is useful to develop a target group profile that records the key characteristics of the target group in order to ensure that the assessment tools are appropriate.
3. Undertake research to identify the assessment context where the proposed assessment tool is to be implemented. Conduct this research by accessing the training organisation's policies and procedures; interviewing trainers and assessors; and reviewing enrolment forms, assessment plans, training packages and information distributed by relevant professional associations and industry groups.
4. The benchmarks that are used for judging evidence for assessment are determined by the type of training conducted by the training organisation. Assessors who are employed by RTOs will use assessment tools that gather evidence to judge competence in regard to the critical aspects of assessment prescribed in units of competency.
5. Information that you need regarding the RTO's organisational, legal and ethical requirements are found in their workplace policies and procedures documents. The RTO manager, compliance manager or quality manager will be able to clarify their contents for you.
6. There is a range of other related documents that you should source and interpret during the design phase of the assessment tool. The implementation guide contains an overview of the assessment system and an overall framework for carrying out all activities relating to assessment in relation to the training package you are using.
7. It is important to seek industry engagement (for example, through meetings with industry representatives) to ensure assessment tools are relevant to the industry and to get feedback on the skill needs and the context of assessment.
8. Assessment requirements require the use of critical thinking skills to interpret the unit of competency's requirements for the assessment conditions, assessment context and assessment methods.
9. Assessors have a duty of care to candidates and must take all reasonable steps to ensure that assessment activities promote the health and safety of those involved in assessment.
10. The Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) describes levels of performance in the core skills of learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy. Specialist LLN practitioners use the ACSF to describe an individual's performance in these five core skills and then monitor progress over time. Contact a specialist LLN practitioner for advice when developing assessment tools that are targeted for use by candidates who may have LLN issues.



Topic 2

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 2A Select assessment methods that support the collection of defined evidence, taking into account the context in which the assessment will take place, and meeting the principles of assessment**

- 2B Enable candidates to show or support their claim for recognition of current competency through selected assessment methods**

- 2C Consider different assessment instruments for the selected assessment methods to generate options for collection of evidence**

- 2D Consider how the assessment instruments will be administered**

Design the assessment tool

In this topic you continue the process of researching and designing the assessment tool. Use the information you gathered in Topic 1 to help you select the appropriate assessment method for designing an assessment instrument that will gather quality evidence that meets the rules of evidence and the principles of assessment. Developing your design skills is an important aspect of this topic.

2A Select assessment methods that support the collection of defined evidence, taking into account the context in which the assessment will take place, and meeting the principles of assessment

Assessment relies on judging whether the evidence presented by a candidate demonstrates their competence in regard to specific benchmarking criteria. To plan the evidence that needs to be collected and the appropriate assessment method for gathering it, you need to draw together the various pieces of information you have collected regarding the context of assessment. A crucial part of this process is critically reflecting on the information in the assessment requirements provided in the unit of competency you are working with.



Make sure you are familiar with your RTO's learning and assessment strategy. This forms part of their compliance with The Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, Standard 1. This standard establishes the RTO's obligation to conduct assessment in accordance with the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence. This document includes a description of the rules of evidence that must be followed. If you work for an RTO, this information will be included in its learning and assessment strategy.

Collect quality evidence

Your objective at this stage of the assessment tool design process is to visualise how competency looks in the workplace and determine the type of evidence that is available to the candidate and the assessor. Before you can consider assessment methods, you need to understand and confirm the following because this knowledge will help you determine the most appropriate method to use to collect the evidence.

Consider the following:

- ▶ Assessment context
- ▶ Competency profile
- ▶ Defined evidence
- ▶ Principles of assessment and the rules of evidence
- ▶ Dimensions of competency

Review the assessment context

The decision about which assessment method you should use to gather evidence is based on the context of assessment. Your objective is to evaluate the ways in which the evidence can be collected to demonstrate competency.

Consider the following:

- ▶ Organisational requirements for demonstration of work performance
- ▶ Needs of candidates
- ▶ Nature of the work activity described in the implementation guide
- ▶ Training package guidelines
- ▶ Location of the assessment

Context of assessment

The following table demonstrates the key components of the context of assessment. You should reflect on each of these points as you examine the variety of assessment methods that are described in this section of the learner guide.

Context of assessment	Determining the appropriate assessment method/s
RTO learning and assessment strategy	This provides consideration for formative assessment, workplace-based, online facility, arrangements for adjustments and candidate support (LLN, disability, etc.)
Purpose of assessment	<p>Determine the reason for assessment. For example, assessment may be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ demonstrate competency for a particular unit of competency ▶ identify training needs ▶ confirm training progress ▶ recognise current competencies ▶ provide informal feedback to the learner on their progress to assist them to evaluate their learning (formative assessment).
Candidates	<p>What are the characteristics of candidates that will influence the assessment process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Age ▶ Work experience ▶ Previous education ▶ Cultural background ▶ Language, literacy and numeracy ▶ Disability ▶ Access to technology ▶ Learning environment ▶ Support from other people

Context of assessment	Determining the appropriate assessment method/s
Units of competency	What are the criteria that will be used to judge performance? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Elements ▶ Performance criteria ▶ Required knowledge ▶ Foundation skills ▶ Performance evidence
Assessment location	Where will assessment take place? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Workplace ▶ Group learning environment ▶ Online ▶ Simulation

Prepare a competency profile

You will find it useful to develop a competency profile – an overall picture of a competent person in practice – before proceeding with the assessment tool design. Your goal is to visualise a person in the workplace performing the various components of the benchmarking criteria holistically.

Use a range of methods to record the competency profile. You should check the training organisation's policies and procedures to identify whether they have a preferred method. Consider using a checklist, written description, job description or a 'story' where you describe a person performing the tasks.

Draw on this information to develop the competency profile:

- ▶ Unit of competency
- ▶ AQF descriptor
- ▶ Foundation skills
- ▶ Performance evidence
- ▶ Contexts where candidates will apply their skills
- ▶ WHS legislation, codes of practices, standards and guidelines that impact on performance
- ▶ Indicators and levels of competence of the Australian Core Skills Framework
- ▶ Organisational requirements for demonstration of competence
- ▶ Contingencies that may arise

Identify defined evidence

Assessment instruments are used to gather evidence from candidates. Evidence takes three forms: direct, indirect and supplementary. The distinguishing features of each type of evidence is summarised on the following table.

Type of evidence	Forms of evidence
<p>Direct: anything that the candidate has either produced themselves or for which they have been primarily responsible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Audio-recording or podcast ▶ Audiovisual recording using DVD, video or YouTube ▶ Correspondence (letters, memos, fax messages and emails) composed by the candidate ▶ Demonstration of skill ▶ Diary extracts ▶ Learning journals ▶ Materials or tools used to perform work ▶ Observation by an assessor or workplace supervisor ▶ Photographs ▶ Published works such as operational manuals ▶ Samples of work, including research and reports ▶ Workplace policies and procedures written by the candidate
<p>Indirect: evidence of candidate work that can be reviewed or examined by assessors that was gathered off the job</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Accredited courses or qualifications they have completed ▶ Budgets prepared or implemented by the candidate ▶ The candidate's curriculum vitae or résumé ▶ The candidate's performance appraisal ▶ A certificate of achievement (this could be for non- accredited training) ▶ Formal certificates or results of relevant training you have completed ▶ Job specifications or position descriptions ▶ Letters of appreciation from customers, suppliers or work colleagues ▶ Membership of professional associations ▶ Minutes of meetings that contain information on your participation and performance in specific activities ▶ Presentations or written speeches ▶ References or letters of support ▶ Workplace awards and certificates ▶ Written tests of underpinning knowledge

Type of evidence	Forms of evidence
Supplementary: additional evidence presented by candidates to demonstrate competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ It may be necessary to seek supplementary evidence when a candidate has submitted a portfolio of documents or work samples for assessment. The assessor may liaise with the candidate to agree on additional evidence that could be gathered to address these gaps. ▶ The candidate may provide a written report or answer questions that are designed to address the required knowledge component of the unit of competency. ▶ Testimonials from employers may also be used as supplementary evidence. ▶ Third-party reports are a common form of evidence and are often used in RPL assessments and for authenticating skills and knowledge demonstrated in a workplace under the supervision of someone other than an assessor.

Meet the principles of assessment

When developing assessment tools, you need to ensure that the principles of assessment are met.

Principles of assessment

- ▶ Fair – assessments must not be discriminatory or disadvantage the candidate
- ▶ Flexible – assessments should meet the candidate’s needs and include an appropriate range of assessment methods
- ▶ Valid – assessments should assess the unit/s of competency’s performance evidence and knowledge evidence
- ▶ Reliable – there should be a common interpretation of the assessments

Comply with the principles of assessment

Consider the following information about complying with the principles of assessment

Principle of assessment	Strategy
Fair: assessments must not be discriminatory or disadvantage the candidate in any way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ All eligible candidates must be guaranteed access to assessment that does not discriminate on any basis. ▶ Assessment processes must be designed to address the individual needs of candidates; this may require the reasonable adjustment of assessment methods, such as allowing a candidate to answer questions orally rather than in writing. ▶ All communication to the candidate must be clear and easy to understand. ▶ The candidate must agree to the assessment process and know what their responsibilities are. ▶ The candidate must have the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment.

Principle of assessment	Strategy
<p>Flexible: assessments should meet the candidate's individual needs and include a range of appropriate assessment methods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Select methods to gather evidence that reflects the individual needs and circumstances of the candidate. ▶ Make adjustments to the assessment process where appropriate; for example, rewording instructions; contextualising to suit the candidate's culture; focusing on oral responses and demonstration rather than written work. ▶ Provide additional time for an assessment or timetable the assessment to suit the candidate. ▶ Provide opportunity for the recognition of prior learning.
<p>Valid: assessments should assess the established benchmarks and integrate the practical application of skills and knowledge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The assessment process must be sound and assesses what it claims to assess. The assessment must be designed to gather evidence on a number of occasions and in a range of contexts, using different assessment methods. The specific evidence requirements of the units provide advice relating to sufficiency.
<p>Reliable: there must be a common interpretation of the assessments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Methods and procedures ensure that the units of competency are interpreted and applied consistently from person to person and from context to context. ▶ Judgments of competence are made consistently by various assessors relying on the same types of evidence.

Meet the rules of evidence

The rules of evidence state that evidence must be valid, sufficient, authentic and current.

Valid

- ▶ Assessment is valid when the process is sound and assesses what it claims to assess. Validity requires that the evidence must cover the performance evidence and knowledge evidence and be integrated with their practical application.
- ▶ The assessment tool could satisfy this by requiring:
 - evidence used for assessment being gathered on a number of occasions
 - evidence being collected in a range of contexts using different assessment methods.

Sufficient

- ▶ Sufficiency requires that evidence of the learner's competency is demonstrated across all aspects of the unit of competency and has been demonstrated repeatedly. The assessment tool may collect evidence that satisfies this rule by:
 - using formative and summative assessment
 - including an assessment activity that may be used to gather supplemental evidence (such as a third-party report where the learner is observed performing a specific skill)
 - providing a range of assessment activities that gathers evidence on more than one occasion.

Authentic

- ▶ You must be convinced that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner's own work and supporting documents are genuine. The assessment instrument may recommend using third-party reports or questioning to authenticate evidence.

Current

- ▶ Currency relates to the age of the evidence presented by a candidate to demonstrate they are still competent. Competency requires demonstration of current performance – thus the evidence collected must be either from the present or the very recent past.
- ▶ The assessment tool must include specific advice regarding the currency of evidence that is presented for assessment. The tool may also include assessment questioning to gather evidence that the candidate's knowledge remains current.

Understand dimensions of competency

Assessments must take in the dimensions of competency. These relate to all aspects of work performance. Assessments that don't explore the dimensions of competency are not valid assessments.

The following table describes the four dimensions of competency.

Task skills

The candidate must perform the individual skills required to complete a work activity to the required standard.

Task management skills

The candidate must manage a number of different tasks to complete a whole work activity such as working to meet deadlines.

Contingency management skills

The candidate must use their problem-solving skills to resolve issues that arise when performing a work activity.

Job/role environment skills

The candidate must perform effectively in the workplace when undertaking a work activity by working well with all stakeholders and following workplace policies and procedures.

Choose assessment methods

You need to be aware of a range of different assessment methods, their purposes and uses, as they form the framework on which you will base the assessment instrument. It is useful to consult with your peers, relevant parties in the candidate's workplace and representatives of industry to determine the most appropriate method for gathering the types of evidence that are required to demonstrate competence. Access the 'Evaluating assessment tools to assessment methods' template. You can use this to evaluate the assessment tools in relation to the different assessment methods.

The training organisation's workplace policies and procedures may include specific advice about the assessment methods the RTO prefers to use in specific contexts of assessment. Consider the following factors when selecting which assessment method to use.

Evidence requirements	Evidence requirements of the competency standards/ benchmarks; for example, if the candidate has to operate a machine, then direct observation is an appropriate method; if the candidate has to demonstrate knowledge evidence, then questioning may be appropriate.
Location of the candidate	The location of the candidate; for example, the candidate may be in a remote location and assessment may take place online. Assessors must consider whether technology is available to the candidate to support online assessment or if other alternative methods are available through a coach or third person such as a supervisor.
Feedback from stakeholders	Feedback gathered from industry and enterprise representatives regarding workplace practices, culture, environmental issues and emerging trends and technology will help you identify when a method may be inappropriate. For example, in some cultures asking questions is seen as rude; workplace assessment may not be possible as the candidate's work role does not include the tasks that are to be assessed.
Evidence-gathering opportunities	Evidence-gathering opportunities; for example, you may have to advise an RPL candidate of the ways in which they can collect evidence and present a portfolio. This is an important factor in those cases where a candidate is enrolled in a learning program that is not related to their current job. In this case, it may be very difficult for the candidate to gather evidence from their workplace. A case study or research project would be appropriate assessment methods.
Legal and ethical requirements	Legal, ethical and work health and safety requirements; for example, you need to make sure the method you select is safe, does not require the candidate to do anything illegal and does not contravene any code of conduct.
RTO resources	RTO resources, such as the time available for assessment, costs of assessment and materials.
Needs of candidates	Individual needs of candidates; for example, you may have to adjust the assessment method to take into account a candidate's disability, language needs or cultural background to ensure the assessment meets access and equity principles.

AQF level	The AQF level being assessed to ensure the assessment requires the candidate to gather evidence of work that would be performed by a person at the appropriate level in the workplace. For example, an assessment for an AQF2 work health and safety competency should not be assessed by asking the candidate to develop a WHS policy. At AQF2 the candidate should be observed performing routine work tasks safely.
Language, literacy and numeracy	The language, literacy and numeracy demands of the particular unit of competency and the candidate's job role so any instructions for collecting evidence do not have higher levels of LLN than that required for the unit.
Licensing and regulatory requirements	Licensing and regulatory requirements, to ensure that any requirements established by professional associations, industry groups or government bodies are satisfied.
Clustering	Opportunities to cluster units of competency for assessment so assessment is logical, reflects workplace practice and saves time.

Direct observation

The following table summarises the key attributes of direct observation methods and makes suggestions about their effectiveness in various assessment contexts.

Assessment methods	Description	Suitability
Real work/ real- time activities at the workplace	<p>This type of observation is conducted in the candidate's workplace.</p> <p>Assessors need to coordinate a time for assessment. Candidates require access to the various resources and materials that are needed to perform the specific work activity that will form the basis of assessment.</p> <p>Candidates require information on the duration and scope of the observation; for example, for how long will they be observed?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Workplace trainees and apprentices ▶ When the assessment conditions guide requires assessment to be conducted in an actual workplace ▶ Assessment has been contextualised for a specific enterprise or organisation ▶ To gather evidence of the candidate demonstrating tasks outlined in the performance evidence ▶ Used for both formative and summative assessment ▶ Can be supplemented by questions; for example, 'What if ... happened?', 'Why did you ...?', 'How would you ...?' or 'Why is it important to ...?'

Assessment methods	Description	Suitability
<p>Work activities in a simulated workplace environment</p>	<p>Candidates who are not currently employed or are undertaking their learning in a group environment may not have access to an actual workplace for assessment. The assessor needs to coordinate access to a simulated workplace where they can observe the candidate. Check whether the RTO has developed a simulated workplace or partners with an organisation that offers this type of service.</p> <p>Simulations offer additional benefits such as a controlled assessment environment, greater flexibility in timing and savings in travel costs for assessors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ideal for group learners ▶ When assessment requires the use of specialised equipment or technology ▶ When appropriate supervision of assessment is not available in the workplace ▶ When the candidate is studying in an off-the-job environment but requires exposure to experiences that reflect those in the workplace ▶ When the candidate is undertaking a learning program that is not relevant to their current job ▶ When provision for reasonable adjustment cannot be made in the candidate’s workplace ▶ It is crucial to maintain workplace health and safety; for example, when the learner is to be observed under specific conditions performing high-risk activities such as senior first aid ▶ Used for both formative and summative assessment

Structured activities

The following table summarises the key attributes of structured activities' assessment methods and makes suggestions about their effectiveness in various assessment contexts.

Assessment methods	Description	Suitability
Role-plays	<p>Role-plays are a variation of the simulation method of assessment. They usually require much less preparation and cost less to establish than a simulated work environment.</p> <p>Many candidates report feeling threatened by role-plays and are concerned that their 'acting' skills may undermine their demonstration of competent performance.</p> <p>Online learning technologies are increasingly offering new methods for collecting evidence from distance learners, with candidates being able to upload audio or visual evidence of role-plays they have undertaken in remote locations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Role-plays are suitable for assessing competency in regard to behaviours and interpersonal skills, such as communicating with customers, participating in a team meeting or resolving conflict ▶ Useful for collecting evidence from online or distance learners ▶ Useful when the candidate must be assessed using skills that are not related to their current job ▶ May be used to practise skills during the learning stage of the program as formative assessment ▶ Useful in assessing 'what if' scenarios; for example, emergency responses or child protection
Projects	<p>Project assessment instruments may be developed in such a way as to allow the candidate to undertake their project in their workplace, using a case study or by undertaking research.</p> <p>Consider having the candidate submit their project for feedback at several stages in order to ensure that relevant evidence is being gathered. This would be an example of formative assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Projects are most appropriate at higher AQF levels (Certificate IV and above) ▶ The advantage of the project method of assessment lies in the scope that it offers. Projects may be used to gather evidence of competency in a wide range of assessment contexts and are often effective in gathering evidence holistically (the project gathers evidence of various aspects of the unit of competency rather than individual aspects); supplementary evidence of the candidate applying specific skills as they conducted their project may be required ▶ Often used for summative assessment

Assessment methods	Description	Suitability
Presentations	Candidates may present research findings or their experience from their own workplace to fellow learners during the delivery stage of learning or as a final assessment method. The assessor’s observations of the presentation may be recorded as a component of assessment and may also contribute to the learning of the other participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use presentations as a method of assessment when presentation skills are one of the critical aspects of assessment or performance evidence points identified in the benchmarks that is being used to judge competence ▶ Check the training organisation’s policies and procedures for advice about using presentations for assessment where competence in presentation skills is not specified in the benchmarking criteria ▶ May be difficult to administer for workplace learners ▶ Often are resource intensive (requires time, a venue, audio- visual equipment and an audience) ▶ Presentations may be used for both formative and summative assessment
Activity sheets	Activity sheets must be clear and use culturally inclusive language and provide easy-to-follow instructions. They should be validated to ensure they will gather the evidence you require. A poorly designed worksheet may result in the candidate gathering evidence that is not clearly linked to the performance evidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Activity sheets are particularly appropriate for assessment at lower AQF levels ▶ Consider using observation and role-plays to gather evidence that the candidate is competent to apply their knowledge (demonstrated on the activity sheet) to a work-based scenario ▶ Suitable for group or workplace candidates ▶ May be administered online ▶ Suitable for inclusion in an assessment portfolio ▶ Most appropriate for formative assessment

Questioning

The following table summarises the key attributes of questioning assessment methods and makes suggestions about their effectiveness in various assessment contexts.

Assessment methods	Description	Suitability
<p>Written questions; for example, on a computer</p>	<p>It is essential that you carefully consider the AQF level of the candidate and their LLN levels when deciding the format of the written questions. There is a range of question formats that may be suitable for use in specific circumstances including multiple choice, true/false and short answer.</p> <p>It is essential that you trial the use of the written question assessment instrument prior to using it with candidates. You will need to check that the questions are clear, gather the relevant evidence and are culturally inclusive.</p> <p>You can expect that you will need to use other evidence-gathering methods to satisfy the assessment requirements, as written questions are not usually able to gather sufficient evidence of the learner's competence when used on their own.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Used for assessing knowledge evidence ▶ May be used in conjunction with simulations, projects, observations or case studies ▶ Are comparatively easy to mark ▶ Appropriate for online assessment ▶ Suitable to gather supplementary evidence ▶ May be used for formative or summative assessment
<p>Interviews</p>	<p>The assessor should review the candidate's assessment portfolio before meeting with them to identify those areas where sufficient evidence of each of the assessment requirements may not have been presented.</p> <p>The assessor then prepares a list of questions they will use to gather supplementary evidence to clarify the process used to complete a specific task and to identify any obstacles or issues the candidate needed to address, to complete the work represented in the portfolio.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Recommended for use with RPL portfolio assessment ▶ Appropriate for gathering evidence of knowledge evidence ▶ Effective method for satisfying the validity and authenticity rules of evidence ▶ Can be recorded and played back at another time

Assessment methods	Description	Suitability
Self-assessment	Candidates may complete a self- assessment checklist or use reflective practice that is recorded in a journal (printed or electronic) as a component of assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Component of RPL portfolio ▶ Suitable for units that require critical thinking or reflective practice ▶ Additional forms of evidence will be required ▶ Young or inexperienced candidates may require support to complete the checklist
Verbal questioning/ oral exams	<p>Verbal questioning gathers evidence that the candidate has the underpinning skills required to perform the work activities described in the performance criteria that is being used to judge assessment.</p> <p>Check that the foundation skills or performance criteria items in the unit of competency or other benchmarking criteria does not stipulate that the candidate must demonstrate their ability to produce written communication as a component of competence before you develop an assessment instrument that relies solely on verbal questioning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Verbal questioning may also be used to accommodate the needs of candidates that have lower levels of LLN or have a disability that impacts on their ability to complete a written assessment ▶ An appropriate assessment method to accommodate the need for reasonable adjustment ▶ Responses can be recorded ▶ Assessors often use verbal questioning to gather supplementary evidence when observing candidates for assessment purposes ▶ Often used for summative assessment
Questionnaires	<p>A questionnaire is a written or electronic set of questions that gather information from a candidate that may be used to develop an understanding of the candidate’s background, work experience, attitudes, self-reflection and goals and aspirations.</p> <p>A questionnaire is not used to test or examine a candidate; rather it gathers information that may be used to support a candidate’s claim for recognition or as a component of the candidate’s portfolio.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Component of an assessment portfolio ▶ Questionnaires are appropriate when the unit of competency requires evidence of the candidate’s attitude, goal setting or reflective practice ▶ Summative assessment

Assessment methods	Description	Suitability
Oral or written examinations	In some cases, competency requires the candidate to demonstrate that they have an in-depth knowledge of specific legislation or are able to manage an organisation's compliance system. The RTO managers may determine that knowledge evidence in these higher-level qualifications will be assessed using a formal oral or written examination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Applicable at higher AQF levels ▶ This type of summative evidence-gathering may be in addition to various types of formative assessment that are conducted in the delivery stage of the learning ▶ Some professional associations require potential members to complete formal examinations in order to demonstrate that they possess the specific attributes and knowledge

Portfolios of evidence

The following table summarises the key attributes of portfolios of evidence assessment methods and makes suggestions about their effectiveness in various assessment contexts.

Assessment methods	Description	Suitability
Collection of work samples compiled by the candidate	The type of work performed by the candidate and the performance criteria that is being assessed will suggest the types of work samples that the candidate presents in their portfolio.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Workplace-based candidates including trainees ▶ When you need to consider availability of workplace supervision and authentication of work samples ▶ Most commonly used for summative assessment ▶ Needs verification that the work was produced by the candidate; for example, authentication by a supervisor

Assessment methods	Description	Suitability
<p>Product with supporting documentation</p>	<p>In some cases, a unit of competency will state that the candidate must present a specific number of samples of their work for assessment.</p> <p>Alternatively, you may interpret the competency and decide that the most appropriate form of assessment is an examination of at least one product produced by the candidate.</p> <p>Consider what forms of additional information you will need to assess that the candidate demonstrated their competency in regard to the process that they applied in the production stage; for example, ask the candidate to supply a design or project brief, working papers, feedback they received during the production stage and drawings or plans they developed.</p> <p>Consider whether you need to use written or verbal questioning to gather supplementary evidence of underpinning knowledge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Check the performance evidence for details of units that require submission of a product for assessment ▶ May be difficult to administer for distance and online candidates ▶ When assessment instruments require instructions for authenticating a product ▶ Formative and summative assessment
<p>Historical evidence</p>	<p>The candidate's résumé; certificates; award; qualifications; testimonials from work colleagues, supervisors, customers and suppliers; and work completed as a learner in other courses of study may be suitable for inclusion in the portfolio.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Portfolio assessment ▶ Suitable for recognition of prior learning candidates

Assessment methods	Description	Suitability
Journal or logbook	<p>Journals are a useful tool for gathering evidence of the candidate's learning journey. They may be used to promote reflective practice by learners, which may be a requirement for competency.</p> <p>Logbooks are particularly beneficial when the candidate must have completed a specific number of hours of work performance or have completed specific work tasks in order to be deemed competent.</p> <p>Candidates who are employed as apprentices, for example, are required to maintain a log of their work activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Apprentices and workplace trainees ▶ Suitable for units that require evidence of reflective practice and critical thinking ▶ Useful when assessment is being conducted for awarding of a license or certificate of competency
Information about life experience	<p>Candidates who are seeking recognition of their competency may ask the assessor to consider their life experience.</p> <p>The portfolio items they provide could include testimonials from groups where they have worked as volunteers or where they have contributed as a member of a sporting or community group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Appropriate for recognition of prior learning

Review of products

The following table summarises the key attributes of review of products assessment methods and makes suggestions about their effectiveness in various assessment contexts.

Assessment methods	Description	Suitability
Testimonials and reports	<p>Testimonials and reports about a candidate's skills and knowledge or past experience may come from employers and supervisors.</p> <p>Carefully evaluate the evidence to identify how closely they relate to the assessment requirements. You may need to use questioning and other forms of supplementary evidence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Appropriate for recognition of prior learning and recognition of current competency candidates ▶ Not well-suited for learners who are not employed or who are undertaking a learning program not relevant to their current job
Evidence of training	<p>The candidate may have completed an individual unit of competency in a previous course of study and presents a record or transcript of competency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Appropriate for recognition of prior learning and recognition of current competency candidates
Authenticated prior achievements	<p>Certificates and other documentation may be presented. Confirm that the previous achievements are relevant to the benchmarking criteria that are being used for assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Appropriate for recognition of prior learning and recognition of current competency candidates
Interview with employer, supervisor or peer	<p>Carefully plan how you are able to ensure that the information you receive from these sources is valid.</p> <p>Supplementary evidence will need to be gathered to satisfy the sufficiency rule of evidence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Interviews are a useful tool for gathering evidence of the candidate's performance in the workplace, particularly their application of the performance evidence skills that are described in units of competency ▶ The qualifications and position of the interviewee need to be authenticated and determined to be valid and reliable

Make reasonable adjustments

It is useful to work through the issues that confront many candidates. Be prepared to select assessment methods that take these into account. In some instances you will have to make reasonable adjustments to the assessment; that is, adjust the assessment to ensure the candidate is not discriminated against, while at the same time ensuring the assessment continues to satisfy the requirements of the performance evidence and other assessment requirements of assessment, and is a valid and reliable assessment.

Reasonable adjustment	Candidate issues	Assistance provided
Taking into account the candidate's LLN requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Problems interpreting content (including instructions) in assessment instruments ▶ Unable to conduct research to complete assessment ▶ Difficulties reading and interpreting workplace policies and procedures ▶ Problems contacting assessors ▶ May feel disempowered from discussing assessment with a workplace supervisor or technical expert 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Verbal assessment ▶ Include diagrams and images in instructions ▶ Access specialist support ▶ Use of calculators ▶ Demonstration rather than written assessment ▶ A scribe to record responses
Making adjustments to the physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Physical disabilities ▶ Accessing the assessment environment ▶ Difficulties using equipment, materials or technology ▶ Problems conducting research to complete assessment ▶ Difficulties contacting assessors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Access specialist support ▶ Modify environment, equipment or technology ▶ Flexible assessment sessions to allow for breaks to address physical fatigue ▶ Use simulations rather than actual workplaces

Reasonable adjustment	Candidate issues	Assistance provided
<p>Providing personal support services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ May be required by those who have a disability, do not speak English as their first language or have LLN issues ▶ Problems interpreting content (including instructions) in assessment instruments ▶ Candidates may find group assessment threatening ▶ Difficulties using equipment, materials or technology ▶ Medication regimen may impact on optimum performance times ▶ Problems reading and interpreting workplace policies and procedures ▶ Difficulties contacting assessors ▶ Personal care required during prolonged assessment sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Conduct assessment over short durations and at times to suit optimum performance ▶ Include images and diagrams in instructions ▶ Use verbal questioning ▶ Access specialist support ▶ Modify equipment and machinery where appropriate ▶ Offer online assessment where appropriate
<p>Allowing for cultural beliefs, traditional practices and religious and spiritual observances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ May not be able to use certain materials required in assessment ▶ Unable to attend assessment on specific days or at specific times ▶ Confidence ▶ Stereotypes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Organise assessment times that are suitable for the candidate's religious and spiritual observations ▶ Make sure assessment tools do not include stereotypes and do not require specific cultural knowledge for completion

Reasonable adjustment	Candidate issues	Assistance provided
Accommodating age and gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Fatigue ▶ Lack of experience of competency-based training assessment ▶ Limited technology skills ▶ Confidence ▶ The role may not usually be performed in the workplace by people of this gender ▶ The candidate is a different gender from the assessor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use a range of assessment methods ▶ Verbal questioning and interviews ▶ Portfolio assessment ▶ Use an assessor of the same gender if appropriate ▶ Make sure assessment tools are not gender specific in content ▶ Eliminate the use of stereotypes in images and communication
Providing different formats of assessment materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ May be required by those who have a disability, do not speak English as their first language or have LLN issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use appropriately formatted assessment materials. This could include the use of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the candidate's first language – audiotape or videotape – braille – diagrams, flowcharts, illustrations.
Providing adaptive technology or special equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Required by those with a disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use adaptive technology or special equipment to support the candidate, including voice recognition software ▶ Coordinate access to a scribe ▶ Provide aural information and aural response ▶ Consider lighting of the venue ▶ Offer opportunities to use electronic technology for sending responses such as email or SMS

Reasonable adjustment	Candidate issues	Assistance provided
<p>Revising proposed assessment methods and tools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Individual differences that may need to be addressed by revising assessment methods and tools include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – English LLN barriers – physical impairment or disability – medical conditions that may impact on assessment – learning difficulties – mental or psychological disability – religious and spiritual observances – age – gender. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Multiple short tests or allow rest periods ▶ Online assessment ▶ Limit distractions – select an appropriate venue ▶ Coordinate assessments with medication regimen to optimise performance ▶ Use graphics and images to augment the written word ▶ Select assessment method other than a written, formal exam ▶ Offer assessment options ▶ Offer opportunities to use electronic technology for sending responses such as email or SMS
<p>Providing flexible assessment sessions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Candidates, who have a disability, are older, have a medical condition or mental illness or who are taking medication may require flexible assessment sessions. ▶ You should also consider whether a candidate’s cultural, religious or spiritual beliefs may impact on the duration of assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use formative assessment ▶ Portfolio or online assessment methods may be suitable ▶ Negotiate assessment timing with candidates ▶ Workplace assessment ▶ Access specialist support such as scribes

Example

Select assessment methods that support the collection of defined evidence, taking into account the context in which the assessment will take place, and meeting the principles of assessment

Martin has established a business in NSW that consults with RTOs to ensure that the policies and procedures and the assessment and delivery strategies they develop, comply with VQF requirements. He finds that many qualified assessors require support in identifying the appropriate assessment method for the collection of defined evidence, taking into account the context in which the assessment will take place and meeting the principles of assessment.



Martin's advice to assessors is to consider the following factors when selecting an assessment method for use in a specific assessment tool. He prepares a checklist assessors can use.

- Access to resources necessary for assessment
- Availability of other parties who may contribute to assessment (workplace supervisors, technical experts or subject matter experts, for example)
- Characteristics of the target candidates
- Costs associated with conducting assessment
- Language, literacy and numeracy proficiency
- Assessment location (group-based, workplace, online, offshore)
- Number of candidates to be assessed
- Opportunities for gathering quality evidence
- Party responsible for collecting evidence
- Provision of reasonable adjustment

Martin recently assisted an RTO that had added the Certificate IV in Fitness to its scope. This includes the unit of competency *HLTWHS003 Maintain work health and safety*. The performance criteria or performance evidence requires candidates to demonstrate that they have sufficient knowledge to implement and monitor the organisation's WHS policies, procedures and programs. Martin highlights that the unit of competency includes an extensive, detailed 'required knowledge' component. The assessment team carefully interprets the performance evidence and agrees that they need to develop an assessment tool that includes four assessment methods in order to meet the principles of assessment and gather quality evidence.

They decide to use the following assessment methods:

- ▶ Samples of performance (work completed by candidates in their workplace such as checklists, reports and minutes of meetings)
- ▶ Observation of performance in the workplace (including third-party reports and logbooks)
- ▶ Evidence of prior performance (gathered using portfolios)
- ▶ Supplementary information (questioning, quizzes and structured activities)

The assessment team also considers how reasonable adjustment could be provided using the selected assessment methods. They include the following ideas in the draft assessment tool:

- ▶ Substitution of an oral assessment task for a written one
- ▶ Provision of extra time to complete an assessment activity
- ▶ Use of adaptive technology

2B Enable candidates to show or support their claim for recognition of current competency through selected assessment methods

Trainers and assessors often use the terms recognition of prior learning and recognition of current competency interchangeably. It is crucial to understand the significant difference between these two purposes of assessment and the procedures that assessors should follow for gathering evidence and making appropriate judgments.



Recognition of prior learning

Candidates may wish to have their existing skills, knowledge and competence formally reviewed against standards, such as the units of competency in training packages, to determine whether they satisfy the requirements for a qualification. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is an assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit.

Learners must match their previous training, work or life experience with the skills and knowledge outlined in a qualification, and supply appropriate evidence to verify competency. The assessor then evaluates this evidence against the criteria for the qualification, as they would for any assessment.

The training organisation will have developed specific policies and procedures for conducting recognition of prior learning assessment.

Recognition of current competency

Recognition of current competency (RCC) describes the situation where a candidate has previously successfully completed the requirements for a unit of competency or module and is now required to be reassessed to ensure that the competency is being maintained; for example:

- ▶ for the registration or renewal of an industry-specific licence, such as workers in real estate, pest management, security, and those operating machinery
- ▶ professional associations require learners to regularly submit evidence of their current competency for ongoing membership
- ▶ employers may require staff to provide evidence (as part of their annual accreditation) that they have participated in relevant work activities, networking opportunities, professional development and formal learning programs to ensure they remain informed of best practice standards, emerging work practices and technologies and changes in legislation and regulations that impact their work role.

Specific procedures and forms that are used for this form of assessment will be available from RTOs.

Assessment tools for RCC and RPL

Assessment of RCC is a form of summative assessment. The candidate lodges their application and supporting evidence and receives feedback and advice on the assessment outcome.

The assessment tool that you develop must enable candidates to support their claim for RCC or RPL using the selected assessment methods. RPL assessment should be the same standard as other assessment for the qualification. A portfolio is often used as the assessment instrument.



Include sufficient details for the candidate to understand the purpose of RCC and RPL, the evidence-gathering process and how their evidence will be judged. Include advice to the candidate that they should clarify with their assessor any information they do not understand. Instructions should also include advice about how the outcomes of assessment will be reported, and the candidate's right to appeal the assessment decision.

Ask your trainer for the 'Evaluation of RPL assessment process checklist' template.

An assessment instrument used for RPL and RCC

The following table outlines the key components of a quality assessment instrument used for RCC and RPL.

Component	What to include in the assessment tool
Assessment context	Describe the target group and purpose of assessment. In this case the purpose is recognition of current competency.
Competency mapping	Describe the relationship between individual parts of the assessment instrument and the unit of competency the candidate is seeking recognition for. Demonstrate the linkages between components of the assessment and the elements, performance criteria, knowledge evidence and assessment requirements such as performance evidence identified in the unit of competency.
Information to the candidate	<p>Include the specific task or activities the candidate must complete and present to the assessor in order for a judgment of their competency to be made.</p> <p>Suggest that the candidate prepares a portfolio for RCC assessment, including items such as third-party reports, work samples or observation checklists. It is essential that the candidate submits authenticated evidence of the competencies they have previously completed and are seeking recognition for.</p> <p>Additional activities to be completed for assessment may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ questionnaires ▶ interviews ▶ challenge tests ▶ self-assessments.

Decision-making rules	Outline the rules that the assessor will follow in judging competency.
Assessment conditions	Outline any specific conditions that apply to assessment. For example, currency of evidence included in the portfolio.
Materials and resources required	Outline any materials and resources that may be required to complete assessment. These will be minimal in RCC assessment. It may include any questionnaires that are being used to gather evidence. Alternatively the candidate may be required to participate in an interview with the assessor.
Reasonable adjustment	Consider the individual needs of the candidate when selecting evidence-gathering methods and instruments to provide opportunities to address any special needs and promote access and equity.

Example

Enable candidates to show or support their claim for recognition of current competency through selected assessment methods

Tempo Instructional Designers Pty Ltd has been engaged by an RTO to develop an assessment tool to gather evidence from candidates who need to apply for accreditation of their competence as a swimming coach. The purpose of the assessment tool is to gather evidence of the candidate's current ability to perform the requirements of the relevant licence.



The team at Tempo familiarise themselves with the units of competency that are required to achieve a licence as a swimming coach. They review the performance evidence and assessment conditions of the relevant units and determine that portfolio assessment and a questionnaire (that includes self-assessment) are appropriate assessment methods.

They design a tool that explains the evidence the candidate is required to supply for each unit of competency. Candidates are also required to supply evidence that they are a current member of the relevant professional association. They also have to supply proof of a current nationwide police check.

The instructions for candidates include advice for authenticating the evidence they include in their portfolios. The procedures for the RPL application are described in the assessment tool.

The typical RPL process for providers consists of the following stages:

- ▶ Identifying the evidence required
- ▶ Providing advice to candidates about the process
- ▶ Providing candidates with sufficient information to enable them to prepare their evidence to meet the standard required for the RPL assessment process
- ▶ Assessing using appropriate evidence-gathering methods and tools
- ▶ Verifying the evidence provided
- ▶ Providing additional evidence if the assessor cannot reach a decision
- ▶ Attending an interview with the assessor and/or a licensing expert
- ▶ Undertaking additional assessment challenges such as to demonstrate a skill under the observation of an assessor or supply responses to questions
- ▶ Recording the outcome
- ▶ Reporting to key internal and external stakeholders

2C Consider different assessment instruments for the selected assessment methods to generate options for collection of evidence

A crucial component of the design process is critically reflecting on the assessment method you have selected to determine the assessment instruments that will be most effective for supporting candidates to gather evidence. In some cases, you need to provide multiple assessment instruments to provide flexibility for the range of environments where assessment is to be conducted. In this section, you will develop the competence to consider different assessment instruments to generate options for the collection of evidence.

For candidates completing a diploma level qualification, you may:

- ▶ decide that a project is appropriate for classroom-based learners
- ▶ include instructions for workplace learners as well as requiring their supervisors to complete a third-party report
- ▶ develop a case study and an additional assessment activity that requires candidates who are not currently employed in a relevant job to maintain a journal.

Assessment instruments and assessment methods

There is a range of assessment methods that are effective in gathering evidence in competency-based training. The assessment method that you select for the assessment tool is the key determinant in your design of the assessment instrument. You need to select the assessment method that has the greatest potential to gather quality evidence in a particular context and then prepare the assessment instrument that suits.

In the following section, we examine assessment methods in more detail and their implications for assessment instruments. In this section you will examine in detail the process of developing assessment instruments.



Align the assessment method with the instrument

Your job is to select the most appropriate instrument for the selected assessment method.

Assessments instruments include:

- ▶ profiles of acceptable performance measures
- ▶ templates and proformas
- ▶ specific questions or activities
- ▶ evidence and observation checklists
- ▶ portfolios of examples including for RPL
- ▶ checklists for the evaluation of work samples
- ▶ candidate self-assessment materials.

Assessment instruments for direct observation

The following information describes direct observation assessment methods and suggests relevant assessment instruments. Ask your trainer for the 'Observation assessment instrument checklist' template. This checklist can be used as a tool to evaluate the suitability and quality of an observation assessment instrument you will develop.

Direct observation	
Selected assessment method	Suggested assessment instrument
Real work/real-time activities at the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Observation template ▶ Profile of acceptable performance measure ▶ Questions
Work activities in a simulated workplace environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Observation template ▶ Third-party report ▶ Questions ▶ Profile of acceptable performance measures ▶ Candidate self-assessment

Assessment instruments for structured activities

The following information describes structured activities assessment methods and suggests relevant assessment instruments. Ask your trainer for the 'Third-party report' template. This can be used to record the candidate's performance.

Role-plays

- ▶ Observation proforma or template
- ▶ Third-party report
- ▶ Scenario provided
- ▶ Profile of acceptable performance measures
- ▶ Candidate self-assessment
- ▶ Debriefing guidelines

Projects

- ▶ Profile of acceptable performance measures
- ▶ Candidate self-assessment
- ▶ Specific instructions for assessment (project brief)

Presentations

- ▶ Observation proforma or template
- ▶ Third-party report
- ▶ Specific instructions for assessment activity (presentation brief)
- ▶ Candidate self-assessment
- ▶ Debriefing guidelines

Activity sheets

- ▶ Specific instructions for assessment activity

Assessment instruments for questioning

The following information describes questioning assessment methods and suggests relevant assessment instruments.

Questioning

- ▶ A question bank (this could include texts; exams; case studies; true/false questions; multiple-choice, essays or short-answer questions)
- ▶ Profile of acceptable performance measures

Oral or written examinations

- ▶ Instructions for activity
- ▶ Questions (this could include texts, exams, case studies, true/false questions, multiple-choice, essays or short-answer questions)

Assessment instruments for portfolios

The following information describes portfolio assessment methods and suggests relevant assessment instruments. Ask your trainer for the 'Portfolio assessment instrument checklist' template. This checklist can be used as a tool to evaluate the suitability and quality of a portfolio assessment instrument you will develop.

Portfolios of evidence

- ▶ Instructions for a journal or logbook
- ▶ Portfolio instructions
- ▶ Profiles of acceptable performance measures
- ▶ Questions for gathering supplementary evidence
- ▶ Instructions for recognition assessment

Product with supporting documentation

- ▶ Instructions for development of product samples
- ▶ Profiles of acceptable performance measures
- ▶ Candidate self-assessment materials
- ▶ Evidence and observation checklists
- ▶ Checklists for the evaluation of work samples
- ▶ Questions for supplementary evidence

Assessment instruments for the review of products

The following information describes a review of products assessment methods and suggest relevant assessment instruments.

Testimonials and reports from employers and supervisors

- ▶ Instructions for evidence
- ▶ Evidence checklists
- ▶ Questions for supplementary evidence
- ▶ Third-party reports

Evidence of training

- ▶ Instructions for evidence
- ▶ Evidence checklists
- ▶ Questions for supplementary evidence

Authenticated prior achievements

- ▶ Instructions for evidence
- ▶ Evidence checklists
- ▶ Questions for supplementary evidence
- ▶ Third-party reports

Interviews with employers, supervisors or peers

- ▶ Instructions for evidence
- ▶ Evidence checklists

Example

Consider different assessment instruments for the selected assessment methods to generate options for collection of evidence

The following example examines the methodology used by a qualified assessor to select the assessment instruments he will use in conjunction with a specific assessment method.

Emil is preparing to assess learners who are completing their Diploma of Management course. The assessment strategy implemented by the RTO requires Emil to use portfolio assessment for all Diploma qualifications. The majority of the learners enrolled in Diploma qualifications by the RTO are currently employed in a relevant role.

As Emil knows he must use portfolios as his assessment method, his next task is to identify the various assessment instruments he needs to develop. The RTO has a range of templates for assessment instruments that he can customise to suit the evidence requirements of the individual units that he is assessing.

Emil reviews the implementation guide of the BSB Business Services Training Package and decides that he needs to develop the following assessment instruments:

- ▶ A quiz to gather evidence of knowledge evidence
- ▶ A questionnaire to gather supplementary evidence where gaps are identified in the portfolio evidence
- ▶ A third-party report to be completed and included in the portfolio
- ▶ A self-assessment proforma
- ▶ Instructions for work samples to be included in the portfolio
- ▶ Instructions for maintaining a journal during learning (the completed journal is to be included in the assessment portfolio)

Ask your trainer for the 'Self-assessment record' template.



Activity 7

In this stage of the assessment tool design process you need to analyse the assessment method to select an appropriate assessment instrument. For each assessment method there may be a range of assessment instruments you could consider developing.

Refer to the assessment method you selected in Activity 6. In the tables provided, record the assessment instruments you would develop for use with that method. For each assessment instrument, record how you will address each aspect of the context of assessment using dot-points.

1. Identify the assessment method and the assessment instruments that you intend to include in the assessment tool. Use this table. Provision has been made for you to use two assessment instruments; however, you should use as many assessment instruments as required to gather quality evidence and satisfy the principles of assessment.

Assessment method:	
Assessment instrument 1:	
Assessment instrument 2:	

2. Use this table to record how each of the assessment instruments you intend to use is appropriate for the various aspects of the context of assessment.

Assessment method:		
Context of assessment	How will assessment instrument 1 address this aspect?	How will assessment instrument 2 address this aspect?
Purpose of assessment		
Assessment environment		

Assessment method:		
Context of assessment	How will assessment instrument 1 address this aspect?	How will assessment instrument 2 address this aspect?
Opportunities for collecting evidence		
Party that will be conducting assessment		
Relationships between units of competency and work activities and learning activities		
Characteristics of the target group		

Click to complete Activity 7

2D Consider how the assessment instruments will be administered

A crucial aspect of designing assessment tools is to work out how the assessment instruments will be administered to collect the most appropriate evidence. Factors impacting on the administration include the type of candidates, where the assessment is to take place, when it will occur, available resources, the type of assessment instruments to be used, and WHS issues. You need to consider these factors to ensure you have sufficient information to be able to proceed with developing the assessment instrument.



Understand the assessment context

As previously discussed, the assessment context is crucial in the design of the assessment instrument. The way the instrument will be delivered may affect the way it is designed. Once you have considered these aspects, you can then determine the best way to administer the instrument.

Purpose of the assessment

The purpose helps identify the evidence required, the location of assessment, resources required etc. This information will help you know the best way to administer the assessment, such as face to face, online or in a workplace. You may also want to consider the type of evidence that is most likely to be available in this context that will satisfy the rules of evidence.

A profile of candidates

Candidate profiles identify whether the candidate has any issues or a situation that needs to be taken into account when administering the assessment instrument; for example, LLN issues; their familiarity with technical language; cultural issues; a remote location; they have a disability; they have low levels of education; they come from non-English-speaking backgrounds; or are mature age candidates.

The assessment system

The assessment system is that within which assessment is carried out; for example, where the assessment will take place; who carries out the assessment; the period of time during which it takes place; and opportunities for gathering evidence in a number of situations.

Administer assessment instruments

The following information describes how the assessment instrument may be administered.

Profiles of acceptable performance measures

- ▶ Prior to assessment, present candidates with a checklist of the benchmarks of competence so they understand how their competence will be judged. This will also support them in preparing materials they can present for assessment.

Templates and proformas

- ▶ Provide forms or templates for the candidate to record their responses to questions or situations; for example, an examination booklet, blank incident reports or mapping template. Ensure there are instructions to help them know what to do.

Specific questions or activities

- ▶ Arrange to watch the candidate and either ask questions as they work, such as when they are operating a piece of equipment, or after the activity, such as after they have conducted a meeting. Questions are also crucial in the RPL process.
- ▶ Prepared questions can be asked verbally or may require a written response.
- ▶ Activities may be completed as written exercises, role-plays, oral answers or within journals.

Evidence and observation checklists

- ▶ Checklists to identify a candidate's performance can be administered by assessors, workplace supervisors or other third-party personnel assisting in the assessment.

Checklists for the evaluation of work samples

- ▶ After sufficient evidence of a candidate's work has been collected as a portfolio, assessors can use a checklist that identifies the benchmarks for competency and compares the samples with the benchmarks.

Recognition portfolios

- ▶ Prior to the assessment, discuss requirements and make sure the candidate understands their responsibilities. For example, instructions must be prepared so candidates know what is required of them; the type of evidence to collect; how to ensure currency and authenticity of the evidence; how best to present the information to enhance readability; and how to store the evidence.
- ▶ When assessing the portfolio, ensure items are clearly mapped to the assessment requirements so you can see the relationship between portfolio items and the unit of competency and to highlight evidence of employability skills and reflection on their performance by the candidate.

Candidate self-assessment materials

- ▶ A self-assessment form lists the required skills and knowledge for a unit and asks candidates to assess their confidence and understanding. This may be given to them to complete both before and after their learning program.

Considerations for reasonable adjustments

As previously discussed, the assessment process should not prevent any person from demonstrating their competence, skill or knowledge because the design of the assessment failed to take account of their requirements. All learners will benefit from inclusive practice that takes into account individual learner requirements.

Groups that may need reasonable adjustment in assessment include candidates:

- ▶ from rural/remote areas
- ▶ with a disability
- ▶ with low levels of education or low literacy or numeracy
- ▶ from an Indigenous background
- ▶ from non-English-speaking backgrounds
- ▶ who are older.

Follow the advice in the assessment instrument for providing support material for candidates with special needs and use them correctly, safely and in accordance with assessment requirements. These may include braille computers/text, audio tapes, and text in the candidate's first language.

Notify specialist personnel support who will contribute to the assessment process, such as interpreters, technical experts, disability support staff, community workers or subject matter experts.

Schedule assessment activities

In some situations, assessment may be disruptive to the candidate, trainer or employer so you need to consider the scheduling of assessment activities. For example, the assessment instrument instructions should advise the assessor to identify with the candidate and their supervisor the best time to observe the candidate, receive a report, watch a presentation, ask questions, and speak to a subject matter expert to gain third-party feedback, etc.



Candidates will also need sufficient notice of assessment requirements in order to ensure they make time available to gather the evidence.

Incorporate WHS requirements

Consider the WHS implications of the activities that are described in the assessment instrument. Reflect on the characteristics of the target candidates for the assessment instrument and whether these constitute a particular WHS risk. For example, you may have designed an assessment instrument that requires use of power tools by young learners such as apprentices. In this situation you would include specific advice to the assessor to perform a risk assessment.

Integrate assessment

Integrated (or holistic) assessment is the term used for an assessment activity that assesses several units rather than assessing individual units and elements as specific tasks or components of a work activity. Training package developers identify units of competency that together represent whole work activities, and group them to form a skill set. Skill sets offer an opportunity for integrated assessment.



Check the performance evidence and other assessment requirements to determine opportunities to integrate assessment for units of competency relevant to the industry sector, workplace and job role.

Consider the opportunities for integrating assessment when developing assessment tools. It is crucial that you clearly map each aspect of the integrated assessment tool to the requirements of assessment.

Validate the assessment

A validation process reviews the assessment instruments to ensure assessments are fair, flexible, valid and reliable and can be easily administered to provide quality evidence.

Arrange with the RTO manager or quality manager for newly developed assessment instruments to be validated both before and after implementation.

A validation panel:

- ▶ discusses assessment instruments and methods
- ▶ compares evidence and judgments made
- ▶ ensures instructions are clear and appropriate
- ▶ identifies where reasonable adjustments can be made.

Example

Consider how the assessment instruments will be administered

The following is an example of a proforma used by a qualified assessor who is developing an assessment instrument that will be used to gather evidence from workplace trainees who are enrolled in the unit *ICTICT101 Operate a personal computer*.

Administration issue	Comment
Assessment/evidence-gathering conditions	Demonstration of skills being assessed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Operating a personal computer, including starting the PC, logging in, using and understanding desktop icons and their links to programs, navigating a directory structure, saving work, printing and closing down the PC.
Purpose of assessment	Summative assessment for trainees enrolled in <i>ICTICT101 Operate a personal computer</i> .
Location of assessment	Workplace assessment
Resources required for assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Personal computer ▶ Basic software ▶ Printer ▶ Monitor ▶ Mouse and keyboard
Assessment materials	Assessment instrument (questions, observation checklist, structured activity that requires the candidate to perform specific tasks that reflect the performance criteria of the unit)
Holistic assessment	To be assessed holistically with <i>ICTICT102 Operate word-processing applications</i> .
Assessment schedule	To be completed in week 10.
WHS requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Hazard inspection to be completed prior to assessment. ▶ Instructions to remind candidates of WHS requirements. ▶ Advice regarding risk assessment to be given to workplace supervisor who is contributing to assessment.
Reasonable adjustment	Additional time to complete assessment. Use of adaptive equipment.
Validation process	To be validated prior to implementation.
Reporting arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Assessment decision (competent/not yet competent) to be recorded using the RTO's student record system. ▶ Assessment tool to include a section for student feedback. ▶ Student Administration Officer will advise assessment outcomes to relevant parties.

Activity 8

Use a checklist similar to this one to evaluate the assessment instruments you have selected in Activity 7, to confirm that you have sufficient information to proceed with developing the assessment instrument.

Administration issue	Summary of information that will need to be included in the assessment instrument
Purpose of assessment (list 3 reasons)	
What is the location of assessment?	
What assessment methods are you using?	
What resources are required?	
How will you identify any LLN issues among candidates?	
List the materials the assessor and candidates will require during assessment.	
What opportunities to gather evidence are presented using this assessment method and instrument?	

Administration issue	Summary of information that will need to be included in the assessment instrument
When will assessment occur?	
What information should you include regarding WHS?	
How have you addressed the safety information needs of the target group?	
What information should you include regarding hazard identification and reporting, use of PPE, risk assessment and emergency procedures?	
Have you considered integrating units of competency for assessment? If so, in what way?	
What are your recommendations for reasonable adjustment?	
What information are you required to give assessors regarding reporting arrangements?	
How will the training organisation validate the assessment instrument?	

[Click to complete Activity 8](#)

Summary

1. The purpose of the assessment tool is to provide instructions and activities that assessors can implement to gather evidence, make a judgment of competence and record and report the outcome. Assessment tools are used to gather evidence from candidates. Evidence takes three forms: direct, indirect and supplementary.
2. When developing assessment tools, you need to ensure that the principles of assessment are met; that is, the assessment is fair, flexible, valid and reliable.
3. There is a range of assessment methods you may select from when planning assessment processes. Consider consulting with your peers, relevant parties in the candidate's workplace and representatives of industry in determining the most appropriate method for gathering the types of evidence required to demonstrate competence.
4. Candidates may wish to have their existing skills, knowledge and competence formally reviewed against standards, such as the units of competency in training packages, to determine whether they satisfy the requirements for a qualification. This process is referred to as recognition of prior learning (RPL).
5. Recognition of current competency describes the situation where a candidate has previously successfully completed the requirements for a unit of competency or module and is now required to be reassessed to ensure the competence is being maintained.
6. Assessment of RCC and RPL is a form of summative assessment. You would expect the candidate to lodge their application and supporting evidence and receive feedback and advice of the assessment outcome.
7. The assessment method that you select for the assessment tool is the key determinant in your design of the assessment instrument.
8. You need to consider how the assessment instrument will be administered. This may affect the way it is designed.



Topic 3

In this topic you will learn how to:

3A Develop specific assessment instruments that support the collection of evidence that meets the rules of evidence

3B Define and document clear and specific procedures instructing assessor and candidate on the administration and use of assessment instruments

3C Consider the requirements of assessment system policies and procedures, and address storage and retrieval needs, and review, evaluation and version control procedures as part of this process

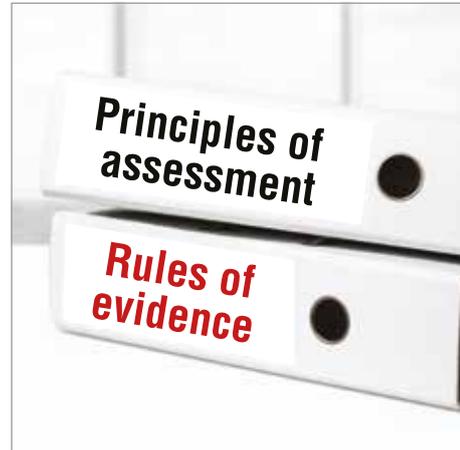
Develop the assessment tool

The assessment tools you develop must satisfy the training organisation's quality standards and VQF/AQTF requirements and provide candidates with the most effective option for gathering quality evidence. Assessors need quality assessment tools that will assist them in supporting candidates in the assessment process and that support a reliable judgment of assessment. Consider the needs of the various stakeholders in the assessment process as you undertake the process of developing assessment tools.

3A Develop specific assessment instruments that support the collection of evidence that meets the rules of evidence

After completing the design stage by considering the various assessment instruments you could use for specific assessment methods, you can now proceed to develop appropriate assessment instruments (specific questions, checklists, portfolios) that will reliably collect the evidence outlined in units of competency or course curricula.

Remember that the assessment instrument must also satisfy the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence.



Identify the evidence needed

The first step is to confirm the evidence required for a candidate to be judged as competent. This is described in the assessment requirements document for the unit of competency or listed in the outcomes of course curricula. Your job is to match these aspects of assessment with an appropriate assessment instrument.

There will sometimes be different target groups in the same cohort of learners. For example, there could be a combination of employed and unemployed people in the same group. When considering the assessment instruments, it is important to remember that assessments will vary; for example, some candidates will be able to complete a project in their workplace and others may have to do a simulation and presentation to the class. Therefore, the task may be the same for both groups, but the instruments needed to assess it are different.

You need to consider:

- ▶ where the assessment will take place
- ▶ the skills required
- ▶ the knowledge required
- ▶ how the evidence will be gathered
- ▶ whether the instruments provide sufficient evidence against all unit requirements.

Example

Unpack assessment information to identify the assessment evidence for a unit of competency

Evidence for the foundation skill: Writing, in the unit of competency: *TAEASS502 Design and develop assessment tools*

Performance indicator	Performance level criteria	What evidence you will need	Assessment instrument
Writing	Prepare assessment tools and documentation that incorporates language and format appropriate to the audience	The candidate must show how the assessment tools and accompanying documents use appropriate language, format and design for the target audience.	Portfolio items showing assessment tools will have annotations or comments explaining language pitch and format for the target audience. OR Provide a written report describing target group, AQF level and examples of language usage and format of the tool.
	Amend tools in response to feedback	The candidate must show how amendments were made to the assessment tools.	Portfolio items can show two versions to show how amendments were made. Feedback responses from candidates or supervisor can be used as evidence of amendments.

Evidence for the unit of competency *CHCAGE002 Implement falls prevention strategies*

Performance indicator	Performance level criteria	What evidence you will need	Assessment instrument
The ageing process and how it might affect the risk of falls	The physical effects of ageing	The candidate should be able to outline the physical, social and psychological aspects of ageing	<p>Questions for the candidate to show they have acquired the necessary knowledge about ageing</p> <p>Observation checklists to confirm the candidate applies their knowledge of the risks of falls in ageing people</p> <p>Third-party reports to confirm the candidate uses fall prevention strategies</p>

Evidence for the unit of competency *TLID1001 Shift materials safely using manual-handling methods*

Performance indicator	Performance level criteria	What evidence you will need	Assessment instrument
Relocate load	Actions for lifting, lowering, carrying, pulling and pushing a load are in accordance with workplace procedures and WHS/OHS requirements	The candidate can relocate a load safely	<p>Self-assessment checklists for the candidate to identify whether they can relocate a load successfully</p> <p>Observation checklists to show the candidate can relocate a load safely</p> <p>Third-party reports to confirm the candidate can relocate a load safely</p>

Develop instrument templates

Templates and proformas can support assessors and candidates to gather quality evidence by clearly articulating the evidence that must be collected using language that others will understand. Remember that assessment instruments will be used by people other than qualified assessors. Workplace supervisors, technical experts and subject matter experts, for example, may contribute to the process of collecting evidence under the supervision of a qualified assessor.

Templates and proformas are often in the form of questions or checklists. They are particularly useful for workplace supervisors, coaches and mentors who need to complete third-party reports and observation checklists.

The assessment method that you have selected will determine which templates or proformas you need to develop for the assessment instrument. The following table shows the relationship between the assessment method and the various instruments selected. Templates and proformas will also include instructions to the assessor and candidate.

Observation method

- ▶ Observation checklists to list the actions the candidate should take and the performance benchmarks; the checklist should be 'piloted' before being implemented for assessment
- ▶ Templates to gather evidence of the use of/demonstration of skills
- ▶ Checklists and forms/reports to be completed by a third party such as an experienced colleague or supervisor
- ▶ (Templates may require the assessor to supplement the information collected with questions, to gather evidence of knowledge evidence.)

Simulation method

- ▶ A simulation scenario that describes a particular scene/role-play to enable the candidate to provide evidence; this method is particularly suitable for classroom/group learners and may be appropriate for candidates with special needs
- ▶ An observation checklist that prescribes what to look for when observing the candidate

Questioning

- ▶ For prepared questions it is important to use a range of questioning types (open, closed, probing). Consider the LLN proficiency required to complete questioning and provide benchmark responses (model answers) for the assessor. A form must be required to record the responses from the candidates.

Portfolio

- ▶ A template of instructions to remind candidates of the need to comply with their workplace privacy policies and procedures when collecting evidence for their portfolios
- ▶ A proforma that provides a list of the evidence needed

Third-party report method

- ▶ Will need to include:
 - instructions for the third party
 - a third-party observation checklist
- ▶ (This is effective for gathering workplace evidence, though usually requires supplementary evidence.)

Structured activities

A structured activity is a task or a series of tasks with a defined outcome. They are particularly well suited for formative assessment. Consider the AQF level of the qualification being assessed and rubrics or 'model answers' will be required as a benchmarking tool for assessors. These should be validated as part of the training organisation's quality review procedures.

There is a wide range of formats for structured activities including case studies. These must be clearly written and present a real-life situation with opportunities for the candidate to solve a problem, identify specific learning points or decide what they would do. Avoid long, rambling scenarios where the reader gets lost in too much information. Ask your supervisor to show you examples of well-written, challenging case studies.

Other structured activities for formative assessment includes:

- ▶ undertaking a research assignment
- ▶ interviewing an experienced colleague and writing a report of the findings
- ▶ responding to a case study
- ▶ completing a worksheet
- ▶ making a model or sample.

Specific questions

Questioning is a particularly effective method for gathering evidence of underpinning knowledge or the process that the candidate has performed in demonstrating a work task, writing an assignment, completing a project, creating a work sample or compiling a portfolio. Formats include multiple choice, true/false, written short answer or interviews.

A well-written question is clear, targets the learning and leaves no doubt as to what is required. Avoid questions that are long, contain too much information, are ambiguous or confusing.

Consider the following for questioning:

- ▶ Consider the level you are writing for; for example, level 2 candidates require questions that allow them to show they understand procedures, while candidates at level 4 and beyond need probing questions that require them to synthesise, analyse and conceptualise information.
- ▶ After you have written a question, read it through until you are satisfied that it will help the candidate provide an appropriate response. Make sure you avoid questions such as, 'Can you describe how you operate the photocopier?' which can be answered by a simple 'Yes'.
- ▶ You need to consider the LLN levels of candidates as well as the AQF level being assessed when determining whether to use oral or written questioning as an assessment method.
- ▶ Review the various forms of questioning that may be used to gather evidence: interviews, written questions, verbal questioning, questionnaires and written examinations that you examined earlier.
- ▶ You may need to use additional evidence gathering methods, as questions are not usually able to gather sufficient evidence of the candidate's competence when used on their own.

Issues that arise for questioning and activities

The following table summarises some of the issues you should address when preparing assessment instruments that use questioning or activities.

Questioning method	Issue
Written questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What is the rationale for using written questions for assessment? ▶ Are they written at an appropriate AQF level? ▶ Have you considered the language and literacy levels of the candidates? ▶ How clearly are the questions linked to the evidence requirements of the unit of competency? ▶ What opportunity is there for reasonable adjustment to suit the individual needs of candidates? ▶ How will you ensure reliability of assessment?
Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How is this assessment method linked to the assessment purpose and context? ▶ What format will you use for the interview; for example, individual or panel interview? ▶ At what stage will the candidate be given the interview questions; for example, will they have an opportunity to read the questions prior to the interview? ▶ How will you record the candidate's responses? ▶ How will you ensure reliability in judging competency using this format? ▶ What opportunity is there to provide reasonable adjustment?
Verbal questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What is the rationale for using this assessment method? ▶ What opportunity will the candidate have to prepare their responses? ▶ How will you record the candidate's responses? ▶ Will you use verbal questioning for formative or summative assessment (or both)? ▶ Is there an opportunity to use probing questions? If so, how will you ensure reliability in judging competence? ▶ What method will you use to map questions to the unit of competency assessment requirements?
Questionnaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What is the rationale for using this method of assessment? ▶ How will you accommodate requests for reasonable adjustment? ▶ How will you ensure the authenticity of the candidate's responses? Is there a need to gather supplementary evidence? ▶ What benchmarking criteria will you use to judge the candidate's responses? ▶ Are the questions written at an appropriate AQF level?

Questioning method	Issue
Oral or written examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Is the format that you have selected for the examination appropriate for the AQF level of the unit of competency? For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – multiple choice, true/false questions and simple case studies are most appropriate for Certificates 1 and 2 – short-answer questions and case studies are appropriate for Certificates 3 and 4 – essays and sophisticated case studies are most appropriate for Diploma level. ▶ Rationale for formal examination, such as the candidate being able to apply their knowledge within a restricted time period.

Evidence and observation checklists

Observation is a very effective method of assessment as the assessor gathers first-hand evidence of the candidate performing the various aspects of the unit of competency and their employability skills.

It is often used for summative assessment where the candidate demonstrates the application of their completed learning in their actual workplace or a simulated work environment. Observation may also be used to gather evidence for candidates who are seeking recognition.

Observation may be conducted on or off the job. You may arrange to observe the candidate perform part of their usual workplace activities; complete an activity that you have designed specifically for assessment purposes; or complete a series of tasks or activities in a simulated work environment. Technologies are available to provide an opportunity for remote candidates to submit recorded visual evidence of their performance.

The quality test of an observation form is the detailed mapping of the observation form with the unit of competency.

The checklist could include:

- ▶ identification of the candidate
- ▶ assessor details
- ▶ benchmarking criteria (or units of competency)
- ▶ duration of the observation
- ▶ context of the tasks
- ▶ identification of prerequisite competencies
- ▶ work health and safety issues relevant to assessment
- ▶ the specific task or activity to be performed
- ▶ follow-up questions to assess knowledge or clarify understanding
- ▶ the number of assessments to be observed
- ▶ the standard of performance used to judge competence
- ▶ a description of any supplementary evidence that will be required
- ▶ comments for feedback

- ▶ the result/outcome
- ▶ bullet notes for follow up or quality review processes.

Checklists for work samples

Assessors need a method for recording the process that they follow in judging competence based on a work sample. A checklist is suitable for recording this information. Each of the criteria used to evaluate work samples should be mapped to the relevant sections within the unit of competency.

The assessor may require a checklist or samples of completed products to use as a guide in judging competence. These should be provided in the assessment instrument.



The assessment instrument should also instruct the assessor that wherever possible they, or a supervisor, technical expert or subject matter expert, should attempt to observe the candidate's involvement in the process of creating the product.

Recognition portfolios

Portfolios are collections of items of evidence gathered by the candidate that demonstrate their competence in regard to the assessment criteria. Candidates seeking recognition for their existing competence will usually present a portfolio of evidence for the assessor to review. Portfolios are also an effective tool for candidates who are being assessed at higher AQF levels, such as Certificate IV and Diploma. In many cases, candidates at this level are employed in job roles that are relevant to the course they are undertaking and may be able to collate evidence of the application of their learning in their workplace.



Consider whether the candidates are likely to have sufficient scope in their job role to gather sufficient evidence of their competence. You may decide on an assessment process that requires the candidate to provide supplementary evidence by completing a quiz on the knowledge evidence component of the unit of competency, or arranging for a testimonial from their employer about their performance of a specific aspect of competence.

You need to develop very clear guidelines to follow when evaluating the portfolio submitted for assessment. How will assessors know that a specific item satisfies the rules of evidence? How will you ensure that other assessors would interpret and judge the items in the same way? You may address these aspects of reliable assessment by collaborating with relevant stakeholders in developing the rules that you will use to make decisions. You may decide to develop an evidence checklist that you use to record how you have applied the decision-making rules. Look again at the 'Portfolio assessment instrument checklist', template first mentioned in Topic 2.

You need to ensure consistency and reliability in your judgment of the material presented in the portfolio. Tools to judge competence and authenticate evidence may be included in the assessment instrument.

Candidate self-assessment materials

Self-assessment is a process that allows candidates to collect and provide evidence on their own performance against identified units of competency. Self-assessment is often used as a tool to help the assessor and candidate determine what evidence is available and where the gaps may be. The assessor can then decide what assessment method could be used to gather supplementary evidence; further training may need to be undertaken to address the gaps.

Candidate self-assessment is often a component of the evidence gathered in support of an application for RPL.

Self-assessment tools may be available in printed or electronic format to candidates. These are usually in the form of a checklist that identifies each of the aspects of assessment. Ask your trainer for a 'Self-assessment record' template.

For each unit of competency, the candidate should:

- ▶ check their underlying skills and knowledge
- ▶ reflect on their performance of the elements of competency
- ▶ summarise their competencies for the unit
- ▶ record on the checklist specific examples of how they perform each aspect of the work activity.

Assessment instruments for simulations

Develop a scenario for the simulation, and a form or template that may be used to record observations of the candidate's performance in the simulation. It is important that you have a clear understanding of the type of actual workplace you are attempting to simulate in the assessment instrument. You may find it helpful to visit a similar type of organisation or consult with industry representatives to ensure you are authentically replicating current work practices and technology, and organisational culture in the simulation. You may provide scripts for any participants who are required to help create the situation. Plan a series of questions that could be asked during the simulation to gather evidence of the candidate's underpinning knowledge.



Remember to pay careful attention to workplace health and safety when designing assessment instruments using simulations. This is particularly important when the simulation involves young learners or those with LLN issues, and when candidates are required to use plant and equipment.

Also consider whether it is necessary to involve technical experts or subject matter experts in the conduct of the simulation. For example, if the assessment instrument is designed to demonstrate competence for issuance of a licence to operate a forklift in a specific work location, you may advise assessors to arrange for a workplace WHS specialist to observe the simulation in conjunction with a qualified assessor.

Refer to the implementation guide for the BSB Training Package as an example for detailed guidance on the use of simulations for assessment, available at:

- ▶ [http://companion_volumes.vetnet.education.gov.au/CVDocuments/BSBv1%20Business%20Services%20Implementation %20Guide.pdf](http://companion_volumes.vetnet.education.gov.au/CVDocuments/BSBv1%20Business%20Services%20Implementation%20Guide.pdf)

Assessment instruments for role-plays

Role-plays are often the preferred method of assessing competency and gathering evidence in regard to behaviours and interpersonal skills such as communicating with customers, participating in a team meeting or resolving conflict. Online learning technologies are increasingly offering new methods for collecting evidence from distance learners. You may develop an assessment instrument to give candidates the opportunity to upload audio or visual evidence of role-plays they have undertaken in remote locations.



Role-plays need to be as realistic as possible. Useful tools for a role-play include cards with dialogue or scenario and character information. You may also provide an observation checklist for those observing the role-play and a checklist for assessing its effectiveness.

Assessment instruments for third-party evidence

Third-party evidence is a particularly cost effective method of gathering authentic and valid evidence from the candidate's workplace supervisors and peers. In some cases, customers, suppliers or community members may also be able to comment formally on the candidate's performance.

Prepare a form, template or checklist to be used by the third party to ensure that their evidence is clearly mapped to the relevant components of the unit of competency.

You may need to supplement the report with additional evidence such as a quiz that gathers evidence of the application of the knowledge evidence, and observations completed by a qualified assessor. Include a third-party report for candidates who present a portfolio for recognition purposes. Refer to the 'Third-party report' template, used as a part of Topic 2.

Third-party reports can be a problem when they are poorly designed. They need to consider more than just the performance criteria and VET jargon. The person completing the report needs to understand the language. A third-party report also needs to identify the position or qualifications or competence of the supervisor. The person needs to report on what their findings are based on; for example, for how long did they observe the person, how long have worked with them and so on.

Example

Develop specific assessment instruments that support the collection of evidence that meets the rules of evidence

Max has recently joined an RTO that has added to their scope the CUA30415 Certificate III in Live Production and Services from the CUA Creative Arts and Culture Training Package. Max's background is in theatre production and he is looking forward to sharing his experience in set design and staging with learners.

The RTO manager explains to Max that in addition to teaching various units in the Certificate III qualification, Max will be responsible for designing the assessment instrument to be used for the elective unit of competency, *CUASTA201 Develop basic staging skills*.

Max has only recently completed his Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and has therefore asked for assistance in developing the assessment instrument. His RTO manager uses three steps in developing assessment instruments, as described here.

Steps to develop assessment instruments	What Max does
Step 1: Clarify the evidence requirements by thoroughly analysing the unit of competency and visualising a competent person.	Max obtains the unit of competency from training.gov.au. The assessment requirements outline that the candidate provides evidence of their competence by installing flooring and basic set pieces for at least two productions.
Step 2: Choose the most appropriate assessment method.	<p>After reading the unit of competency and assessment requirements Max decides, in conjunction with his more experienced work colleague, on the following assessment methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Direct observation on two occasions of the candidate using appropriate and safe techniques to install staging (Observation) ▶ Inspection/evaluation of staging elements positioned by the candidate (Work sample) ▶ Questioning to assess knowledge of staging terminology, features and uses of different types of equipment and stage geography (Questioning) ▶ Portfolio of evidence gathered in the workplace (Portfolio)
Step 3: Design and develop the assessment instrument.	<p>Max selects the most appropriate instruments that will collect quality evidence, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ an observation checklist ▶ third-party report ▶ portfolio cover sheet (that lists suggested items) ▶ a questionnaire.

Activity 9

Ask your trainer if they have copies of assessment instruments you can view, or they may also have electronic proformas or templates you can use. Use the training organisation's assessment system policies and procedures to confirm the format you are required to use for assessment instruments. Check for a style guide from the policies and procedures for instructions regarding formatting and layout. Ask your trainer for the 'Formatting checklist for assessment instruments' template.

Prepare each of the assessment instruments that are needed for your selected assessment method. You do not need to write the specific instructions for use of the assessment instrument at this stage. Ask your trainer/assessor for feedback on the assessment instruments or arrange for a peer to review them. Make revisions where necessary and retain electronic copies of the assessment instruments for use in the Activity 10.

Print a copy of the draft assessment. In those cases where you are using an electronic portfolio, you should store an electronic copy of the draft instruments as evidence of the development process. Make sure you use a file path that reflects version control protocols and clearly identifies the location of your file.

[Click to complete Activity 9](#)

3B Define and document clear and specific procedures instructing assessor and candidate on the administration and use of assessment instruments

A key feature of a well-written assessment instrument is the quality of the information given to candidates and assessors about how to use the instrument.

Depending on your work situation, you may have developed assessment instruments that will be administered online, in workplaces, published in books or used in group learning environments. They may be used by assessors with minimal experience and candidates who are not familiar with assessment processes. It is crucial that the people using the assessment instruments in their specific context are given all of the instructions they need, so they can interpret how they are meant to administer the assessment instrument and gather quality evidence to make a reliable assessment decision. Workplace supervisors are often forgotten as having an important role in understanding the assessment instructions.

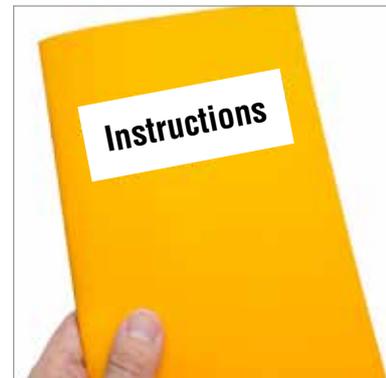


The process of writing instructions for using assessment instruments should be focused on the end-users of the product. This means that although you are required to write instructions that comply with the RTO's VQF/AQTF obligations, your primary focus should be:

'What do I need to do to make sure the assessment instructions are interpreted correctly and understood by the assessor (so they can administer it appropriately) and the candidate, in order for them to have the best possible opportunity to provide evidence of competence?'

Instructions for assessors

Assessors need to know the role of the assessment instrument they are using, how it should be delivered, the resources required for appropriate delivery, WHS requirements and any other factors that impact on their ability to provide the candidate with the opportunity to provide quality evidence.



Identify the resources

Write instructions that clearly explain what resources are needed to conduct the assessment. These may include the relevant training package and the unit of competency; assessment policies and strategies; the assessment instrument (forms, templates, checklists and benchmark solutions) that will be used to judge competence.

Instructions in the assessment tool should identify:

- ▶ equipment
- ▶ technology
- ▶ personal protective equipment (PPE) such as visors or gloves
- ▶ documents
- ▶ forms
- ▶ items the candidate needs immediate access to during assessment
- ▶ support material for candidates with special needs, such as a braille computer/text, audio tape or text in a first language
- ▶ the context, such as workplace or simulation assessment environment.

Instructions for questions

Consider the following when discussing using questions with an assessor.

Provide the following guidance for the assessor when asking questions:

- ▶ Advice for the method that is to be used for questioning (verbal or written)
- ▶ The method to be used for recording responses
- ▶ The number of attempts a candidate may make to answer a question correctly (this must reflect the RTO's assessment policy)
- ▶ Resources the candidate may access while answering questions
- ▶ A list of questions to gather supplementary evidence, particularly in regard to knowledge evidence

Instructions for observation checklists

Consider the following when discussing using observations with an assessor. Check the 'Observation assessment instrument checklist' template mentioned in Topic 2, and confirm the items in the instrument against the following quality indicators.

The following information should be provided to the assessor:

- ▶ A reminder to the assessor to ensure that the candidate receives a copy of the checklist before the observation, and understands what is involved
- ▶ An explanation of the format of the checklist; for example, a detailed list of the evidence criteria for each aspect of performance that is being assessed; boxes indicating 'competent', 'needs more training'. etc.
- ▶ A description of the materials and resources needed for the observation
- ▶ How to complete the observation checklist; for example, tick relevant boxes as they are observing a candidate to indicate competency or whether the candidate needs more experience; add comments about the performance, WHS issues, etc.
- ▶ A paragraph that asks the assessor to clarify arrangements for where the observation will take place (in the candidate's workplace or a simulated environment) and schedule times for the observation
- ▶ A list of questions to gather supplementary evidence (particularly in regard to knowledge evidence)

Instructions for work samples

Clearly specify the evidence criteria to be applied to the work sample. Clarify whether only the final work sample will be assessed or whether the process of creating or producing the work sample is also a component of assessment. In those cases where the assessment method includes assessing the creation or production process, write instruction on how to gather evidence of the process. You may decide that journaling or questioning would be effective. Explain how the work sample will be collected. Explain the need to ensure authenticity, perhaps with a third-party report.



Instructions for a portfolio

Consider the following when discussing using portfolios with an assessor. Refer again to the 'Portfolio assessment instrument checklist' template to confirm the quality of a portfolio instrument.

The instructions you include in a portfolio assessment instrument may include:

- ▶ the types of items that could be collected
- ▶ the need to ensure currency of the evidence; for example, explain the evidence must be no older than five years
- ▶ the need to ensure authenticity; for example, request a third-party report
- ▶ the need to show the linkage between individual portfolio items and the performance evidence and other assessment requirements
- ▶ what to do if the candidate needs to address gaps in competency; for example, the candidate may need to complete gap training or provide further evidence
- ▶ advice on how best to present the information in the portfolio to enhance readability, show the relationship between portfolio items and the unit of competency, and to highlight evidence of foundation skills.

Instructions for simulations and role-plays

Instructions to the candidate for simulations should include clear advice about what is being assessed through the simulation. Identify whether the simulation is to be recorded using technology such as webcams, video or DVD records.

Many candidates report feeling threatened by role-plays and are concerned that their acting skills may undermine their demonstration of competent performance. This can be avoided by asking assessors to provide candidates with the checklist they will use to record evidence during the role-play. The criteria on the checklist should be clearly mapped to the assessment criteria identified in the aspects of the unit of competency.

There are usually additional parties involved in a role-play other than the candidate. Any other participants require instructions and role-play cards with scenario and character information. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to provide an observation checklist for other group members not involved in the role-play exercise. This is useful for their learning as they can be asked to provide feedback to the person being assessed.

Contextualisation guidelines

Explain whether an assessment instrument has been contextualised to reflect the candidate's environment including organisational policies and procedures, personnel and technology.

Variations or restrictions on the tools

Explain if the assessment instrument or assessment method has any specified variations or restriction on the tools.

Variations or restrictions may relate to:

- ▶ the assessment context where they are to be used
- ▶ qualifications that an assessor must hold to administer the tool
- ▶ the amount of support that may be provided to candidates during assessment.

Instructions for reasonable adjustments

Any adjustments to assessment tools are determined by the qualified assessor to reflect the individual characteristics of the candidate. As the developer of the assessment instrument, you are responsible for writing advice to the assessor to guide them in addressing access and equity issues and providing reasonable adjustment to support the candidate when implementing the assessment instrument.

Explain that people with differing needs and abilities must have the same opportunities to successfully gather evidence and demonstrate their competence irrespective of their age, disability, colour, race, gender, religion, sexuality, family responsibilities or location.

Reasonable adjustment

Reasonable adjustment is generally associated with:

- ▶ personal support services, such as providing a reader, Auslan interpreter or scribe
- ▶ assistive technology or special equipment
- ▶ the format of assessment materials; for example, electronic or oral assessment, or braille
- ▶ adjustment of the physical environment.

Explain adjustments

Explain adjustments and where the assessor needs to:

- ▶ provide access to support resources such as braille computers or a scribe
- ▶ provide flexible assessment sessions to allow for breaks to address physical fatigue
- ▶ consider cultural beliefs, traditional practices and religious observances
- ▶ include images and diagrams in instructions
- ▶ ensure that assessment tools do not include stereotypes and do not require specific cultural knowledge for completion.

Instructions for recording and storing materials

You may need to include advice in the assessment instrument that explains how to record the result in the RTO's electronic record system. For example, enter the code 'C' in column 1 where a candidate has demonstrated competence for a specific unit of competency.

Specify whether it is necessary to securely store the materials prior to assessment; for example, when the assessment instrument is to be used to assess units of competency with school students whose results will contribute to their higher school certificate, the assessment instruments may need to be secured prior to assessment and distributed to candidates with appropriate supervision during assessment.

You may be required to include on the assessment instrument a reminder to the assessor as to whether they are to retain the candidate's evidence or return it to them after assessment.

ASQA, state funding bodies and some licensing bodies have different requirements for the retention of assessment records. The RTO should be aware of these guidelines from an organisational level. Refer to the following advice provided by ASQA in relation to the storing and retaining or student assessment records:

- ▶ www.asqa.gov.au/news-and-media/retention-requirements-for-completed-student-assessment-items.html

Verify assessment decisions

The assessment instrument should also include the rules for reviewing the decision-making process and verifying assessment decisions. You may wish to provide written directions and a checklist that the assessor could use to ensure that the collected evidence satisfies the rules of evidence and that the principles of assessment have been met. Ask your trainer for the 'Requirements for making assessment decisions checklist' template.



The assessor must take each piece of evidence and carefully evaluate it to confirm that they can make a reliable judgment of competence according to these criteria.

Competence is about achieving all the requirements of the unit; for example, a 50 or even 80 per cent pass rate on a unit may not be sufficient. It is important to be able to identify the areas that were not competent, especially if they relate to safety, dealing with vulnerable clients or risk management. It is possible that one piece of evidence such as an assignment shows that the candidate is competent but another does not (for example, a third-party report).

The assessor may need a reminder that the candidate should be offered opportunities for reassessment or gap training if they are not competent. In addition, where someone was not able to practise certain skills in the workplace, then they should not be discriminated against for this and the assessor needs to make reasonable adjustments for this without compromising the integrity of their decision-making judgments.

Remind the assessor that they must follow the RTO’s assessment policies and procedures to make the assessment decision. You may be required to develop a marking rubric or benchmark solutions that the assessor may refer to when making their assessment decision.

WHS requirements

Consult with a WHS representative or subject matter expert to ensure that you write correct instructions in the assessment instrument.

WHS aspects in an assessment include the following.

Specific information	<p>Specific WHS information that should be addressed in the instructions to candidates including the identification and reporting of hazards</p> <p>The units of competency include advice about any regulations or licences or specific WHS knowledge that candidates are required to have to demonstrate competence.</p>
Industry characteristics	Any industry characteristics with particular implications for WHS training and assessment such as remote locations, particular hazards or regulations, or workforce characteristics
Issues and hazards	WHS issues and hazards for the industry, including industry characteristics impacting on WHS
Equipment	Equipment required must be checked to ensure it is in good working order with appropriate safety guards attached; the various systems and equipment that will be used during the assessment must be checked to make sure they are in correct working order
PPE	<p>Personal protective equipment (PPE) that is required during assessment: hearing and eye protection, hard hats, gloves, masks, aprons, coats, overalls, etc.</p> <p>You may need to consult with an appropriate workplace supervisor or WHS expert for advice on the correct use of equipment in order to write correct instructions in the assessment instrument</p>
Prerequisites	Prerequisites relevant to WHS performance to ensure pre-training has been conducted
Licences or certificates	Industry operations that require WHS-related licences or certificates; for example, pest control, dangerous goods or asbestos removal
Legal requirements	WHS legal and legislative requirements and duty-of-care obligations
Reporting	Requirements for reporting incidents and hazards associated with the assessment

Emergency procedures

Procedures for responding to any emergencies that may occur during assessment; for example, when the assessment instrument requires the assessor to conduct assessment that uses material, equipment or technology that poses a risk to personal safety, the assessor must identify the procedure for contacting the person who is able to administer first aid

They must also be familiar with the procedures to shut down any equipment/ machinery in an emergency, or if the candidate suffers a medical emergency

Instructions for specific assessment instruments

RTOs usually require assessment instruments to be collated into an 'assessment bank'; a collection of assessment instruments that are available for use by any of their assessors. The various assessors in the RTO will usually check the assessment bank for an appropriate assessment instrument rather than designing a one. Consider how you can give advice to assessors that will help them to identify whether a specific assessment instrument is appropriate for use in a specific context. For example, you may prepare a standard operating procedure that specifies the characteristics of target candidates or locations of assessment that will be met by a specific assessment instrument.



Instructions for candidates

Provide clear, accurate and unambiguous instructions so candidates are able to understand the assessment process and their responsibilities. Consider each of the following items when developing instructions for candidates.

AQF

What is the AQF level of the qualification that is being assessed?

Context

What is the context of assessment?

Location

Where will assessment occur? This will impact on the style and amount of detail that may be required in the instructions.

Support

What support and advice will be available to the candidate when they are interpreting the instructions?

LLN

What are the LLN levels of the candidates? Make sure:

- ▶ any terms used are clearly explained
- ▶ the style of language and tone used is appropriate to the target group; for example, people who speak English as a second language may feel less-threatened when the instructions are less formal and offer as much step-by-step task information as possible.

Learning styles

How can I accommodate the learning style of candidates? Do I need to provide instructions that incorporate aspects of various learning styles? For example, include diagrams or illustrations in your advice to candidates for people who prefer pictorial rather than written instructions.

Special needs

How do I accommodate any special needs that candidates may have in reading and interpreting instructions? You may need specialist assistance when writing instructions for candidates who do not speak English as their first language or who have a disability.

Cultural issues

What cultural issues do I need to consider?

Considerations for instructions

The following table describes the areas that need to be included when writing instructions for candidates.

Area to address	Explanation	Example
Why they are being assessed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explain the reason for the assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ For a qualification; RCC; recruitment; registration or licensing; to identify LLN proficiency
The steps involved in the assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Confirm what will happen during the assessment ▶ Describe the assessment method/s and instrument/s being used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explanation of assessment – what they are required to do and when ▶ Completion of assessment activities ▶ Submission of assessment evidence ▶ Assessment decision ▶ Feedback and reporting
The conditions under which the assessment will be conducted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explain where and when assessment will take place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In the workplace; in a group learning environment; online; in a simulation
How their competence will be judged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Describe the performance measures that will be used to judge competence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide a copy of, or describe, the assessment criteria ▶ The method that will be used to give feedback ▶ How the decision will be reported
Candidate responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Describe what they need to do and when they need to do it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Understand and follow the instructions ▶ Submit evidence on time ▶ Ask the assessor if in doubt about anything ▶ Format that they must use to submit evidence (Word document submitted by email, for example) ▶ Evidence must be authentic (original, referenced, not plagiarised)
Materials and resources required for assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Describe the materials they need access to for the assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Equipment, computer, blank templates, checklists, self-assessment tools, a copy of policies and procedures

Area to address	Explanation	Example
<p>The evidence they are required to submit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Describe the evidence they need to submit ▶ Explain that the evidence must be recent (not be older than five years) ▶ Explain that the evidence must be their own work and that they may need to supply a third-party report to acknowledge this ▶ Explain what to do if they are having difficulty providing sufficient evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide examples and exemplars where appropriate – work samples, journals, answers to questions, checklists, completed forms ▶ Include an extract from the organisation’s policy regarding authenticity of the candidate’s work; describe any software that is used to detect plagiarism and the repercussions for candidates who submit non-original work for assessment ▶ Explain that the assessor may attend their workplace or organise a simulated workplace where they can observe their performance
<p>How to submit the evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explain the format in which they can submit their evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Candidates may collate work samples for assessment into a portfolio ▶ Candidates may be asked to perform a role-play ▶ Candidates may submit their assessment activities online
<p>Support supplied</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explain the support and advice available to the candidate when they are interpreting the instructions ▶ Describe any provisions or reasonable adjustment for people who have special needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Candidates who do not have direct access to an assessor, such as those completing assessment online in a remote community, may require more-detailed instructions ▶ Candidates may need an interpreter, scribe, more time, staggered assessment times, specialised equipment, or the opportunity to respond verbally

Area to address	Explanation	Example
How to follow WHS procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Inform candidates why protective clothing is necessary, and when and how it must be worn ▶ Inform candidates that they must follow WHS procedures when performing tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ If PPE is required ▶ Whether the candidate is required to conduct a hazard inspection ▶ Reporting hazards that arise during assessment ▶ Emergency procedures ▶ Safety instructions for specific pieces of equipment, plant and technology
How they will be informed of the decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The candidate must know that they will receive written confirmation of their results ▶ Provision must be made to incorporate feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The method that will be used to provide feedback ▶ Returned evidence with accompanying form ▶ Student records website
How they can appeal a decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explain the procedures the candidate must follow if they wish to appeal a decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How they appeal against a perceived unsatisfactory result ▶ To whom they can appeal ▶ The time period available for that appeal ▶ The process for repeating the assessment ▶ What happens when they demonstrate competence for only some of the assessment criteria

Recognition of prior learning

Instructions for candidates who apply for recognition of prior learning must be clear and specific so they are easily followed. Written instructions may be augmented by a telephone call or face-to-face interview.

Check that the instructions include:

- ▶ information that will assist the candidate in determining whether they may be eligible for recognition and how to self-assess their skills and knowledge before applying for RPL
- ▶ an explanation of the type of recognition the candidate should consider applying for
- ▶ instructions for the candidate to complete the relevant application document correctly
- ▶ a range of assessment methodologies to meet their individual needs
- ▶ the criteria for the qualification
- ▶ a recommendation that the candidate meets with an assessor to discuss their application
- ▶ clear instructions for the gathering of quality evidence
- ▶ evidence required, such as recent work samples (for example, not less than five years old), journals, certificates, awards, third-party testimonials, and answers to questions
- ▶ how to submit the evidence
- ▶ a mechanism for providing meaningful feedback.

Example

Define and document clear and specific procedures instructing assessor and candidate on the administration and use of assessment instruments

The following example identifies the instructions you need to include when developing a range of quality assessment tools.

Assessment instrument	Quality criteria
Project	<p>Check that instructions regarding WHS, project scope, final report, consultation and referencing are accurate and clear</p> <p>Check that reasonable adjustment has been provided</p>
Presentations	Candidates require accurate information about the duration of their presentation, timing (when is it to be delivered), WHS, availability of technology and the content of their presentation
Activity sheets	Instructions must be clear, logical and accurate; consider the AQF level of the person completing the activity sheet; diagrams and illustrations may be appropriate
Questioning	Instructions must be explicit, accurate and precise; it is particularly important to trial multiple choice and true/false questions to ensure they are worded appropriately, accurately and unambiguously
Case studies	The information contained in the case study must be accurate and appropriately referenced (where necessary); it is important that candidates do not become distracted from the purpose of assessment by inaccuracies contained in the detail of the case study scenario
Third-party reports	<p>Instructions need to provide examples of the types of feedback and comments you require</p> <p>The person completing the report may not have had any experience in this type of report and they may not understand the tone of the language required; for example, may comment on the candidate's personality rather than their competence</p>

Activity 10

Write procedures to instruct assessors and candidates on the administration and use of the assessment instrument. Use the electronic draft version of the assessment instruments that you developed in Activity 9.

Ensure you have included the following aspects in your instructions to the assessor and the candidate where appropriate:

- ▶ How the assessment will be carried out
- ▶ Resources needed for assessment
- ▶ Context for use
- ▶ Guidance for reasonable adjustment
- ▶ Any specified variations or restrictions on use of the tool
- ▶ Information relevant to the decision-making process
- ▶ WHS requirements
- ▶ Access and equity considerations
- ▶ Rules for verifying assessment decisions
- ▶ Assessment reporting
- ▶ Appeals

Check the training organisation's style guide for information to help you format the instructions correctly. You may find there is a form or template to use.

Arrange for your trainer/assessor or a peer to review your draft procedures and give you feedback. Once you have made necessary revisions, save either a printed or electronic version for evidence of your development of skills in the design of assessment tools.

[Click to complete Activity 10](#)

3C Consider the requirements of assessment system policies and procedures, and address storage and retrieval needs, and review, evaluation and version control procedures as part of this process

Training organisations develop sophisticated systems for storing, retrieving, reviewing and evaluating assessment tools to ensure they comply with their VQF/AQTF obligations and for quality management purposes.

As part of the assessment tool development phase, you need to carefully consider the requirements of the training organisation's assessment system policies and procedures so assessment methods and instruments comply with requirements and can easily be accessed for use and review.



Assessment policies and procedures

To comply with VQF/AQTF requirements, RTO managers must develop a training and assessment strategy for the programs they deliver that accords with the need of their learners, current industry requirements and the requirements of the training packages in their scope.

As part of their obligations they need to have a secure system for documenting and storing the assessment information they collect according to VQF/AQTF audit requirements as well as having provision to review and evaluate the system.

Workplaces that employ apprentices and trainees have specific obligations that must be met for maintaining records of assessment.

An assessment policy underpins quality assessment by the RTO. It provides a framework of terminology, rights, responsibilities, obligations and objectives. For example, RTOs must implement continuous improvement processes that include the validation of all assessments by a panel of stakeholders. This ensures that an RTO's assessment system and individual assessment instruments are VQF/AQTF compliant and satisfy the rules of evidence and principles of assessment.

The assessment policy must be readily available to employees of the RTO and should be regularly reviewed and revised when necessary as part of the organisation's continuous improvement system. While individual RTOs are empowered to develop and implement assessment policies that address their specific operational requirements, it is essential that assessment policies are also designed to satisfy VQF/AQTF obligations.

Assessment information management

The training organisation's assessment policy must describe the actions the organisation will implement to manage candidate records in regard to assessment. It is crucial that you reflect these policies in the instrument component of assessment tools so assessors know how to document and store records of their assessment decision.

Assessment records must include:

- ▶ candidate results including records of their personal details, date of enrolment and results of assessment; there should be a form on the electronic record system where you enter these details
- ▶ qualifications and statements of attainment awarded
- ▶ assessment resources (including templates, questionnaires, checklists, summary sheets and records of feedback)
- ▶ assessment tools
- ▶ validation tools
- ▶ evidence of industry input.

Version control

Version control refers to the process used in organisations to manage their files and records to ensure users are able to identify the currency of the file or record.

Version control can be used to track the changes that occur to a document and record its distribution throughout the document's development, implementation and subsequent revision/s. You may find that you are required to store copies of each draft of the assessment tool, records of consultation and planning documents in the training organisation's continuous improvement or knowledge management system. Make sure you follow the procedure to name a file or records so they are easy to access at a later date; this should be detailed in the RTO's workplace procedures.



You also need to be familiar with the version control procedure adopted in your workplace to ensure you have correctly stored the various draft and final versions of any assessment instruments or documentation used in assessment activities. Those responsible for quality management and continuous improvement may need to approve amendments to documents such as proformas, templates and checklists.

Recognition processes and procedures

Training organisations must provide for recognition of prior learning (RPL) or recognition of current competency (RCC) in their assessment system. Training organisations are also required to recognise qualifications that candidates have achieved under the AQF from other training organisations. The training organisation will ask the candidate for evidence such as a student transcript to identify those units of competency the candidate should receive credit for. Check the RTO's assessment system for policies and procedures relevant to recognition of both previous learning and current competence.

Here is some more information about RPL processes and procedures.

Procedures

- ▶ Confirm the procedure for candidates to:
 - match their previous training, work or life experience with the knowledge evidence and performance evidence outlined in a qualification RPL
 - apply for credit transfer for units of competency that have been successfully completed at the same RTO.

Policies

- ▶ The assessment policy should describe the RTO's approach to:
 - allocating responsibility for activities related to RPL and credit transfer
 - informing candidates of the opportunity to apply for RPL or credit transfer
 - gathering relevant evidence to support a candidate's claim for RPL or credit transfer
 - verifying and judging the evidence.

Reflect policies in assessment instruments

- ▶ Check the RTO's policies for maintaining appropriate records of RPL assessment. For example, you need to determine whether the RTO retains the evidence in the portfolio submitted by an RPL candidate or returns it to the candidate following the assessment decision.

Feedback

- ▶ The assessment instrument should include a mechanism for providing feedback to the candidate and advice of the assessment decision.

Assessor requirements

The training and assessment competencies to be held by trainers and assessors are outlined under the VQF Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, Standard 1. This Standard specifies the Certificate IV competencies that are relevant to assessors. Refer to the specific unit of competency for assessor requirements.

Assessors must also be able to demonstrate vocational competencies, at least to the level of those being delivered. This means that a person assessing a candidate for a Certificate IV qualification must hold relevant vocational competencies at least at AQF level 4. Vocational competency is defined as broad industry knowledge and experience, usually combined with a relevant industry qualification. A person who has vocational competency will be familiar with the content of the vocation and will have relevant current experience in the industry. Check the relevant training package, the unit of competency and the RTO assessment system to confirm the vocational competency that is relevant to the assessment instrument you are developing.



Discuss with the training organisation manager whether they require you to specify the assessor qualification requirements in the assessment tool. You should be aware that the training organisation's policies will also describe the professional development activities that assessors are required to undertake to support continuous improvements in delivery of the RTO's services. This could involve, for example, participating in a 'return to industry' program to maintain currency of competence. It is unlikely that you would be required to incorporate this type of information in the assessment instrument.

Assessment reporting procedures

Check the RTO's assessment system for information on assessment reporting procedures. You need to provide relevant information in the instructions in the assessment tool. The various assessment instruments that you develop should include an area where the assessor may record feedback and where the candidate acknowledges that they have received feedback. You can expect that you will need to allocate an area on a summative assessment tool where the assessor may record the assessment decision. In some cases, training organisations will develop a separate form or template that summarises the various components of assessment and records the final assessment decision.

Check whether you are required to retain the candidate's evidence or return it to them after assessment. You may also be asked to prepare a proforma that is attached to candidates' stored evidence that identifies the qualification or unit of competency assessed, the period of assessment (for example, Semester 1, 2010) and a disposal date.

An assessment policy should explain how to:

- ▶ provide feedback on assessment
- ▶ record the assessment outcome
- ▶ maintain records of the assessment procedure, evidence collected and outcome
- ▶ maintain confidentiality and privacy.

Costs and resourcing

Source information from the training organisation's assessment system regarding the budget that is available for the design and development of assessment tools. The budget will impact on resources such as time, personnel and software that are able to be used in the design and development process.

Confirm with relevant stakeholders and the training organisation's policies and procedures the budget for conducting assessment activities; for example, wages and salaries for assessors, premises, and transport, materials, insurance, utilities, technology, communication and professional development.

The budget will influence the assessment methods you select; for example, the training organisation may not have funds available to resource a simulated work environment for assessment. You may need to find an alternative assessment method such as forming a relationship with an appropriate local business that will allow assessment to be conducted on their premises.



Planning is important in ensuring cost-effectiveness. For example, an assessor may communicate with a candidate before they go out to the workplace to make sure they are able to observe what they need to observe on the day. They also may be able to arrange to combine assessment for different units in the one visit.

Human resources or industrial relations systems

Training packages often suggest that candidates be assessed performing activities that reflect authentic work practices. Authenticity requires that work is performed in accordance with the various human resources and industrial relations systems implemented in workplaces. These policies and procedures establish the workers' employment conditions, role, responsibilities and entitlements. For example, assessment of trainees and apprentices must comply with human resources policies and procedures in regard to coaching and mentoring, record keeping and assessing workers' job performance.



Your contribution to assessment processes must comply with the industrial relations systems and processes, awards and enterprise agreements that operate in the assessment environment. Consider the impact of these pieces of legislation, awards, workplace agreements and individual contracts when designing assessment; for example, when designing assessment instruments that must be conducted outside of regular business hours in a specialised environment, you need to be aware of the potential cost to the training organisation, the candidate and their employer.

All workplaces must comply with anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation. This means that the assessment tools and instruments you develop must not discriminate against anyone on the basis of their gender, age, religion, ethnicity, family situation or sexual preference.

The RTO's assessment system will be designed to promote equitable access to learning and assessment opportunities. Aim to promote cultural inclusivity in your assessment tools and instrument in order to support candidates in the assessment process.

Access and equity

Providing reasonable adjustment for learners is based on legislative and regulatory requirements, as well as on the policies of the organisation providing vocational education and training. The assessment process should not prevent any person from demonstrating their competence, skills or knowledge because the design of the assessment failed to take their individual requirements into account. Refer to section 3B of this learner guide for detailed information on providing reasonable adjustment information in assessment instruments.



Partnership arrangements

An RTO may enter into a formal collaborative assessment arrangement with other RTOs. This collaborative arrangement enables the partners to share resources, effort, time, costs, expertise and responsibility for assessment.

You need to understand the various partnership policies and arrangements or collaborative arrangements that the RTO is a party to as the partners will influence the assessment instruments you develop. You may need to gather additional information about the assessment policies the partner implements, and to consult with the assessment partners in the design phase and involve the partners in the trial and review of the assessment tool. The Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 outline details about the requirements for RTOs in terms of partnerships.

Note that the RTO remains the responsible body for issuing the qualification and ensuring the quality of assessment.

Partnerships with an enterprise or industry organisation may be formed to:

- ▶ help its partner to understand competency-based training
- ▶ identify how training and assessment can help them to achieve their objectives, and provide skills to the workforce
- ▶ act as a conduit that shares information about the needs of industry and organisations with stakeholders involved in training and assessment, and offer specialist advice and support in managing training and assessment records and recognition processes.

Candidate grievances and complaints

The Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 outline (in Standard 6) that RTOs must have a transparent complaints and appeals policy. Candidates must be confident that any grievances they have about the assessment procedure will be dealt with promptly and fairly by the relevant authorities.

Complaints may come from learners and other clients, industry, licensing bodies or other stakeholders and relate to complaints or candidate problems in regard to training and assessment products, outcomes, services, a particular RTO staff member or with the assessment approach itself.

Confirm with the RTO manager the assessment system, policies and procedures, and whether you are required to include information about complaints and grievances in the assessment instrument. It is more likely that this information is included in the student handbook or enrolment pack.

The assessment tool may include advice to assessors regarding the storage and accessing of evidence and assessment tools and instruments as part of the procedures the RTO uses to resolve complaints and grievances.

RTO policies and procedures set out the approach the managers take responding to grievances and complaints and form an important component of the organisation's continuous improvement and quality management system. A grievance or complaint may lead to an assessment appeal.

The complaints and grievance policy will usually identify the:

- ▶ process used to record complaints and grievances
- ▶ role and responsibilities of RTO staff in responding to complaints and grievances
- ▶ process used to respond to complaints and grievances
- ▶ external review procedures.

Assessment appeals

Confirm whether the RTO's assessment policy requires that information regarding an appeal of the assessment result be included in the assessment instrument.

Policies and procedures may include information on:

- ▶ how a candidate can appeal against a perceived unsatisfactory result
- ▶ who they can appeal to
- ▶ the time period available for that appeal
- ▶ the process for repeating the assessment
- ▶ what happens when they demonstrate competence for only some of the aspects of assessment.

Quality assurance

RTO managers must implement a quality assurance system that includes processes designed to help achieve comparability of standards. There are three major components to quality management of assessments: quality assurance, quality control and quality review. In Topic 4 of this learner guide, you will examine in detail the processes that are involved in reviewing and evaluating assessment tools and instruments. These concepts are also covered in detail in the unit *TAEASS403 Participate in assessment validation*.

You should be aware that training organisations undertake internal audits as part of their compliance program and to ensure the quality of the assessment system. Assessment tools and instruments are included in internal audit processes as they pose a potentially high risk in regard to compliance. The evaluation processes that are described in Topic 4 and the RTO's assessment validation system should help to ensure that the assessment tools and instruments you develop satisfy the performance benchmarks and standards used in the internal audit.

Validation



Assessment validation is a key component of a training organisation's quality management and continuous improvement systems. It requires assessors to systematically check that the assessment system, tools and methods used by the organisation produce valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence to enable reasonable judgments to be made. Assessors should also evaluate whether the requirements of the relevant aspects of the training package or accredited course have been met.

Validation is also the process that an RTO uses to ensure that their assessment system complies with quality standards as outlined in Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), and that the assessment methods they use to gather evidence are consistent with the requirements of the unit/s of competency and of the industry.

The various assessment tools and instruments you develop require validation. Confirm with the RTO manager or compliance manager the procedure for ensuring that assessment tools and instruments are made available for validation. You should also familiarise yourself with the range of documents (such as templates and checklists) and evaluation criteria that will be used for validation. They will be useful tools for reviewing and trialling the assessment tool.

Ask your assessor for a copy of the Validation documents/templates that come with the Trainer's and assessor's guide accompanying this unit.

Example

Consider the requirements of assessment system policies and procedures, and address storage and retrieval needs, and review, evaluation and version control procedures as part of this process

Franco and Rebecca have developed a bank of assessment tools that will be used by their RTO to assess students undertaking the AHC33316 Certificate III in Feedlot Operations.

Their colleague, Ashkan, has also developed some assessment tools. Franco and Rebecca are concentrating on the assessment tools for the units that learners must complete for WHS.

It is essential that the completed assessment tools are stored in accordance with the RTO's assessment system policies and procedures. The assessment team needs to be able to access and clearly identify the current version of the assessment tools.

Franco and Rebecca discuss the information in the RTO's policies and procedures and agree that they need to take the following actions:

1. Store a master copy of each assessment tool electronically on the shared drive of the RTO's computer system.
2. Store each assessment tool with a file name that indicates the version number; for example, AHCWHS301 Assessment tool version 1 Date.
3. Store the current version of the assessment tool as a 'Read only' file. Only the RTO compliance manager or RTO manager will be authorised to modify the assessment tool.
4. Securely store the master copy of the assessment tool (including assessment instruments, instructions, model answers and benchmarking criteria) for seven years.
5. Retain all draft versions of the assessment tool that were circulated for feedback on the shared drive in the continuous improvement folder.
6. Quality review all assessment tools using the RTO's assessment validation procedures prior to implementation. Store records of validations in accordance with relevant workplace procedures.
7. Retain hard copies of records of consultation and external review undertaken by an industry expert during the design and development of assessment tools in the quality management system file.
8. Retain hard copies of outcomes of assessment tool trial procedures in the quality management system file.
9. Retain validation documentation conducted by representatives of the RTO and external, independent industry representatives.



Activity 11

Describe how your completed assessment tool will be stored by the training organisation. Follow the instructions of your trainer/assessor for keeping these as your own examples of evidence of your learning.

1. Provide an example of the file naming convention that will be used to store an electronic version of the assessment tool.

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2. Why might it be necessary for you to store copies of draft versions of assessment tools and evidence of the design and development processes that you undertook?

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3. How does a training organisation ensure the security of assessment tools?

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4. Which people in the training organisation have access to assessment tools?

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5. How will the assessment instrument be evaluated both before and after implementation?

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6. Summarise the training organisation's version control methods.

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Click to complete Activity 11

Summary

1. RTO managers are charged with the responsibility for using a quality management approach to develop assessment instruments that gather evidence to allow a judgment to be made regarding a candidate's competence.
2. Assessors must develop appropriate assessment instruments that will reliably collect the evidence outlined in units of competency or course curricula. These include:
 - templates and proformas that clearly articulate the evidence that must be collected using language that those conducting the assessment and candidates will understand
 - questions that effectively gather evidence, particularly of underpinning knowledge
 - observation that may be conducted on or off the job; the quality test of an observation form is the detailed mapping of the observation form with the unit of competency
 - portfolios that present items of evidence collected by the candidate that demonstrates their competence in regard to the assessment criteria
 - self-assessment checklists that allow candidates to collect and provide evidence of their own performance against identified units of competency.
3. Assessors need a method for recording the process they follow when judging competence based on the work sample.
4. The individual needs of the candidate must be considered when selecting methods and instruments to gather evidence. This is called reasonable adjustment and it means choosing alternative assessment methods or tools to meet the individual needs and characteristics of candidates.
5. A key feature of a well-written assessment instrument is the quality of the information given to candidates, assessors and workplace personnel about how to use the instrument.
6. Consider how you can give advice to assessors that will help them to identify whether a specific assessment instrument is appropriate for use in a specific context.
7. Assessment instruments must contain clear, accurate and unambiguous instructions so candidates are able to understand the assessment process and their responsibilities.
8. Training organisations develop sophisticated systems for storing, retrieving, reviewing and evaluating assessment tools to ensure they comply with their AQTF obligations and for quality management purposes.



Topic 4

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 4A Check draft assessment tools against evaluation criteria and amend as required**

- 4B Trial assessment tools to validate content and applicability**

- 4C Collect and document feedback from relevant people involved in trialling**

- 4D Make amendments to the final tool based on the analysis of feedback**

- 4E Appropriately format, and file, finalised assessment tool according to assessment system policies and procedures**

Review and trial the assessment tool

It is essential that the draft assessment tool is trialled with a sample of assessment candidates and assessors and reviewed by other relevant stakeholders. This ensures that the assessment instructions can be interpreted accurately and that the assessment tool meets the principles of assessment and rules of evidence.

The assessment trial must be conducted in accordance with the training organisation's policies and procedures. Your goal will be to implement a trial that will maximise the amount of quality feedback you can gather so you have an opportunity to strengthen the assessment tool prior to its implementation.

You will need to use your knowledge of evaluation methodologies, and research and evaluation skills to evaluate assessment tools on the basis of trials and feedback.

4A Check draft assessment tools against evaluation criteria and amend as required

Before sending the assessment tools to trial, you need to check the draft tools against specific evaluation criteria and amend as required.

To successfully review and evaluate the assessment tools you need to understand evaluation methodologies and develop your analysis and interpretation skills. This will come with practice and by asking experienced practitioners for advice.

You may decide to involve other qualified assessors in this preliminary review stage. Refer to the original planning tool from previous topics you used to develop the assessment tool so you can evaluate how effectively you have satisfied the client's brief and the quality standards for assessment.



Use evaluation criteria

Check the draft assessment tool/s you have developed against the criteria discussed in this chapter. Your organisation may have developed a checklist for this purpose. If a checklist is not currently available, consider developing an appropriate form yourself. The information in this section will be helpful in determining the criteria to include in your checklist.

Check effectiveness and relevance

During the time that you have been working on developing the assessment tool for a specific unit of competency, you should have acquired a deeper understanding of the evidence requirements of the unit.

The document that you prepared to link these components to the various aspects of the assessment instrument will be useful in evaluating the effectiveness and relevance of the assessment tool to the unit of competency. Remember that mapping activities, particularly in regard to foundation skills, are subjective and you would benefit from the input of other qualified assessors in checking the mapping is completed thoroughly.

Check also that you are confident that the assessment tool satisfies the VQF Standards/AQTF Standards for Assessment, by gathering evidence of the various components of the unit.

Components of a UOC include:

- ▶ foundation skills
- ▶ dimensions of competency
- ▶ elements and performance criteria
- ▶ knowledge evidence
- ▶ performance evidence
- ▶ assessment conditions.

Align to a unit of competency

The following is an example of a checklist you could use to evaluate the alignment of the assessment tool to the unit of competency.

Evaluation criteria	Yes	No	Comments/action
1. Does the assessment tool clearly identify the unit/s of competency from the endorsed training package to which it relates?			
2. Does the assessment tool address all aspects of the unit of competency such as the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ elements and performance criteria ▶ knowledge evidence ▶ foundation skills ▶ performance evidence ▶ assessment conditions? 			
3. Does the assessment tool reflect industry characteristics through use of appropriate industry terminology?			
4. Do the assessment instruments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. reflect the dimensions of competency by reflecting realistic working conditions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - task skills - task management skills - contingency management skills - job/role environment skills? b. reflect the rules of evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - valid - sufficient - current - authentic? 			
5. Does the contextualisation of elements maintain the integrity of the unit of competency?			

Check the appropriateness of the assessment tool to assessment methods

Reconfirm that the assessment tool includes an assessment instrument and instructions that are appropriate to the assessment method you have selected and that will provide opportunities to obtain the best evidence.

The following table lists the various assessment methods that were examined earlier, with some questions you could use to evaluate the appropriateness of the assessment tool. Ask your trainer for the 'Evaluating assessment tools to assessment methods' template, which has additional questions and space for comments consistent with the table provided here.

Assessment methods	Your evaluation
Real work/real-time activities at the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Are the resources that are required for assessment clearly described? ▶ Does the assessment tool include appropriate instruments to gather evidence in the workplace, such as third-party reports and observation checklists?
Work activities in a simulated workplace environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Does the assessment tool include appropriate instruments to gather evidence in the workplace (third-party reports and observation checklists, for example)? ▶ Have access and equity requirements been addressed?
Role-plays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How will the candidate provide evidence of the knowledge; evidence for example, have a list of questions been developed? ▶ Do the instructions to candidates clearly describe the criteria that will be used to judge performance in the role-play?
Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Are sufficient instructions provided to support candidates in undertaking a project that will gather quality evidence? ▶ Do the instructions to candidates clearly describe the criteria that will be used to judge the evidence provided by the completed project?
Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Do the instructions to candidates clearly describe the criteria that will be used to judge the evidence provided by the presentation? ▶ How does the assessment tool gather evidence of the performance evidence and knowledge evidence; for example, is a questionnaire used to gather supplementary knowledge?
Activity sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How does the assessment tool gather evidence of the required skills? ▶ Is the activity sheet clear and easy to follow?
Questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Does the assessment instrument reflect appropriate language, literacy and numeracy levels? ▶ Is the format of the questions (for example, multi-choice, short answer, true/false) appropriate to the context of assessment?

Assessment methods	Your evaluation
Portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Are the suggested items for the portfolio clearly mapped to the unit of competency and performance evidence requirements? ▶ Is the candidate given clear instructions to ensure that they satisfy the rules of evidence; for example, are they told how to have their evidence authenticated?
Journal or logbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Are the instructions for recording information in the journal or logbook clear and easy to follow? ▶ Have benchmarking criteria been developed for assessors to judge the evidence provided in the journal?
Review of products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Are assessment instruments such as self-assessment checklists, third-party reports and observation checklists provided? ▶ Is the candidate given clear indicators for judgment of the work products?

Check the appropriateness of the tool to the target group and assessment context

Check that the assessment method/s are appropriate to the characteristics of the target group and the context assessment.

This includes confirming:

- ▶ the profile of the target group
- ▶ assessment instruments are appropriate to the target group and satisfy the principles of assessment
- ▶ the language used is appropriate
- ▶ instructions are clear and in plain English
- ▶ whether provision has been made for reasonable adjustment
- ▶ that the tool provides the most effective strategy for gathering quality evidence in the specific context, such as online assessment; RPL assessment; for workplace trainees and apprentices; and classroom-based learners.

Assessment tools for target groups

The following table summarises the key attributes of effective assessment tools for various target groups.

Target group	Appropriateness of assessment tool to target group and context
Workplace trainees and apprentices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Instructions are clear and easy to follow ▶ Journal or logbook available ▶ Advice provided for workplace supervisor ▶ Advice provided for scheduling of assessment activities ▶ Promotes WHS including use of PPE ▶ Instructions for access to specialist support
RPL candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Portfolio instructions are clear and easy to follow ▶ Exemplars provided where appropriate ▶ Instructions provided for seeking advice from assessors where gaps in competence are identified ▶ Range of assessment instruments developed (portfolios, observation checklists, third-party reports, self-assessment) ▶ Questionnaires and interview questions are available ▶ Performance requirements are clearly identified ▶ Instructions to satisfy rules of evidence are provided
Workplace candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Instructions are clear and easy to follow ▶ WHS information is provided ▶ Instructions are provided for other parties contributing to assessment (such as workplace supervisors or technical experts) ▶ Range of assessment instruments developed (portfolios, observation checklists, third-party reports, self-assessment) ▶ Questionnaires and interview questions available ▶ Performance evidence is clearly identified ▶ Instructions to satisfy rules of evidence are provided
International students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Content of the assessment tool is able to be contextualised to the candidate's environment ▶ Simulations, case studies and role-plays are free of stereotypes and are culturally appropriate ▶ LLN issues have been considered ▶ Diagrams and illustrations have been used appropriately and are culturally appropriate

Target group	Appropriateness of assessment tool to target group and context
Online students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Instructions are provided in regard to authenticity of the candidate's evidence ▶ Technology and resource requirements are specified ▶ Appropriate methods are suggested for submitted evidence to comply with the organisation's privacy policies ▶ A mechanism for providing for feedback is included ▶ Content of the assessment is suitable for formatting using the technology available to the RTO; for example, the assessment instrument is developed using software compatible with the RTO's learning management system (LMS)
Classroom-based students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Group assessment activities have been used where appropriate ▶ Scheduling of summative assessment reflects the RTO's student calendar ▶ Resources and materials required are clearly identified ▶ Instructions for a simulated work environment are provided where necessary ▶ Materials for use by candidates to complete written tasks are provided where necessary (for example, quizzes or formal examinations) ▶ Individual special needs of group learners are addressed by appropriate reasonable adjustment ▶ Advice is provided regarding the use of additional personnel (for example, an education consultant to support special needs or team teacher)

Check language and literacy

You may wish to seek the advice of a person who has expertise in the area of language and literacy as you conduct a review of the draft assessment tool. Their input would be particularly helpful when the assessment tool is designed for use in lower level AQF qualifications. Your primary concern is to ensure that the assessment tool requires the candidate to demonstrate competence using a level of language and literacy that is appropriate in their job role in a workplace.

Evaluate whether the instructions given to candidates are clear, free of jargon and easy to understand. Critically review the instructions to confirm that they are written in plain English and are supported by appropriate diagrams and checklists where relevant.

Evaluate whether you have used appropriate language and literacy in the instructions you have written to assessors. Although qualified assessors will be proficient in written and spoken English, they still require the assessment instructions to be free of jargon and highly technical language.

The assessment instructions must be able to be clearly interpreted by people who do not have a training and education qualification. For example, people including workplace supervisors, technical experts and subject matter experts may also conduct assessment under the supervision of a qualified assessor.

You may develop a checklist using the following evaluation criteria to determine the appropriateness of language and literacy for a range of candidates.

Evaluation criteria

- ▶ Variety of learners – does the assessment tool accommodate Indigenous, disabled, rural or isolated learners?
- ▶ Diversity – does the assessment tool accommodate cultural diversity?
- ▶ Avoid stereotypes – does the assessment tool challenge stereotypes of gender, ethnicity and disability?
- ▶ AQF level – are the LLN requirements appropriate for the workplace and the AQF level of the qualification?

Amend the draft assessment tools

Use the information you have gathered in your review to amend the draft assessment tools. Remember to comply with your organisation's file management system in naming and storing various drafts of the assessment tool. It is important that you are able to easily find the final version of the assessment tool for trial prior to implementation.

Review any changes you have made against the original checklist or evaluation criteria to ensure you are satisfied that you have adequately addressed any issues or weaknesses that were identified.

Example

Check draft assessment tools against evaluation criteria and amend as required

The process of developing a range of assessment tools for use with the FNS Financial Services Training Package is challenging for the staff at Macquarie Training Group.

After the development team has spent a lot of time preparing an assessment tool that includes assessment instruments, information and instructions for the candidate and assessors, they feel they may have lost focus.



The Quality Manager at Macquarie Training Group organises for a team meeting where the developers revisit the information they have gathered during the design phase. The team uses this information to prepare an evaluation checklist that reflects the requirements of the RTO's assessment strategy and the assessment plan that relates to the conduct of assessment for financial services qualifications.

The team then arranges a meeting where they carefully review the draft assessment tool to ensure that the assessment instruments and instructions satisfy the principles of assessment and will collect evidence to meet the rules of evidence.

In a few cases they find that they have not addressed final revisions that had been made to several of the assessment conditions in some of the units of competency.

Appropriate changes are made to the draft assessment tools. They are now ready to proceed to a formal trial.

4B Trial assessment tools to validate content and applicability

Trialling assessment tools is a key component of a training organisation's quality management and continuous improvement systems.

Confirm your responsibilities in the trial process. There may be constraints on the cost, time and resources available for trialling. Your goal will be to implement or assist in the implementation of a trial that will maximise the amount of quality feedback you can gather so you will have an opportunity to strengthen the assessment tool prior to its implementation.



The purpose of trialling

Trialling is carried out prior to implementation. It involves systematically checking the proposed assessment methods, instruments and instructions to ensure they are applicable to the target group and are likely to gather valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence to enable reasonable judgments to be made. The trial should also evaluate whether the requirements of the relevant aspects of the training package or accredited course have been met.

The assessment trial process should also evaluate the material and advice that is given to assessors to support them in judging competence. This could take the form of benchmark solutions, model answers and samples of products or work practices that demonstrate competent performance or marking rubrics.

Trialling the draft assessment tool is an example of a risk-management approach as it may also identify potential risks that may lead to non-compliance with the RTO's VQF/AQTF obligations.

Trials need to gather data to evaluate whether the assessment tool is:

- ▶ cost-effective to implement
- ▶ engaging and interesting to potential candidates
- ▶ able to produce evidence that will satisfy the rules of evidence and address the purpose of assessment identified in the assessment plan
- ▶ appropriate to the characteristics of potential candidates
- ▶ equitable and inclusive
- ▶ able to be reported using descriptors that are relevant to key stakeholders.

Plan the trial

The trial process that you implement must comply with the training organisation’s policies and procedures.

Determine the following aspects when planning a trial:

- ▶ Who will be responsible for coordinating the process?
- ▶ Who will be the sample candidates and assessors?
- ▶ What criteria will you use as a benchmark?
- ▶ What materials will you need?
- ▶ How will information about the trial be disseminated to participants?
- ▶ How will the data be gathered?
- ▶ How will the data be recorded?
- ▶ How will outcomes be reported?
- ▶ How will revisions be made and who will make them?
- ▶ Who will be responsible for coordinating the process?

Identify trial personnel

The trial of assessment tools is a collaborative process, although someone will be appointed as the overall coordinator of the trial.

The discussion that takes place during the trial ensures that various stakeholders agree on the interpretation of the unit of competency, the evidence requirements and the benchmarking criteria to ensure consistency. In some cases the performance evidence and specific assessment requirements may be interpreted differently by a range of assessors.

The following table outlines the parties you should consider involving in a trial. Your workplace policies and procedures may also contain information on this topic.

Participants	Rationale
Industry and enterprise representatives	<p>Assessment methods must be relevant to the needs of industry and enterprises. Assessors and product developers must maintain partnerships with stakeholders who can provide advice on workforce skills, how competence ‘looks’ in the workplace; and trends, influences and innovations that impact on their industry or individual enterprises.</p> <p>These stakeholders can review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ the clarity of the instrument ▶ content accuracy (this is particularly important where specialist information in regard to equipment, technology, legislation and quality standards, for example, are referred to in the instrument) ▶ risks related to compliance and WHS (in those cases where assessment is to be conducted in the workplace, this group of experts may help you to identify potential hazards and related risks that need to be controlled) ▶ relevance ▶ mapping to the unit of competency ▶ appropriateness to the industry and workplace culture.

Participants	Rationale
Assessors	Involve several assessors in the trial process to demonstrate that the assessment tool will be used reliably by other assessors. Participation in this type of activity should be considered part of the ongoing professional development of assessors and may form evidence in a quality audit of the RTO's continuous improvement processes.
Pilot group	Assemble a pilot group that has similar characteristics to the target group. These similarities could relate to LLN levels, education, socioeconomic background and work experience. For example, it would be inappropriate to trial an instrument that is designed for summative assessment of Certificate II level competencies with a group of Diploma learners.
Previous candidates	Candidates who have used an assessment instrument previously will be able to provide valuable feedback, particularly in regard to the instructions to candidates.
RTO managers	If the assessment tool poses a high risk to the RTO, consider involving members of the RTO management team in the trial. For example, RTO managers who have added new units of competency to their scope would usually trial the assessment instruments prior to using them with candidates to confirm that they satisfy the rules and principles of assessment.
Technical or subject matter experts	<p>Involve technical or subject matter experts in the trial to confirm that the instructions (including those for projects, simulations and role-plays) are accurate and authentically reflect current work practices and standard operating procedures. These experts should also trial the use of observation checklists and third-party reports.</p> <p>A WHS expert will be able to confirm whether the safety advice, such as that given for the use of PPE, is adequate.</p>
LLN specialist	Check whether the training organisation has a relationship with an LLN specialist who can use their expertise to confirm whether the assessment tool supports the training organisation's access and equity policies by using language that is appropriate to the target group and AQF level of the qualification. They can confirm that completion of the various assessment activities requires an appropriate level of literacy for candidates attempting assessment.

Confirm responsibilities for a trial

Stakeholders have various responsibilities. Most importantly, they must know the areas they should respond to when participating in a trial. Participants will be required to complete the following tasks and have an understanding of the following topics.

AQF level

Understand the AQF level of the person performing the role.

Interpret the UOC

Agree on an interpretation of the unit of competency, especially the performance evidence and assessment conditions.

Evidence

Come to a shared understanding of what evidence is required, based on the performance evidence in the unit of competency.

Confirm assessment

Review and evaluate each part of the summative and formative assessment tools and methods to confirm whether the:

- ▶ instructions to assessors and candidates are clear and appropriate
- ▶ assessment instrument is based on realistic or authentic work activities and contexts
- ▶ assessment will achieve what is intended
- ▶ assessment is appropriately designed to gather evidence that assessors can use to make a judgment of the candidate's competence.

Mapping

The mapping of the assessment tool to the unit of competency is valid.

Assessment requirements

Assessment complies with the performance evidence in the unit of competency and the implementation guide or other information in the relevant training package.

Principles of assessment

Apply the principles of assessment to ensure assessments are fair, flexible, valid and reliable, including access and equity and reasonable adjustment.

Rules of evidence

Apply the rules of evidence to ensure assessments are valid, authentic, sufficient and current.

Benchmarking

Evaluate the benchmarking material given to assessors to see whether it accurately assesses the performance criteria being assessed (validity) and contains instructions that are unambiguous and clear for assessors and candidates (reliability and fairness).

Identify the type of material needed for the trial

To be prepared for the trial of assessment tools, the following material must be available.

Materials for trialling tools

- ▶ Instructions to trial participants such as time lines for feedback, and how they need to respond (complete a form, telephone, etc.)
- ▶ Relevant checklists, templates and forms to help participants maintain a comprehensive record of the process
- ▶ The relevant training package and unit of competency or accredited unit documents
- ▶ The assessment tool, including assessment instruments, information and instructions to candidates and assessors
- ▶ Assessment policies and strategies
- ▶ Form/s for recording feedback

Identify the logistics of the trial

This information regarding logistics is required ahead of time by the participant and the assessor.

Participants

Participants need to know:

- ▶ how the data will be gathered; for example, trial participants may supply completed assessments, complete feedback forms, discuss outcomes in formal debriefing meetings
- ▶ that they will receive all trial information as a package prior to the trial commencement date so they can familiarise themselves with the requirements.

Assessors

Assessors need to know:

- ▶ the methods that will be used to record and report the data findings
- ▶ how revisions will be made and who will be responsible for making them.

Conduct the trial

When conducting a trial, the trial resources must be distributed to participants. These include trial instructions; assessment instruments; assessment instructions; units of competency etc. When administering an assessment to the selected candidates and assessors, ensure conditions match those outlined in the assessment. Refer to the checklist used in a previous section for the trial and review of an assessment instrument. Here is a list of the items that could be included in a checklist.

A checklist can be used to collect data and include evaluation of:

- ▶ the implementation instructions to ensure they are clear for the assessor and the candidate
- ▶ assessment methods to see whether they are appropriate to the evidence required
- ▶ the assessment instrument to identify whether it collects relevant evidence
- ▶ the assessment instrument to identify whether it achieves what was intended
- ▶ the assessment instrument to identify whether it complies with the assessment requirements in the unit of competency
- ▶ whether the mapping of the assessment tool to the unit of competency is valid
- ▶ dimensions of competency
- ▶ the appropriateness of resources and timing
- ▶ mechanisms for providing feedback
- ▶ how LLN and access and equity considerations are addressed
- ▶ mechanisms for candidates to provide feedback and appeal.

Example

Trial assessment tools to validate content and applicability

Sarah is a member of the learning and development team at a senior high school. She has been working with a team of teachers to develop a new unit of study in sustainability that will be included in the Business Studies curriculum for Year 11 students. It has been a very big project and the team has struggled to reach their completion date.



Sarah is responsible for developing the assessment instrument for the unit. She decides, in consultation with the team, that she will use a structured activity as the assessment method. She writes detailed instructions for a project that requires learners to develop a plan to introduce sustainable work practices in a specific organisation. It is expected that students use a case study or their work placement as the basis of their project. Due to the time constraints and the school's obligation to have the unit ready for delivery at the beginning of the term, Sarah decides not to trial the assessment instrument.

The first group of assessment candidates to use the project assessment instrument do not achieve competency at the rate that had been expected. A significant number of candidates do not complete the project to a satisfactory standard, complaining that they were not given adequate time. Informal feedback from candidates includes complaints that they did not understand how the information in the learning section of the unit applied to the requirements of the project. Many candidates found the language used in the instructions confusing and needed clarification from their teacher or help from their parents. One candidate suggests that the workplace may have had a policy and other documents about sustainability and she could have accessed them if she had had time.

Sarah and the team decide to postpone further assessment until the instrument is revised and trialled with a pilot group that represents an appropriate sample of candidates. Sarah realises that she should have negotiated with the school principal to arrange for a trial of the assessment instrument before assessing candidates.

4C Collect and document feedback from relevant people involved in trialling

A significant amount of feedback may be collected from the trial of the assessment tool. It is essential that this feedback is collated into meaningful information that can be interpreted to identify opportunities to strengthen the assessment tool and instrument.

Follow your organisation's procedures for summarising the findings of the assessment trial and making recommendations for revisions. Confirm whether the outcomes of the assessment trial are to be shared with participants or distributed only to internal staff.



Collate and analyse the feedback

Your organisation may have templates and forms to help you record the various pieces of information and data that is gathered during the process. The purpose of these records is to present the findings of trial activities in a format that helps you identify those areas of assessment that need to be strengthened or revised, and best practice examples in assessment that can be used to inform future assessment activities.

It is important that the recommendations made by the trial participants for changes to assessment tools are supported by some form of justification or evidence, so information collected by the participants plays an important role here.

Participants may have used a range of methods to record their findings; for example, handwritten or electronic notes on assessment instruments; the organisation's feedback and survey forms; checklists and possibly recorded conversations and interviews with various assessment stakeholders. At the conclusion of this stage of the trial process, you may find yourself with a significant quantity of data that needs to be carefully analysed in order to identify trends and patterns and to enable the findings to be presented logically and effectively.

The next steps in the trial process are as follows.

Your responsibilities are to:

- ▶ collate the data into the suggested format
- ▶ compare the information collected against the evaluation criteria
- ▶ discuss the outcomes with participants
- ▶ record the outcomes of the trial, including making recommendations.

Document the feedback

Use your organisation's forms to systematically record the information about the various aspects of the assessment tool. You may need to ask for further information from the trial people or need them to clarify what they have said. It is crucial that the feedback is documented accurately and completely, and is accompanied by examples that illustrate a need for clarification, an amendment, addition or improvement.

The completed report may contain:

- ▶ participants in the trial
- ▶ methods that were used to gather feedback
- ▶ analysis of the feedback
- ▶ recommendations for revisions to the assessment tool
- ▶ an appendix of completed checklists, questionnaires and samples from candidates who piloted the assessment instrument, etc.

Example

Collect and document feedback from relevant people involved in trialling

Lucia has been given the task of formally trialling an assessment tool that has been developed by the learning and development team at the bank where she is employed.

The learning and development team have invested significant resources developing an online learning program. At the completion of learning, staff are required to complete a multi-choice quiz for assessment purposes. It is a requirement of the bank that staff demonstrate that they are competent to apply their online learning to their job role. The outcomes of assessment will be carefully reviewed by senior managers of the training and education department.

Participants in the trial were:

- ▶ a sample of staff from sections of the organisation who will be undertaking training; staff will be drawn from various levels, and the sample will reflect the culturally diverse nature of the organisation's workforce
- ▶ selected as sample candidates.

The assessment tool is to be distributed to stakeholders, including the Training Compliance Manager, Lead Internal Auditor, department heads from across the organisation and representatives from the relevant professional association.

Lucia undertakes the following activities to gather and analyse feedback from the participants.

Feedback	Procedures
Methods for gathering feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Collect the feedback checklists, forms, questionnaires and recorded conversations from the trial participants who completed the draft assessment. ▶ Collect the completed assessment activities from the sample candidates. ▶ Collect the survey/feedback forms from stakeholders.
Method for analysing feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Collate data using appropriate software. ▶ Prepare a report for the learning and development manager's review. ▶ Review and develop recommendations for revision of the assessment tool in consultation with the project team. ▶ Forward recommendations using an appropriate template from the quality management system electronic folder.

Activity 14

Collate the feedback that you received from participants in the assessment tool trial you conducted in Activity 13.

Prepare a report of approximately 800 words where you discuss your interpretation of the feedback gathered. Address the following in your report:

- ▶ Participants in the trial
- ▶ Methods that were used to gather feedback
- ▶ Analysis of the feedback
- ▶ Recommendations for revisions to the assessment tool
- ▶ Any conflicting feedback and how this was dealt with

Include any completed checklists, questionnaires or samples from candidates who piloted the assessment instrument etc. Add this report to the documents prepared in Activity 13.

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4D Make amendments to the final tool based on the analysis of feedback

The feedback from the assessment trial provides a final opportunity to refine or revise the assessment tool prior to formal validation by the RTO managers and implementation into future assessment processes. At the conclusion of the trial process, you should be able to produce records of the assessment trial procedure and findings, recommendations for improvements and the revised assessment tool.

Further evaluations of the instrument during the actual implementation and post-implementation should occur in accordance with the RTO's policies and procedures for continuous improvement.



The final steps in the trial process are to:

- ▶ identify and make the appropriate changes
- ▶ format the final, approved assessment tool
- ▶ file and store the assessment tool appropriately.

In this section, you will use your analysis and interpretation skills to examine effective methods for amending the final assessment tool based on an analysis of feedback.

Make amendments

Once the trial of the draft instrument is completed, you need to adjust the instrument to address any issues, gaps or problem areas that have been identified. Conflicting feedback may be received and this will need to be considered or referred to management for further advice. Remember to retain the various draft versions of the assessment instrument in the RTO's record-keeping system as evidence of continuous improvement processes. You may wish to conduct a trial of the revised instrument with a smaller pilot group to ensure that the instrument satisfies the relevant criteria.

Remember to use appropriate version control methods to clearly identify the revised version of the assessment tool. Check the training organisation's policies and procedures for advice on the version control method they prefer to use. It is essential that you follow your organisation's guidelines for version control to ensure that assessors select the most recent assessment instrument from the organisation's record-keeping system. It is also essential that the final assessment tool is validated according to the training organisation's assessment validation policies and procedures prior to use.

Recommendations made by the people involved in the trial will vary to reflect the unique nature of each assessment instrument.

Recommendations that may come from a trial

- 1 Instructions**
Giving clearer instructions to candidates and assessors
- 2 Context**
Changing the method of assessment so it can be used in a wider range of assessment contexts; for example, online, group learning or workplace assessment
- 3 Reasonable adjustment**
Providing clearer advice to candidates and assessors about reasonable adjustment
- 4 Assist understanding**
Providing checklists, diagrams or flowcharts to help candidates understand what they are required to do
- 5 Resources**
Ensuring candidates have access to necessary resources such as workplace policies and procedures, technology and tools
- 6 Amount of evidence**
Reducing the amount of evidence that candidates are required to submit
- 7 Conditions of assessment**
Changing the conditions of assessment to more closely simulate a workplace; for example, it may be appropriate to assess using a simulation rather than a written, closed-book assessment
- 8 Adjust methods**
Adjusting the assessment methods so they comply with the requirements of the assessment requirements of the unit of competency
- 9 Evidence gathering in different contexts**
Writing clearer instructions for gathering evidence in specific contexts; for example, the RTO may need to develop enhanced procedures for collecting evidence from candidates for RPL
- 10 Judging competence**
Revising the criteria used for judging competence; for example, the trial process may demonstrate that the benchmark solutions need to be revised to more accurately reflect current work practices
- 11 Guidelines for evidence gathering**
Writing clearer guidelines for making reasonable adjustments to evidence gathering methods; for example, assessment instruments that are used in remote Indigenous communities should better reflect the language and literacy levels of candidates

Example

Make amendments to the final tool based on the analysis of feedback

The learning and development team at the bank have invested significant resources developing an online learning program and assessment. A trial of the assessment tools was conducted with selected staff, and various stakeholders were invited to review the tool and provide feedback.

Following collation of the data that was gathered during the trial, the learning and development team identified several weaknesses in the tool. The following is a summary of the key recommendations that were actioned by the team responsible for developing the assessment tool.

Feedback	Action
<p>The department managers and Training Compliance Manager argued that several of the multi-choice questions required only a basic understanding of employees' compliance obligations.</p> <p>Several questionnaires included comments that the correct response in the multi-choice questions was too obvious.</p>	<p>The learning and development team agreed to develop additional choices that more accurately reflect the complex nature of the relevant policies and procedures.</p>
<p>The Training Compliance Manager identified that the instructions in the assessment tool did not clarify how many attempts a candidate could have to complete the assessment tool to a satisfactory standard.</p>	<p>The instructions of the tool were revised to inform learners that they would need to correctly answer a specific number of questions on their first attempt to demonstrate their competence.</p>
<p>Several of the sample candidates reported that they felt that the case studies that formed the basis of many of the multi-choice questions relied on stereotypes.</p>	<p>The learning and development team reviewed the assessment instrument and found that in fact all of the managers in the case studies had traditional Anglo-Saxon names and that all contact centre staff were women or young workers. The team agreed that they would need to rewrite the case studies to more authentically reflect the diversity of the bank's employees.</p>
<p>Finally, two candidates identified problems with reading the text on the screen. They pointed out that many of the responses were 'text-heavy' and difficult to read on- screen. The bank's learning management system would not allow them to print the assessment tool.</p>	<p>The learning and development team involved a member of the IT department in finalising the assessment tool so the screen-based information would be easier to read. The learning and development team also revised the questions to reduce the amount of text that candidates would need to read in each case study or question.</p>

4E Appropriately format, and file, finalised assessment tool according to assessment system policies and procedures

The organisation that is responsible for implementing the assessment tool will require it to be formatted in compliance with their assessment system policies and procedures, so you may need to source information about their style guide, file naming convention and copyright policies. You also need to ensure that you are familiar with their requirements for securing assessment tools and their distribution to third parties.

Formatting and filing the finalised assessment tool must be done according to assessment system policies and procedures and organisational, legal and ethical requirements.



Format the assessment tool

The format of the assessment tool will have evolved during the design and development stage. You may have referred to a standard operating procedure in the RTO's assessment system or used an electronic preformatted form or template that required you to insert the content of the assessment tool in specific sections.

The trial of the assessment tool will have provided an opportunity to fine-tune the instructions to candidates and assessors, the various sections of the assessment instrument and the sections where feedback and the assessment decision are recorded. Once you have made these final revisions to the assessment tool you should look at the document with fresh eyes to find opportunities to refine and improve the format of the document. It is always useful to have your colleagues read the final assessment tool to give you another perspective.

You may have a checklist to use to prompt you to focus on particular aspects of the assessment tool design. Access the 'Formatting checklist for assessment instruments' template again.

An assessment tool should include the:

- ▶ candidate's and assessor's name
- ▶ date of assessment
- ▶ unit title and code
- ▶ assessment requirements – performance evidence and assessment conditions
- ▶ assessment context
- ▶ assessment procedures
- ▶ reasonable adjustment information
- ▶ resources required
- ▶ knowledge evidence to be assessed

- ▶ outcomes of assessment (competent/not yet competent)
- ▶ candidate feedback
- ▶ candidate's signature and date
- ▶ assessor's signature and date
- ▶ instructions to the candidate and assessor or third party.

File the assessment tool

RTOs are required under VQF Standards, to manage records to ensure they are accurate, current, can be easily accessed and that their integrity and confidentiality is maintained. Make sure you follow the procedure to name a file or records such as checklists and consultation papers so they are easy to access at a later date. This should be detailed in the RTO's workplace procedures.

File finalised assessment tools and instruments

The process of writing and mapping assessment instruments and then trialling them can be time consuming and may draw on various resources from across the organisation. In order to maximise the outcomes of this assessment development process, RTOs usually require assessment instruments to be collated into an assessment bank that can be used by other assessors.



It is important to remember that the assessment instruments are commercially sensitive documents that represent a significant investment by the RTO. You should not share assessment instruments with external parties or publish assessments in printed or electronic form without the approval of the appropriate person. The assessment instruments may also form part of an assessment strategy that requires assessment to be conducted under strict conditions; for example, candidates completing formal written tests to obtain a licence. You may find that access to the assessment bank is restricted to certain people in some cases.

Check the assessment system for information regarding how assessment tools are stored in the training organisation. In many cases a printed copy may be stored in a secure filing cabinet. An electronic copy will be retained with various levels of security. You may be asked to store the assessment tool as a 'read only' file on a shared computer drive. In many cases only the RTO manager and quality or compliance managers will have access to a modifiable version of the assessment tool.

File developmental documents

Check the assessment policies for information regarding storage of the various printed and electronic documents that were created during the design and development stages. You may be required to store records of discussions and consultation, various draft versions of the assessment tool, assessment tool trial procedures, feedback gathered during the trial and evidence gathered from the pilot group of candidates. These documents may be produced as evidence of the RTO's compliance with continuous improvement processes during a VQF/AQTF audit and also demonstrate the organisation's commitment to quality management.

Example

Appropriately format, and file, finalised assessment tool according to assessment system policies and procedures

Sam has been asked by the head teacher of his department to develop a suite of assessment tools that will be used to conduct assessment for students enrolled in a course that will help them to find jobs in animal care. Many of the students will look for jobs in quarantine stations, pet retailers or veterinary surgeries as animal attendants. The students in this course at this specific RTO have not performed well at school and have low levels of language and literacy proficiency.



The Educational Consultant who manages the learning centre for students with special needs has helped Sam write the instructions for the assessment tool to ensure they are culturally inclusive, challenge stereotypes and address language and literacy issues.

Once Sam has formally trialled the assessment tool, and is satisfied that it meets the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence, he settles down to finalise the formatting of the lengthy document.

He checks that he has used the correct template, with appropriate information in the header and footer of each page and has correctly used the college's logo on the front page. He has referred to the style guide for information on font, spacing, use of colour and page layout.

The Educational Consultant has recommended the use of diagrams and images to 'break-up' the text on the page and to enhance the student's comprehension of the instructions. Sam checks that he has used images that are not restricted by copyright and that the diagrams are clear and error-free.

Sam saves a 'read only' version of the finalised assessment tool on the network share drive using the file naming convention used at the college. He emails the completed assessment tool to the head teacher and tells her that he hopes to be included in the formal assessment validation review.

Activity 16

This is your last opportunity to format the final version of the assessment tool before adding it to your portfolio. Refer to the training organisation's style guide for advice. Confirm that you are satisfied that you have appropriately formatted the assessment tool according to the assessment system policies and procedures and organisational, legal and ethical requirements.

[Click to complete Activity 16](#)

Summary

1. An important component of quality assessment involves trialling draft assessment instruments to ensure they satisfy the rules of evidence
2. Identify potential risks that may lead to non-compliance with the RTO's VQF/AQTF obligations.
3. Identify aspects of the assessment instrument that could impact negatively on candidates.
4. Establish criteria that you could use to check draft assessment tools prior to conducting a trial. You need to refer to the original planning tool you used to develop the assessment tool in order to evaluate how effectively you have satisfied the client's brief and the quality standards for assessment.
5. You may find yourself with a significant quantity of data at the end of the trial process that needs to be carefully analysed in order to identify trends and patterns and to enable the findings to be presented as meaningful information. Use analysis and evaluation skills to collate the data and information.
6. Once the trial of the draft instrument is completed, you need to adjust the instrument to address any issues, gaps or problem areas that have been identified.
7. The organisation that is responsible for implementing the assessment tool will require that it is formatted in compliance with their assessment system policies and procedures and meets legal and ethical requirements.