

TAE40110

**Certificate IV in Training &
Assessment**



**Your
Complete Learning Guide**



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WELCOME

Welcome.

It was lovely to be able to process your enrolment, and put together this print version of our *Certificate IV in Training & Assessment*. I believe that you will see from this document that we do not take short cuts, and that we are above all else interested in the real competence of each and every student who trusts us to deliver their course of study.

Before starting our own Registered Training Organisation, Chris and I spent quite some time working in and around vocational education and training. For a number of years, I was responsible for overseeing VET programs in a number of schools. This was very frustrating, because the same problems seem to arise time and time again. We sought training for staff, but it didn't seem to matter how many pieces of paper they came back with, they just did not seem to be able to get it right.

So, we decided to write our own course. We started by working out what information and skills people need to "do VET", and then we worked out what the best way was to communicate this information in a way that would make sense to people; in a way that would fit with what they already knew.

You see, when it comes down to it, our interest is in learning. And we believe that unless we focus on learners and learning, then training will not be effective.

Our TAE40110 is based on an understanding of how people learn, and an understanding of the sorts of things that people are involved in that lead them to need or want this qualification. It is not based on the need to feed you information from the 10 Units of Competency so that we can tick some boxes and you can get your Certificate as quickly and effortlessly as possible.

Instead, this course is based on the need to link what you know and can do with what you need to know and need to do in order to be competent. All of the 10 Units of Competency are addressed, but in such a way that the connections between them are explored, and so that your learning is integrated rather than segmented. In short, so that you learn how it fits, and so that what you learn sticks.


It is not always easy, and it is not always fun, but it is always focused on a single goal: your competence.

We give two very simple guarantees:

1. When you graduate, you will be competent.
2. When you graduate, you can choose to receive your Certificate or your money back.

While this is a self-paced and distance-based course, we do still exist, and we are never more than a short email or phone call away. If we can support you in any way, just get in touch.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryan West', with a light blue shadow effect behind the text.

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Bryan



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SECTION ONE – THE UNITS IN DETAIL

The *Certificate IV in Training & Assessment* comprises 10 Units of Competency. Each unit of competency represents some underpinning knowledge and skills that are considered by industry to be essential for people who are involved in workplace training and/or assessment.

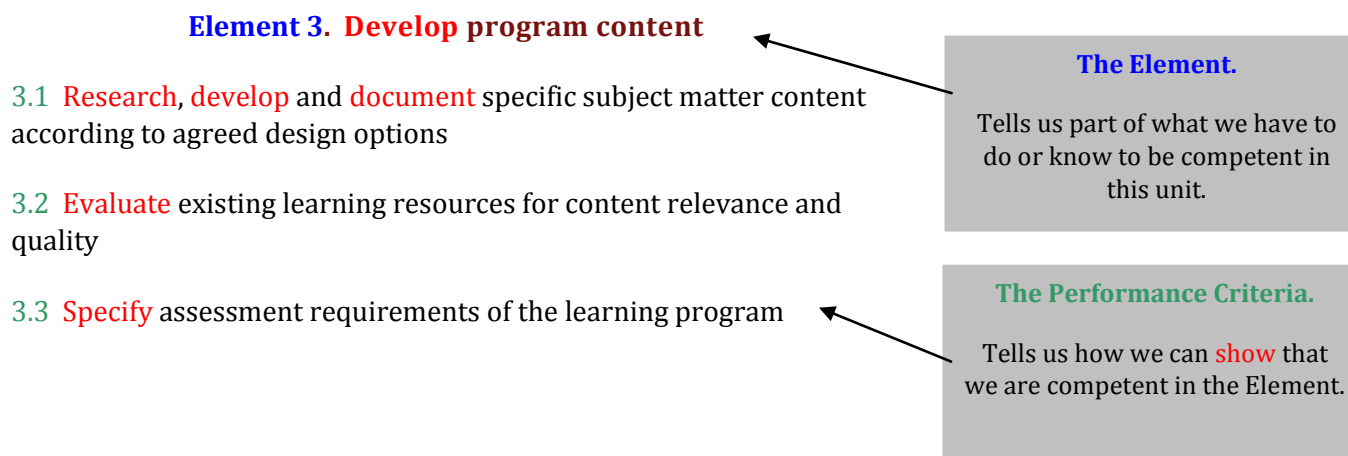
This course aims to equip you with that knowledge and those skills. The following pages outline the Elements and Performance Criteria related to the Units that you will be studying. We encourage you to have a good read through them, because it will help you to better create what is called a cognitive scaffold (ie, “brain space”) to support your studies in this course.

The following diagram illustrates how you can make sense of the many tables that follow.

Example:

Let’s look at the Unit, *TAEDES401A – Design and Develop Learning Programs*. As its title suggests, being competent in this unit means that you will be able to *design and develop learning programs*. Clearly, that involves a number of things. These things are called the **Elements**.

One such **Element** is being able to *assess risks in the environment*. But, what does it actually mean to be competent at doing that? Quite simply, to be competent at that, you need to be able to do certain things. These things that you can do to show that you are competent are the **Performance Criteria**. In all of this, the emphasis is on doing, and you can see from all of the **red action words** in the following that it is all about doing.



TAEDES401A –DESIGN AND DEVELOP LEARNING PROGRAMS

ABOUT THIS UNIT

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to conceptualise, design, develop and review learning programs to meet an identified need for a group of learners. The unit addresses the skills and knowledge needed to identify the parameters of a learning program, determine the design, outline the content and review its effectiveness.

ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

This unit includes the following elements and performance criteria.

Element 1. Define parameters of the learning program

- 1.1 Clarify ***purpose*** and type of learning program with key stakeholders
- 1.2 Access and confirm the competency standards and ***other training specifications*** on which to base the learning program
- 1.3 Identify language, literacy and numeracy requirements of the program
- 1.4 Identify and consider characteristics of the target learner group

Element 2. Work within the vocational education and training (VET) policy framework

- 2.1 Access relevant ***VET policies*** and frameworks, and apply to work practices
- 2.2 Identify changes to training packages and accredited courses and apply these to program development
- 2.3 Conduct work according to organisational quality assurance policies and procedures

Element 3. Develop program content

- 3.1 Research, develop and document specific subject matter content according to agreed design options
- 3.2 Evaluate existing learning resources for content relevance and quality
- 3.3 Specify assessment requirements of the learning program

Element 4. Design structure of the learning program

- 4.1 Break the learning content into manageable segments and document timeframe for each segment
- 4.2 Determine and confirm *delivery strategies* and required assessment methods and tools
- 4.3 Document complete learning program in line with organisational requirements
- 4.4 Review complete program with key stakeholders and adjust as required
- 4.5 Ensure a safe learning progression by analysing risks in the learning environment and including a risk control plan

TAEDS402A – USE TRAINING PACKAGES AND ACCREDITED COURSES TO MEET CLIENTS' NEEDS

ABOUT THIS UNIT

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to use training packages and accredited courses as tools to support industry, organisation and individual competency development needs.

ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

This unit includes the following elements and performance criteria.

Element 1. Select appropriate training package or accredited

- 1.1 Confirm training and/or assessment needs of *client*
- 1.2 Identify and source training packages and/or accredited courses which could satisfy client needs
- 1.3 Use training products in line with the *training and assessment organisation's quality assurance policies* and procedures

Element 2. Analyse and interpret the qualifications framework

- 2.1 Read and interpret qualification rules
- 2.2 Review and determine applicable licensing requirements and prerequisites
- 2.3 Determine suitable electives that meet client needs and job roles

Element 3. Analyse and interpret units of competency and accredited modules

- 3.1 Select individual unit or accredited module to meet client needs
- 3.2 Read, analyse and interpret all parts of the unit or accredited module for application to client needs
- 3.3 Analyse links between unit and/or accredited module to develop effective applications for the client
- 3.4 Document analysis of unit or accredited module in a clear and accessible manner

Element 4. Contextualise units and modules for client applications

- 4.1 Use information from the client to *contextualise the unit* or accredited module to meet client needs
- 4.2 Use advice on contextualisation produced by the training package developer or course developer to meet client needs

Element 5. Analyse and interpret assessment guidance

- 5.1 Read, analyse and apply the assessment guidance of the relevant training package or accredited course
- 5.2 Determine any special requirements for assessment or reasonable adjustment to suit client needs

TAEDEL301A – PROVIDE WORK SKILL INSTRUCTION

ABOUT THIS UNIT

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to conduct individual and group instruction and demonstrate work skills, using existing learning resources in a safe and comfortable learning environment. The unit covers the skills and knowledge required to determine the success of both the training provided and one's own personal training performance. It emphasises the training as being driven by the work process and context.

ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

This unit includes the following elements and performance criteria.

Element 1. Organisation instruction and demonstration

- 1.1 Gather information about *learner characteristics* and learning needs
- 1.2 Confirm a *safe learning environment*
- 1.3 Gather and check *instruction and demonstration objectives* and seek assistance if required
- 1.4 Access and review relevant *learning resources* and *learning materials* for suitability and relevance, and seek assistance to interpret the contextual application
- 1.5 Organise access to necessary equipment or physical resources required for instruction and demonstration
- 1.6 Notify learners of *details* regarding the implementation of the learning program and/or delivery plan

Element 2. Conduct instruction and demonstration

- 2.1 Use interpersonal skills with learners to establish a safe and comfortable learning environment
- 2.2 Follow the learning program and/or delivery plan to cover all learning objectives
- 2.3 Brief learners on any **OHS procedures** and requirements prior to and during training
- 2.4 Use **delivery techniques** to structure, pace and enhance learning
- 2.5 Apply **coaching** techniques to assist learning
- 2.6 Use communication skills to provide information, instruct learners and demonstrate relevant work skills
- 2.7 Provide opportunities for practice during instruction and through work activities
- 2.8 Provide and discuss feedback on learner performance to support learning

Element 3. Check training performance

- 3.1 Use **measures** to ensure learners are acquiring and can use new technical and generic skills and knowledge
- 3.2 Monitor learner progress and outcomes in consultation with learner
- 3.3 Review relationship between the trainer/coach and the learner and adjust to suit learner needs

Element 4. Review personal training performance and finalise documentation

- 4.1 Reflect upon personal performance in providing instruction and demonstration, and document strategies for improvement
- 4.2 Maintain, store and secure learner records according to organisational and legal requirements

TAEDEL401A – PLAN, ORGANISE AND DELIVER GROUP-BASED LEARNING

ABOUT THIS UNIT

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to plan, organise and deliver training for individuals within a group.

ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

This unit includes the following elements and performance criteria.

Element 1. Interpret learning environment and delivery requirements

- 1.1 Access, read and interpret *learning program documentation* to determine delivery requirements
- 1.2 Use available information and documentation to identify group and individual learner needs and learner characteristics
- 1.3 Identify and assess constraints and risks to delivery
- 1.4 Confirm personal role and responsibilities in planning and delivering training with relevant personnel

Element 2. Prepare session plans

- 2.1 Refine existing learning objectives according to program requirements and specific needs of individual learners
- 2.2 Develop *session plans* and document these for each segment of the learning program
- 2.3 Use knowledge of learning principles and theories to generate ideas for managing session delivery

Element 3. Prepare resources for delivery

- 3.1 Contextualise existing learning materials to meet the needs of the specific learner group
- 3.2 Finalise learning materials and organise facility, technology and equipment needs in time for delivery of learning sessions
- 3.3 Confirm overall delivery arrangements with relevant personnel

Element 4. Deliver and facilitate training sessions

- 4.1 Conduct each session according to session plan, modified where appropriate to meet learner needs
- 4.2 Use the diversity of the group as another resource to support learning
- 4.3 Employ a range of delivery methods as training aids to optimise learner experiences
- 4.4 Demonstrate effective facilitation skills to ensure effective participation and group management

Element 5. Support and monitor learning

- 5.1 Monitor and document learner progress to ensure outcomes are being achieved and individual learner needs are being met
- 5.2 Make adjustments to the delivery sessions to reflect specific needs and circumstances
- 5.3 Manage *inappropriate behaviour* to ensure learning can take place
- 5.4 Maintain and store learner records according to organisational requirements

BSBCMM401A – MAKE A PRESENTATION

ABOUT THIS UNIT

This unit covers the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to prepare, deliver and review a presentation to a target audience. No licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of endorsement.

ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

This unit includes the following elements and performance criteria.

Element 1. Prepare a presentation

- 1.1 Plan and document presentation approach and intended outcomes
- 1.2 Choose ***presentation strategies, format and delivery methods*** that match the ***characteristics*** of the target audience, location, resources and personnel needed
- 1.3 Select ***presentation aids, materials and techniques*** that suit the format and purpose of the presentation, and will enhance audience understanding of key concepts and central ideas
- 1.4 Brief others involved in the presentation on their roles/responsibilities within the presentation
- 1.5 Select ***techniques to evaluate presentation effectiveness***

Element 2. Deliver a presentation

- 2.1 Explain and discuss desired outcomes of the presentation with the target audience
- 2.2 Use presentation aids, materials and examples to support target audience understanding of key concepts and central ideas
- 2.3 Monitor non-verbal and verbal communication of participants to promote attainment of presentation outcomes
- 2.4 Use persuasive communication techniques to secure audience interest
- 2.5 Provide opportunities for participants to seek clarification on central ideas and concepts, and adjust the presentation to meet participant needs and preferences

2.6 Summarise key concepts and ideas at strategic points to facilitate participant understanding

Element 3. Review the presentation

3.1 Implement *techniques to review the effectiveness* of the presentation

3.2 Seek and discuss reactions to the presentation from participants or from key personnel involved in the presentation

3.3 Utilise feedback from the audience or from key personnel involved in the presentation to make changes to central ideas presented

TAEDEL402A – PLAN, ORGANISE AND FACILITATE LEARNING IN THE WORKPLACE

ABOUT THIS UNIT

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to plan, organise and facilitate learning for individuals in a workplace.

ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

This unit includes the following elements and performance criteria.

Element 1. Establish effective work environment for learning

- 1.1 Establish and agree upon objectives and scope of the work-based learning
- 1.2 Analyse work practices and routines to determine their effectiveness in meeting established learning objectives
- 1.3 Identify and address ***OHS implications*** of using work as the basis for learning

Element 2. Develop a work-based learning pathway

- 2.1 Address ***contractual requirements*** and responsibilities for learning at work
- 2.2 Arrange for integration and monitoring of external learning activities with the ***work-based learning pathway***
- 2.3 Obtain agreement from relevant personnel to implement the work-based learning pathway

Element 3. Establish the learning-facilitation relationship

- 3.1 Identify context for learning and individual's learning style
- 3.2 Select appropriate technique or process to facilitate learning and explain the basis of the technique to learner
- 3.3 Develop, document and discuss *individualised learning plan* with learner
- 3.4 Access, read and interpret documentation outlining the OHS responsibilities of the various parties in the learning environment
- 3.5 Monitor supervisory arrangements appropriate to learner's levels of knowledge, skill and experience to provide support and encouragement and ensure learner's health and safety

Element 4. Implement work-based learning pathway

- 4.1 Sequence introduction of workplace tasks, activities and processes to reflect the agreed work-based learning pathway
- 4.2 Explain objectives of work-based learning and the processes involved to learner
- 4.3 Encourage learner to take responsibility for learning and to self-reflect
- 4.4 Develop techniques that facilitate learner's transfer of skills and knowledge

Element 5. Maintain and develop the learning/facilitation relationship

- 5.1 Prepare for each session
- 5.2 Structure learning activities to support and reinforce new learning, build on strengths, and identify areas for further development
- 5.3 Observe learner cues and change approaches where necessary to maintain momentum
- 5.4 Practise *ethical behaviour* at all times
- 5.5 Monitor effectiveness of the learning/facilitation relationship through regular meetings between the parties

Element 6. Close and evaluate the learning/facilitation relationship

- 6.1 Carry out the closure smoothly, using appropriate interpersonal and communication skills
- 6.2 Seek feedback from learner on the outcomes achieved and value of the relationship
- 6.3 Evaluate and document process, including *impact, self evaluation and reflection*, and file according to legal and organisational requirements

Element 7. Monitor and review the effectiveness of the work-based learning pathway

- 7.1 Document work performance and learning achievement and keep records according to organisational requirements
- 7.2 Evaluate effectiveness of the work-based pathway against the objectives, processes and techniques used
- 7.3 Recommend improvements to work-based practice in light of the review process

TAEASS301A – PARTICIPATE IN ASSESSMENT VALIDATION

ABOUT THIS UNIT

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to contribute to the assessment process.

ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

This unit includes the following elements and performance criteria.

Element 1. Clarify role and responsibilities in the assessment process

- 1.1 Discuss and confirm ***purpose of assessment*** with ***relevant people***
- 1.2 Discuss and confirm ***benchmarks for assessment*** with qualified assessor
- 1.3 Access, read and clarify ***assessment plan*** with qualified assessor
- 1.4 Discuss and agree with qualified assessor the specific responsibilities in gathering evidence and types of evidence to be gathered

Element 2. Confirm organisational arrangements for evidence gathering

- 2.1 Access and confirm relevant ***assessment system policies and procedures*** ; organisational, legal and ethical requirements; and other relevant advice on assessment
- 2.2 Clarify nominated assessment methods and tools for collecting evidence with qualified assessor, to ensure that procedures to be followed and instruments to be used are clear
- 2.3 Discuss and confirm with relevant people ***assessment context*** , including candidate's characteristics and any need for ***reasonable adjustments***
- 2.4 Confirm and arrange ***resource requirements*** in consultation with relevant people

Element 3. Collect evidence in accordance with the assessment plan

3.1 Explain assessment process to candidate, including the different responsibilities of the parties involved, and refer any candidate issues or concerns to qualified assessor prior to undertaking assessment activities

3.2 Use assessment tools to gather quality evidence within available time and resources, according to organisational, legal and ethical requirements

Element 4. Record and report findings

4.1 Organise and provide evidence to the qualified assessor in a format suitable for analysis according to assessment system policies and procedures

4.2 Actively seek feedback from the qualified assessor on whether evidence-gathering activities meet the principles of assessment and whether evidence collected meets the rules of evidence

4.3 Document areas for improvement in collecting evidence, for future assessment activities

TAEASS401A – PLAN ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES AND PROCESSES

ABOUT THIS UNIT.

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to plan and organise the assessment process, including recognition of prior learning (RPL), in a competency-based assessment system. It also includes the development of simple assessment instruments.

ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

This unit includes the following elements and performance criteria.

Element 1. Determine assessment approach

- 1.1 Identify candidate and confirm ***purposes and context of assessment/RPL*** with relevant people according to ***legal, organisational and ethical requirements***
- 1.2 Identify and access ***benchmarks for assessment/RPL*** and any specific assessment guidelines

Element 2. Prepare the assessment plan

- 2.1 Determine evidence and ***types of evidence*** needed to demonstrate competence, according to the ***rules of evidence***
- 2.2 Select ***assessment methods*** which will support the collection of defined evidence, taking into account the context in which the assessment will take place
- 2.3 Document all aspects of the ***assessment plan*** and confirm with relevant personnel

Element 3. Develop assessment instruments

- 3.1 Develop ***simple assessment instruments*** to meet target group needs
- 3.2 Analyse ***available assessment instruments*** for their suitability for use and modify as required
- 3.3 ***Map assessment*** instruments against unit or course requirements
- 3.4 Write clear instructions for candidate about the use of the instruments
- 3.5 Trial draft assessment instruments to validate content and applicability, and record outcomes

TAEASS402A – ASSESS COMPETENCE

ABOUT THIS UNIT

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to assess the competence of a candidate.

ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

This unit includes the following elements and performance criteria.

Element 1. Prepare for assessment

- 1.1 Interpret **assessment plan** and confirm organisational, legal and ethical requirements for conducting assessment with relevant people
- 1.2 Access and interpret relevant **benchmarks for assessment** and nominated **assessment tools** to confirm the requirements for evidence to be collected
- 1.3 Arrange identified material and physical resource requirements according to assessment system policies and procedures
- 1.4 Organise **specialist support** required for assessment
- 1.5 Explain, discuss and agree details of the assessment plan with candidate

Element 2. Gather quality evidence

- 2.1 Use agreed **assessment methods** and tools to gather, organise and document evidence in a format suitable for determining competence
- 2.2 Apply the principles of assessment and rules of evidence in gathering quality evidence
- 2.3 Determine opportunities for evidence gathering in actual or simulated activities through consultation with the candidate and relevant personnel
- 2.4 Determine opportunities for integrated assessment activities and document any changes to assessment instruments where required

Element 3. Support the candidate

- 3.1 Guide candidates in gathering their own evidence to support recognition of prior learning (RPL)
- 3.2 Use appropriate communication and interpersonal skills to develop a professional relationship with the candidate that reflects sensitivity to *individual differences* and enables two-way *feedback*
- 3.3 Make decisions on reasonable adjustments with the candidate, based on candidate's needs and characteristics
- 3.4 Access required specialist support in accordance with the assessment plan
- 3.5 Address any OHS risk to person or equipment immediately

Element 4. Make the assessment decision

- 4.1 Examine collected evidence and evaluate it to ensure that it reflects the evidence required to demonstrate competence
- 4.2 Use judgement to infer whether competence has been demonstrated, based on the available evidence
- 4.3 Make assessment decision in line with agreed assessment procedures and according to agreed assessment plan
- 4.4 Provide clear and constructive feedback to candidate regarding the assessment decision and develop any follow-up action plan required

Element 5. Record and report the assessment decision

- 5.1 Record assessment outcomes promptly and accurately
- 5.2 Complete and process an assessment report according to agreed assessment procedures
- 5.3 Inform other relevant parties of the assessment decision according to confidentiality conventions

Element 6. Review the assessment process

6.1 Review the assessment process in *consultation* with relevant people to improve own future practice

6.2 Document and record the review according to relevant assessment system policies and procedures

TAEASS403A – PARTICIPATE IN ASSESSMENT VALIDATION

ABOUT THIS UNIT

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to participate in an assessment validation process.

ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

This unit includes the following elements and performance criteria.

Element 1. Prepare for validation

- 1.1 Discuss and confirm the approach to validation according to defined purposes, context, and relevant *assessment system policies and procedures*
- 1.2 Analyse relevant *benchmarks for assessment* and agree on the evidence needed to demonstrate competence
- 1.3 Arrange *materials* for *validation activities*

Element 2. Contribute to validation process

- 2.1 Demonstrate active *participation* in validation sessions and activities using appropriate communication skills
- 2.2 Participate in validation sessions and activities by applying the principles of assessment and rules of evidence
- 2.3 Check all documents used in the validation process for accuracy and version control

Element 3. Contribute to validation outcomes

- 3.1 Collectively discuss validation findings to support improvements in the quality of assessment
- 3.2 Discuss, agree and record recommendations to improve assessment practice
- 3.3 Implement changes to own assessment practice, arising from validation

SECTION TWO – THE INTEGRATED LEARNING GUIDE

HOW TO USE THIS SECTION

As you saw in Section One, this course is rather involved. A common way to organise the course is in three Themes: Assessment, Design, Delivery.

This seems logical given that there are indeed three different “types” of Units included in the course. We can see that from the second three letters of the Unit codes, ASS, DES, DEL.

But, when I do my job as a trainer, do I do the ASS separate from the DES, or do I DEL independent of the ASS?

Of course not. Being an effective trainer/assessor means that we must at all times be aware of all of these things. We cannot separate our understanding of inclusive learning practices and OHS from how we design a training session. And nor should we try.

For this TAE, we do not try to do that. That makes our job a bit harder, because we don't just start with Unit 1, Element 1, Performance Criterion 1 before telling you about Unit 1, Element 1, Performance Criterion 2... Instead, we pulled apart the whole lot of them.

Picture this. Me. On the floor. Surrounded by about 1200 pieces of paper. Trying to group them, to sort them, to make links between them, to see how this could be connected to that by referring to that, but if we put it there then that has to go here first, but that bit needs this bit, and if we put that here, then what will happen over there...and on and on it went, slowly but surely reducing the number of pieces to what you find here – about one hundred topics, assembled and ordered in a way that best reflects the connections that exist between the units.

Is it perfect? No. There will be times when you think that something should be in a different order. Believe me, we laboured over that. So many things can be put in so many places. I am happy with the current sequence, and it has been tested by quite a few students; having said as much, we do welcome ongoing input from all of our students. I think that the important thing is that delivering the material in an integrated manner is essential because it is so hard to separate so many bits from the 10 Units of the course.

So, how to use this section?

Read it. Think about it. Complete a Short-Answer Question when you come to it. This is intentional, so that you can “chunk” your studies into manageable bits. Move around. Move ahead. Come back and keep going.

That's the important thing. Just keep going.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING

Vocational Education & Training (VET) is the term that refers to that part of education that is not compulsory and which emphasises work skills. The Good Universities Guide tells us:

VET provides the skills to help people to:

- join the workforce for the first time
- re-join the workforce after a break
- upgrade skills in their chosen field
- move into a different career.

It can involve a range of qualifications, a range of pathways through those qualifications, and a range of study options (from entirely off-the-job to entirely on-the-job).

But it does not only benefit individual people. You see, by ensuring that all training relates to the sorts of things that industry needs and at the standard that industry needs, VET also provides industry with a skilled workforce to be able to do the job that it needs to do.

WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

If we think back a hundred years or so, we will find that most of what we now know as VET involved men being taught on the job how to do manual things, like mining or fixing a truck. As our society (and economy) grew more complex in the second half of last century, there were three things that gave rise to what we now the VET sector to be:

- more jobs became available
- more types of jobs became available (eg, in finance and other service industries)
- more people became available to do those jobs (eg, women entered the workforce)

So, over the next 30 years or so, training organisations popped up to meet the demands of individuals who wanted to work in these newer industries. This led to the need for some controls over what was going in to ensure that both individuals and the industries that they wanted to work in were getting the best outcome.

This led to the advent of a national framework, which basically aimed to get everyone to agree to train and assess at the same standards.

THE 4 AIMS OF VET IN AUSTRALIA (HINT: USE THIS FOR TASK 1, Q3)

More recently, the AQTF2010 took this idea one step further. From the AQTF2010 website we learn that it sets down four key aims:

1. **Outcomes focused** – focuses on the quality of services and outcomes being achieved rather than the inputs used to get there.

2. **Nationally consistent** – state and territory registering bodies have worked together to develop and publish national guidelines to ensure consistent interpretation and implementation of AQTF 2010.
3. **Streamlined** – the standards for RTOs have been simplified and streamlined to focus on outcomes.
4. **Transparent** – national guidelines and handbooks are readily accessible.

This is a very brief history of VET. From *training.com.au* we find the following information:

The History of VET

Vocational education and training (VET) started in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, when institutions offered industry training and skills development in predominantly male trades, such as mechanics and mining.

For almost 100 years, VET focused on men working full-time in a narrow band of trade-related industries.

The 1960s And 1970s

In the 1960s and 1970s, industry and society began to change. Traditional manufacturing, mining and agricultural industries started to decline in economic significance and new communications and finance industries emerged. More women received an education and entered the workforce.

The 1974 Kangan Report on Needs in Technical and Further Education defined the roles and the mission of what is now known as the TAFE system. There was more preparatory and pre-vocational training and reduced growth in trade and technical training.

The 1980s

In the 1980s, service industries continued to expand at the expense of mining, manufacturing and construction (which had become TAFE's traditional territory). Networks of private training providers emerged to meet the needs of the service industries.

A number of reports pointed out that for the economy to prosper, the training system had to serve the needs of both the individual and industry.

The 1990s

The Deveson (Training Costs of Award Restructuring), Finn (Young People's Participation in Post-Compulsory Education & Training) and Carmichael Reports looked to:

- expand the training systems
- increase young people's participation in training
- develop a consolidated national system.

There was consensus across Australia that substantial VET reform and a unified national effort were needed.

In 1992, all states, territories and the Australian Government agreed to establish the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) and a cooperative VET system with strategic input from industry.

In 1994, the Fitzgerald Report on VET led to development of elements of the current system, including:

- concepts of 'best practice' and 'user choice'
- states and territories take responsibility for accreditation and standards endorsement
- a stronger and more coherent industry-led structure.

The late-1990s saw the introduction of New Apprenticeships, the establishment of the National Training Framework (NTF), the introduction of VET in schools and the development of Training Packages.

2000 And Beyond

On Friday 22nd 2004 October, the Prime Minister announced that, from 1 July 2005, the responsibilities and functions of the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) would be transferred to the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST).

In February 2006 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) asked the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE) to review and amend the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF).

Source: <http://www.training.com.au/portal/site/public/menuitem.3e365e26c4085888a392e51017a62dbc/>

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 1 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

VET POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS

When it comes to training and assessment, we do not work in isolation.

Instead, the way that we do all of our planning, training, assessment and evaluation is influenced by a whole lot of things. These things are generally called the policies and frameworks. Each of the policies and frameworks gives us some guidance for how to do a part of our job.

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND FRAMEWORKS IN THE VET SECTOR

If we are going to do our job as trainers properly, then there are some things that we really know about. If we don't, then chances are that we are not training/assessing in a way that we should be, which means that ultimately we could be:

1. breaking the law
2. not training people to the standard that industry requires (which, after all, is the point of vocational education & training)

So, what are some of the "big picture" things that we need to know about?

1. THE [AUSTRALIAN QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK](http://www.aqf.edu.au) ("THE AQF")
[<http://www.aqf.edu.au>]

From their website, we learn that:

The Australian Qualifications Framework (commonly known as the AQF) is a unified system of national qualifications in schools, vocational education and training (TAFEs and private providers) and the higher education sector (mainly universities)

An introduction to the AQF is provided in the following video:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5wSIvUDoq0>

2. THE [AUSTRALIAN QUALITY TRAINING FRAMEWORK](http://www.training.com.au/documents/Dezem_AQTF%20Essential%20Conditions%20and%20Standards%20for%20Continuing%20Registration_8%20June_3.pdf) ("THE AQTF")
[http://www.training.com.au/documents/Dezem_AQTF%20Essential%20Conditions%20and%20Standards%20for%20Continuing%20Registration_8%20June_3.pdf]

From their website, we learn that:

The Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) is the national set of standards which assures nationally consistent, high-quality training and assessment services for the clients of Australia's vocational education and training system. AQTF 2010 is the current version of the framework.

An introduction to the AQF is provided in the following video:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lokF3ERn4o0>

The AQTF2010 is made up of three components:

1. The Essential Standards for Registration
2. Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies
3. Excellence Criteria

As trainers/assessors, we need to be familiar with all components. For this course, it is enough to be familiar with the Essential Standards for Registration as they apply to Registered Training Organisations, which are summarised here:

**STANDARD 1 THE REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATION
PROVIDES QUALITY TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT ACROSS ALL OF
ITS OPERATIONS.**

Elements

- 1.1 The RTO collects, analyses and acts on relevant data for continuous improvement of training and assessment.
- 1.2 Strategies for training and assessment meet the requirements of the relevant Training Package or accredited course and are developed in consultation with industry.
- 1.3 Staff, facilities, equipment and training and assessment materials used by the RTO are consistent with the requirements of the Training Package or accredited course and the RTO's own training and assessment strategies.
- 1.4 Training and assessment is delivered by trainers and assessors who:
 - (a) have the necessary training and assessment competencies as determined by the National Quality Council or its successors, and
 - (b) have the relevant vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered or assessed, and
 - (c) can demonstrate current industry skills directly relevant to the training/assessment being undertaken, and
 - (d) continue to develop their Vocational Education and Training (VET) knowledge and skills as well as their industry currency and trainer/assessor competence.
- 1.5 Assessment including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):
 - (a) meets the requirements of the relevant Training Package or accredited course
 - (b) is conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence
 - (c) meets workplace and, where relevant, regulatory requirements
 - (d) is systematically validated.

**STANDARD 2 THE REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATION
ADHERES TO PRINCIPLES OF ACCESS AND EQUITY AND MAXIMISES
OUTCOMES FOR ITS CLIENTS.**

Elements

- 2.1 The RTO establishes the needs of clients, and delivers services to meet these needs.
- 2.2 The RTO continuously improves client services by collecting, analysing and acting on relevant data.
- 2.3 Before clients enrol or enter into an agreement, the RTO informs them about the training, assessment and support services to be provided, and about their rights and obligations.
- 2.4 Employers and other parties who contribute to each learner's training and assessment are engaged in the development, delivery and monitoring of training and assessment.
- 2.5 Learners receive training, assessment and support services that meet their individual needs.
- 2.6 Learners have timely access to current and accurate records of their participation and progress.
- 2.7 The RTO provides appropriate mechanisms and services for learners to have complaints and appeals addressed efficiently and effectively.

**STANDARD 3 MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS ARE RESPONSIVE TO THE
NEEDS OF CLIENTS, STAFF AND STAKEHOLDERS, AND THE
ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE REGISTERED TRAINING
ORGANISATION OPERATES.**

Elements

- 3.1 The RTO's management of its operations ensures clients receive the services detailed in their agreement with the RTO.
- 3.2 The RTO uses a systematic and continuous improvement approach to the management of operations.
- 3.3 The RTO monitors training and/or assessment services provided on its behalf to ensure that it complies with all aspects of the AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration.
- 3.4 The RTO manages records to ensure their accuracy and integrity.

3. THE WEBSITE TRAINING.GOV.AU (TGA)

From their website, we learn that:

the database on vocational education and training in Australia. TGA is the official national register of information on Training Packages, Qualifications, Courses, Units of Competency and

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and has been developed for experienced training sector users.

The TGA is really our first port of call, because it

Quote:

...helps you to perform basic and advanced searches and view details about: -

- *Registered Training Organisations;*
- *Nationally Recognised Training (training packages, qualifications, accredited courses, skill sets and units of competency);*
- *RTOs that are registered to deliver a particular NRT Product*

Note that TGA replaced the previous service NTIS (National Training Information Service) on 29 July 2011. A number of services will still refer to the NTIS, but all functionality is now replaced by TGA.

4. THE [Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations](#) (DEEWR)

From their website, we learn that this is the federal government department who

develop and implement policies to ensure the continuing relevance of education, science and training to contemporary needs and the growing requirement for lifelong learning.

There are also some other policies and frameworks that it is a good idea to have a solid understanding of:

- [Training Packages](#)
- [National Training Framework](#)
- [Traineeship System](#)
- [User Choice](#)

Just as there are policies and frameworks, there are organisations who influence what these policies/frameworks are. These are the [stakeholders](#).

GETTING INVOLVED

Policies and frameworks are put together by organisations. Organisations are made up of people. This means that we can each participate in the development of VET policy. Some ways that we could do this are by:

- attending workshops and consultations that the main [stakeholders](#) conduct
- providing a submission (by yourself or as part of your own organisation) and feedback to these organisations
- participating in forums, networks or conferences
- attending - and being active in - meetings held by training/assessment organisations

- participating in validation meetings, where we work with others to make sure that standards are being maintained at a level that industry wants
- conducting some research or consultancy, where we help to understand how we can do things better

Depending on which mailing lists or associations you belong to, you might also receive the following type of invitation to *Have Your Say*:

Not too late: Have your say in professional development opportunities (sent on behalf of Carol Hunter, Director Training Quality) Inbox | X

☆ **BURGESS, Annette**
[show details](#) 12:16 (2 hours ago)
[Reply](#) ▼

Good Afternoon

You recently received an email requesting your feedback on professional development opportunities that best meet your needs. Thank you to the many RTO's that have forward their feedback to us. We are busy collating this information.

If you wanted to respond but haven't yet been able to, it is not too late to have your views included. Please complete the attached survey form and return it by **COB 13 November**.

The purpose of this survey is to ensure that we provide you with the type of professional development opportunities most suited to your needs, we would appreciate you giving 5 minutes of your time to complete this short survey of your professional development preferences.

If you have any questions regarding the reasons we are conducting this survey, please contact Ms Annette Burgess, Project Manager, by phoning 07 3247 5257 or emailing Annette.e.burgess@deta.qld.gov.au.

Thank you in advance for your time and thoughtful feedback.

Yours sincerely

Carol Hunter
 Director, Training Quality
 Training and International Quality Division
 Department of Education and Training

KEEPING UP TO DATE

With so many frameworks, policies and organisations involved at both national and state/territory levels, things can change quite quickly and quite often. This makes it important for us to stay aware of these changes.

Ways to stay up to date include:

- Internet information from VET organisations and stakeholders such as the TGA, printed policies, newsletters, bulletins and publications of VET organisations and stakeholders

- products including revised Training Packages, support materials, and implementation guidelines research journals conference papers.
- periodically accessing the current AQTF2010 Standards publications (eg, from the AQTF website)

Perhaps the most popular sources of information are:

- the Training Packages@Work website and publication (which you can freely subscribe to at www.tpatwork.com).
- the VET and ACE e-News website and publication. This was discontinued late in 2009, but you can still get hold of the archived versions [here](http://www.edna.edu.au/edna/go/vet/vet_news/vet_enews):
http://www.edna.edu.au/edna/go/vet/vet_news/vet_enews
- NCVET News, which is from the federal mob who do a whole lot of research into VET (you can subscribe to it [here](http://www.ncvet.edu.au/newsevents/news.html): <http://www.ncvet.edu.au/newsevents/news.html>)

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 2 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

USER CHOICE

User Choice is a way that our government lets the person being trained determine where government funds for training go.

From the www.training.com.au website, we learn that

User Choice is a national policy governing the flow of public funds to registered training organisations (RTOs). The purpose of User Choice is to make vocational education and training (VET) more responsive to the needs of industry and employers.

User Choice policy works in conjunction with the Australian Apprenticeships system enabling employers and apprentices/trainees to:

- choose an RTO to best provide them with training service
- negotiate key aspects of training, such as where, how, and when it is provided.

How it works is that an employer and an apprentice or trainee can choose who will provide the training for the off-the-job part of an Apprenticeship or [Traineeship](#). The organisation could be a TAFE college or school or any other Registered Training Organisation that has been registered to deliver the training that the employer/trainee want.

VET STAKEHOLDERS

An introduction to the topic of VET Stakeholders is provided in the following video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7za0XAvTI>

When we talk about a stakeholder, we are talking about someone or some organisation that is interested in what is going on. When it comes to VET, there are a whole lot of organisations who are interested in making sure that things run smoothly. This is not surprising when we remember that the purpose of VET is to train people to do jobs. After all, jobs are fairly important things.

Some of the most important Stakeholders that we need to know about are included below.

[DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & WORKPLACE RELATIONS](http://www.deewr.gov.au/pages/default.aspx) (DEEWR, COMMONLY PRONOUNCED "DUE-ER") (<http://www.deewr.gov.au/pages/default.aspx>)

This federal department is responsible for all sorts of things that affect the daily life of Australians, including:

- early childhood
- schooling
- higher education
- skills
- youth
- employment
- workplace relations

You may have guessed that VET falls under the skills category. At the [Skills](#) Page of the DEEWR website, we learn that:

The training and skills sector, also known as vocational education and training or VET, gives Australians the opportunity to gain the skills they need to enter the workforce for the first time, to re-enter the workforce, to retrain for a new job or to upgrade their skills for an existing job. Australian Apprenticeships are available in traditional trades, and in a diverse range of emerging careers, in most sectors of business and industry.

The Australian Government takes a lead role in promoting a post-school education and training system that is nationally consistent and coherent; responsive to individual, industry and community needs; and recognised as providing quality outcomes. To achieve this, the Australian Government works with state and territory governments, education and training providers, and industry.

STATE & TERRITORY TRAINING AUTHORITIES

Because Australia has both federal/commonwealth and state levels of government, we find that each state/territory has its own way of ensuring that what it does helps to ensure the consistency that the National Training Framework requires.

Each of these Training Authorities has a say in what happens at a national level, and makes sure that these national policy and planning objectives are implemented.

From www.training.com.au, we learn that

Each Australian state and territory government has a training authority that administers vocational education and training (VET) – allocating funds, registering training organisations and accrediting courses.

The state and territory training authorities (STAs) are accountable to their minister, who is a member of the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE).

It is the responsibility of each STA to:

- plan and report on VET strategies
- purchase training on behalf of their government
- administer Australian Apprenticeships and VET in schools
- administer funding and financial incentives for VET within the state/territory
- support training organisations, employers and the community on VET issues
- accredit courses and register training providers within the Australian Quality Training Framework 2007 (AQTF2010)

Contact details for these authorities are included below:

New South Wales

NSW Vocational Education and Training
Accreditation Board
NSW Department of Education and Training
Ph: (02) 9244 5335
www.vetab.nsw.gov.au

Australian Capital Territory

ACT Accreditation and Registration Council
Department of Education and Training
Ph: (02) 6205 7091
www.arc.act.gov.au

Victoria

Victorian Registration and Qualifications
Authority
Ph: (03) 9637 2806
www.vrqa.vic.gov.au

Western Australia

Training Accreditation Council
Ph: (08) 9441 1910
www.tac.wa.gov.au

South Australia

Department of Further Education, Employment,
Science and Technology
Ph: (08) 8226 3065
www.training.sa.gov.au

Northern Territory

Employment and Training Division
Department of Employment, Education and
Training
Ph: (08) 8901 1340
www.deet.nt.gov.au

Queensland

Department of Education, Training and the Arts
Ph: 1300 369 935
www.trainandemploy.qld.gov.au

Tasmania

Tasmanian Qualifications Authority
Ph: (03) 6233 7708
www.tqa.tas.gov.au

[AUSTRALIAN QUALIFICATIONS COUNCIL \("THE AQF COUNCIL"\)](http://www.aqf.edu.au/aboutus/tabid/104/default.aspx)

(<http://www.aqf.edu.au/aboutus/tabid/104/default.aspx>)

From their website, we learn that they exist to:

provide Education and Training Ministers with strategic and authoritative advice on the AQF to ensure it is nationally and internationally robust and supports flexible cross-sectoral linkages and pathways.

Being part of the Australian Qualifications Framework the AQF Council works to make sure that the AQF framework is the best it can be, and through that ensure that vocational training in Australia responds to the needs of industry, of people, and remains world-class.

[INDUSTRY SKILLS COUNCILS \("ISCS"\)](http://www.isc.org.au/)

([HTTP://WWW.ISC.ORG.AU/](http://www.isc.org.au/))

There are 11 of these, whose aim to develop [Training Packages](#) that represent the needs that Australian industries have. Links to each of the 11 are available from their website.

They are funded by the federal government. From their website, we learn that this funding is meant to

- *provide industry intelligence and advice to Skills Australia, government and enterprises on workforce development and skills needs;*
- *actively support the development, implementation and continuous improvement of high quality training and workforce development products and services, including training packages;*
- *provide independent skills and training advice to enterprises, including matching identified training needs with appropriate training solutions; and*
- *work with enterprises, employment service providers, training providers and government to allocate training places.*

[AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIPS CENTRES](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/)
(<http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/>)

These replace the New Apprenticeship Centres. From their website, we learn that they

- *provide assistance to employers, Australian Apprentices and training providers throughout the duration of the Australian Apprenticeship*
- *market and promote Australian Apprenticeships in the local area*
- *administer incentive payments to employers*
- *work with the State and Territory Training Authorities to provide an integrated service*
- *establish effective relationships with Job Network providers, Group Training Organisations, Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), schools and community organisations*

NATIONAL AND STATE EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE ORGANISATIONS

Since vocational training & education relates to training for or at work, it is not surprising that employer and employee groups are interested in how VET operates. These organisations include such things as industry groups, unions, federations and so on.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 3 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

TRAINING PACKAGES

The cornerstone of training and assessment is the Training Package. The Training Package is essentially what an industry or group of industries uses to tell us what their training needs are. The basic idea is if we can do what the Training Package says to do, then people will have the skills that industry needs.

Some people say that this is not fair because it means that industry and business get everything that they want.

Another way of looking at it is that if people are trained in the way that a Training Package says, then they will possess the skills that make them employable.

So, it can work both ways. Industry benefits by having people who can do the job. People benefit by having more job prospects because they can do the job.

SO, WHAT IS A TRAINING PACKAGE?

Perhaps in simple terms, we could start by saying that a Training Package is a guide for training and a standard for assessment. According to www.training.com.au (which is an excellent resource), a Training Package is

- a set of nationally endorsed standards and qualifications used to recognise and assess the skills and knowledge people need to perform effectively in the workplace.
- Training Packages are a key resource for registered training organisations (RTOs) in the delivery of structured, accredited training.
- Training Packages are developed by industry through national industry skills councils (ISCs) or by enterprises to meet the identified training needs of specific industries or industry sectors.

Also, it is worth us knowing that they are:

- Funded by the Australian National Training Authority (DEST)
- Written in consultation with State and Territory training bodies and representatives from industry.
- Also called an Industry Training Package or a National Training Package.

Training Packages are the rock on which all nationally-recognised competency standards and qualifications are built. Because they are national in scope, they allow for standards to be set and reached nationally.

WHAT ARE THEY FOR?

There are many Training Packages, ranging from Automotive Manufacturing to Hairdressing to Funeral Services and beyond. In simple terms, there are Training Packages to suit most industries.

We can search for relevant information at the training.gov.au (TGA) database service. Unlike the previous service NTIS, (now defunct) it is not possible to view a list of Training Packages or the list of Industry Skills Councils all at once. However TGA has a considerably improved the search functionality, and access to all information online is improved.

EACH TRAINING PACKAGE HAS ENDORSED AND NON-ENDORSED COMPONENTS

The **Endorsed** components are the core parts that have and are subject to quality assurance to be sure that they meet industry requirements. These are the "must-haves", and include:

- Qualifications
- Competency Standards
- Assessment Guidelines

The **Non-Endorsed** components are the optional parts. We can call them "guidelines" because they help us, but we do not all have to follow them in the same way. Instead, these are the things that the deliverers of the training can choose to support the delivery of the endorsed parts. Commonly, these include:

- learning strategies
- assessment resources

- professional development materials

A SIMPLE STRUCTURE

Thinking big to small, we find that:

Each industry has a Skills Council	eg. Manufacturing Industry Skills Council
Each Skills Council puts together Training Packages	eg. AUM08 Automotive Manufacturing
Each Training Package contains Qualifications	eg. AUM25108 Certificate II in Automotive Manufacturing (Bus/Truck/Trailer)
Each Qualification contains Units of Competency	eg. AUM8041B Prepare materials for fabrication using jigs/fixtures

If you explore the links in the right hand column above, you will see how from the level of the Industry Skills Council things become increasingly specific. We start big, then slowly work our way down from industry sector (eg in the above example, Automotive Manufacturing) to AQF Level (eg, in the above example, AQF Level II - because it is a Certificate II) to specific task that someone working at that level in that industry sector is needed to do (eg, in the above example, preparing materials for fabrication using jigs/fixtures).

Of course, if we go the other way and start at the bottom, we can see that preparing materials for fabrication at this Certificate II level is needed for the Automotive Manufacturing industry so that they can do the things they need to be able to do and at the standard that they need to be able to do them. Taking it one step further, when we provide quality training in preparing materials for fabrication, then we are helping support industry in general, and that helps Australia in general.

So, that's what it is all about!

How do we use one? An example...

Okay. This course, the TAE10 – Certificate IV in Training & Assessment is part of a training package. This Training Package is the [Training & Education Training Package](#). If you click on that link, the Training Package will open in a new window so that you can refer to it for the remainder of this section.

The first thing we see is that this Training Package has been put together by the Innovation and Industry Skills Council. Further down, we see the list of Training Package components – at least some of the endorsed parts that we mentioned earlier. To see the others we will need to download the full document, which is made available in Word or PDF versions under the Release History section near the top.

If we move back down to the Components section we will discover what Qualifications can be delivered as part of this Training Package, and there are seven, from this course Certificate IV, through to Vocational Graduate Diploma.

Further down, we will find a list of Skill Sets – these are groups of units that do not form a qualification in themselves, but are recognised as providing a specific set of skills for the workplace. They are typically part of a qualification, so for example the TAE10 Assessor Skill Set includes three assessment units of competency that together form a skill set that can be used independently in the workplace (in this case assessment) or can (with further study) become a full qualification.

Further down still, we will find a list of all of the Units of Competency that we can use to form part of any qualification in the TAE10 Training Package. To have a look at any of the Units of Competency, we simply click on their title.

But before we get too carried away, we need to think about something. If the training that is required can relate to a bigger qualification, or can lead to an actual qualification, then using **formal competency standards** from Training Packages is important. But, let's face it, not all training is part of a bigger course of study or qualification. So, we might just choose some **informal competency standards** instead – these are ones that we can make up ourselves for our own particular needs.

WHY TRAINING PACKAGES CHANGE

You'll note that throughout the wiki the text refers to the TAE04 Training Package, or the predecessor to the TAE10 Training Package that contains the TAE40110 qualification that you are actually enrolled in. You may be aware that the training package was updated last year, and sometime soon we will go through the process of updating the entire wiki to reflect this.

But why did they change it? Well as Industry needs change, grow and adapt, so do the training requirements. After all, these qualifications exist to support industry, not the other way around. That's why you'll notice in the TGA that quite a number of Training packages are listed as superseded. In fact our course now has gone through a number of changes...

[BSZ98 Assessment and Workplace Training \(Superseded by TAE04\)](#)
[TAE04 Training and Assessment Training Package](#) (Now largely superseded by the TAE10)
[TAE10 Training and Education](#)

So the original Workplace training qualification was formulated back in 1998, but in 2004 it was updated and became part of the TAE04 Training Package. While the TAE04 still has a diploma level

qualification current, the remainder has been superseded by TAE10, which, not surprisingly, was issued in (May) 2010. Usually there is a twelve month changeover period or so between updates. You'll find this code system throughout all Training Packages – a three letter code describing the Industry sector, then a two number code indicating the year the Training Package was approved.

In most cases you'll find a similar code system for the qualifications themselves: **xxx_yzz_{xx}** Where **xxx_{xx}** is the Training package, **y** indicates the AQF level of the qualification (**1-4** = Certificate, **5** = Diploma) and **zz_{xx}** is the number of the qualification. To express that another way,

TAE40110 – TAE 40110 is the first qualification at level 4 of the TAE10 Training Package.
(Certificate IV in Training and Assessment)
The BSB 40207 is the second qualification at level 4 of the BSB07 Training Package
(Certificate IV in Business)

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN?

If we understand that a Training Package is designed to provide people skilled for a job, then we can know how to make sense of a Training Package to find which qualifications and units might be appropriate for our needs, and what we might need in order to deliver it. The next thing to know then is how to understand a Unit of Competency.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 4 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

NATIONAL TRAINING FRAMEWORK

When someone talks about the National Training Framework ("the NTF"), they are talking about the way that government and industry come together to make sure that training is delivered at an acceptable standard.

From [DEEWR's website](http://www.deewr.gov.au) (www.deewr.gov.au), we learn that:

the NTF is a nationally consistent, industry-led system designed to:

- 1. provide high-quality skill outcomes to maintain individuals' employability and increase their productivity*
- 2. provide for nationally recognised qualifications, and*
- 3. improve the competitiveness of enterprises and the nation.*

Training organisations must be registered under the AQTF in order to deliver, assess and issue Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications or statements of attainment in endorsed Training Packages and accredited courses.

The National Training Framework is made up of two parts:

1. VET Policies & Frameworks
2. Nationally endorsed [Training Packages](#) (ie, the ones that are listed at [TGA](#))

The beauty of the National Training Framework is that it ensures that no matter where you do your training, you can be sure that it is at a standard that is same as anyone else anywhere else in the country.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 5 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

STRATEGIC & BUSINESS PLANNING

All Registered Training Organisations are required to have two types of planning:

1. Business Plans
2. Strategic Plans

These tell us how the RTO plans to manage itself to be able to deliver its courses. They include all sorts of information, including planned projects, budgeting, work roles and responsibilities.

STRATEGIC PLANS ARE NOT THE SAME AS BUSINESS PLANS

A **Strategic Plan** contains the "big-picture" plan. It commonly includes the following information:

- goals for the immediate future
- goals for the mid to long term future
- major projects to be commenced/completed
- resources required for operations
- performance measures
- organisational structure
- information and reporting systems
- time frames and deadlines

A **Business Plan** contains information that helps the RTO to work toward the "big-picture" plan. It commonly includes the following information:

- profit and productivity targets
- marketing activities
- training activities
- cost estimates
- time frames and deadlines

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Since one of the aims of the [National Training Framework](#) is consistency of training, it is important that RTOs - and individual trainers - be mindful of ways to ensure that we meet the required quality.

Each RTO is required to have processes, procedures and/or policies that maintain the quality of two things:

1. service to clients (ie, the standard of training)
2. management of the RTO itself (ie, the standard of the organisation's own self-management)

QUALITY ASSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CLIENTS

These can include processes, procedures and/or policies for:

- enrolment, induction or orientation
- complaints, grievances & appeals
- assessment, including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- pre-assessment and appeals
- identification of training support requirements (such as language, literacy & numeracy needs)
- fees
- privacy
- access & equity
- welfare & guidance
- issuance of qualifications
- recognition of qualifications, credit and articulation arrangements (ie, what happens for people who have already done some study somewhere else?)

INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS (FOR RTOS)

To maintain their registration, RTOs not only need to have a range of Internal Quality Assurance arrangements, they must also be able to show evidence that they exist *and are used*. These arrangements can include processes, procedures and/or policies for:

- risk management
- continuous improvement
- occupational health and safety (OHS)
- equal employment opportunity (EEO)
- discrimination and workplace harassment
- staff disciplinary procedures
- financial management
- records management
- management of educative materials
- recruitment and induction of staff
- staff qualifications
- professional and staff development

To check on the requirements to become an RTO, or to retain your registration as an RTO, it is important to keep up to date. Common ways are by periodically checking the [DEEWR](#) website, or by reading other VET publications to which you might subscribe.

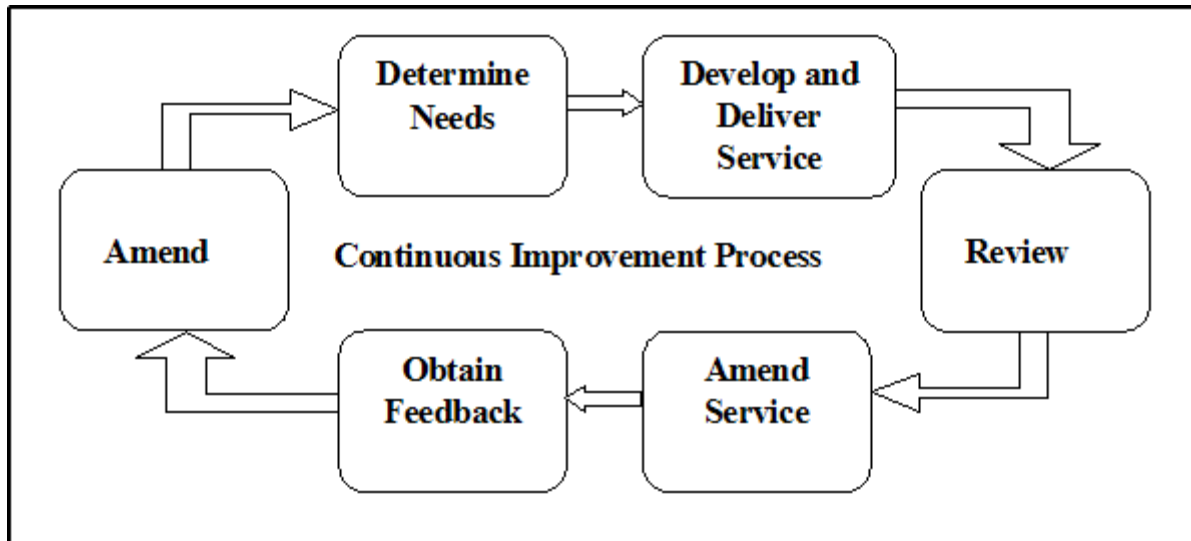
THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 6 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT MODEL

To help us ensure that our [continuous improvement](#) processes are followed properly, we can refer to pictorial models. By seeing the steps in a diagram, we are often better able to picture what has to be done and in what order.

The following is an example of a Continuous Improvement Model:



We will come back to Continuous Improvement a little bit later, in Section 14. For now, it is a good idea to see how this diagram could apply to your current work.

LEGAL & ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES

As trainers, we must join with our employer to uphold a number of legal requirements. It is not only the law that says that we should do these things, but by doing them we can be sure that the service we provide to our clients will be better.

The following table gives an overview of the main legal and ethical responsibilities of RTOs and trainers. After the table, we will have a look in more detail at the OHS and Workplace Relations requirements of RTOs.

LEGAL AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF RTOS AND TRAINERS

Responsibility	Description
Occupational Health & Safety	There are laws that require us and our managers to make sure that we provide a <u>safe work environment</u> for staff and clients, and to make sure that we have a system in place to record and report any workplace injuries.
Anti-Discrimination	It is important that we ensure that access to training and promotion for our staff is fair and equitable. This is addressed through the <u>Anti-Discrimination Act 1977</u> .
<u>Equal Employment Opportunity</u>	We have to make sure that nobody is disadvantaged just because they might have a particular need. This may mean that we adjust the location, timing or content of some planned training event to ensure that it will not disadvantage any individual or group of employees.
State & Territory VET Acts	Funding for VET is controlled by federal laws. It is a good idea to be aware of the <u>Policies and Frameworks</u> affecting VET at the State/Territory level.
CRICOS (Overseas Students)	Before anyone can provide courses to overseas students, they need to be registered through the <u>Australian Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS)</u> . We can also use this resource to find courses and providers for overseas students.
Industrial Awards, Employer Contracts	How we deal with staff working conditions, entitlements and remuneration is governed by laws at both federal and state/territory levels. <u>Workplace</u> is an excellent first port of call to find out more.
Environmental Standards	We must be aware that all of our activities should meet certain <u>environmental standards</u> , with examples of issues including the control of pollution emissions, and recycling.

Responsibility**Description**

Duty of Care	<p>It is important that we and our employing organisations provide a safe and hazard free environment for staff and students (and everyone else, too). Safe Work Australia gives us more guidelines, including about things like liability and finance requirements.</p> <p>When it comes to learning, we need to be mindful of three laws:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disability Discrimination Act 2. Sex Discrimination Act 3. Racial Discrimination Act <p>We can make sure that we address these issues by responding the individual needs of individual learners.</p>
Providing support to learners appropriate to their needs	
Maintaining Privacy & Confidentiality	<p>This is an important issue that relates to the Privacy & Personal Information Act, which gives us guidelines for how we collect, use and share the personal details about our staff and students.</p>
Code of Practice for Assessors	<p>This is a voluntary Code of Practice for all assessors and gives guidelines for how to deal with things like conflict of interest and bribery</p>

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY (OHS)

RTOs (and all other organisations, for that matter) must keep an eye on how they implement the OHS requirements for their workplace. The things that they need to monitor include:

OHS legislation in their state

- OHS management systems
- how they manage OHS in their own workplace
- how they manage OHS risk in the workplace
- how they review their OHS procedures
- how they manage workplace injury and workers' compensation matters

If an RTO cannot show evidence that they do these things, then they may find that they risk losing their registration. Because of how important OHS is, we find that many organisations have person or team who handle these issues and work out what training and processes need to be undertaken to make sure that all requirements are met.



WORKPLACE RELATIONS

RTOs work with people. Some of these people are employees, some are contractors, some are clients. Because of this, they need to make sure that they manage their staff in such a way that they meet the requirements of any of the following that may apply at any particular time:

- industrial awards
- enterprise agreements
- employment contracts
- codes of conduct
- partnership agreements

Managing this aspect of the organisation often involves working with other people and organisations. These commonly include:

- employers
- employees
- unions
- federations

If we think back over the past few years, we can think of a number of changes to how staff are managed. With that in mind, we need to make sure that we keep up to date to make sure that we are meeting our legal responsibilities.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 1 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

SEEKING FEEDBACK

We seek feedback to make sure that we are doing for others what we think are we doing. We have to do this for two reasons:

1. the AQTF says that we have to
2. quite simply, we cannot know if we are doing a good job unless we ask

There things that we most commonly seek feedback about are:

- methods of delivery - were they suitable? did they help people learn what we intended?
- assessment strategies - were they fair and reliable?
- resources - were they relevant? were they useful?
- learning outcomes - were they effective?
- venues - were they accessible? were they comfortable?

The people we commonly seek feedback from are:

- clients
- employees
- employers
- managers
- colleagues
- third parties

The ways we commonly seek feedback are:

- interviews - individuals or groups
- focus groups
- surveys
- questionnaires
- email questions
- formal and/or informal meetings

An example of a feedback form is provided on the following page.

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Course Content						
<i>The Learning Day was taught at a level I could understand.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>The Learning Day was relevant to my job.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>The material was interesting.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Course Structure						
<i>There was the right mix of practical and theory.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Participation was encouraged</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>The training aids and notes were effective.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>The length of the Learning Day was about right.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Let's look at an example.

Another way that we collect feedback is from our students while they are engaging with our learning materials. For example, one of our students (let's call her Janet) of this course found a spelling error on this very page.

Janet added a comment to the bottom of this page. Whenever a comment is made anywhere in the wiki, I receive an automatic notification, and so the error was fixed within 10 minutes of being detected. We have a number of students who are really quite good at spotting errors, and rather than criticise them for being picky, we like to encourage them because they help us to do better the job that we need to do. So, thanks "Janet".

HOW TO GET HONEST FEEDBACK

It is important that we remember that how we go about getting feedback will affect the quality of the feedback that we receive. If we want to receive honest feedback, then we need to make sure that we:

- use open forms of communication (body language, questions, non-judgemental language)
- being receptive to the responses that people provide, rather than being defensive
- ask specific questions if we want specific feedback
- always include open questions to allow general feedback to be given, and to allow the person giving the feedback to feel comfortable

Sometimes, it is useful to use structured processes to collect and use feedback. Doing this gives everyone involved the confidence to know that the feedback is going to be used to improve things.

One such process is Dwyer's Six Step Approach to Problem Solving. The following table outlines the steps briefly, but if you would like to know more, then check out the resource at:

http://www.valpo.edu/afrotc/FTP1_6StepSolvingProcess.pdf.

Step	Strategy
1. Select the best time.	Choose a time when both or all members involved with the problem are relatively calm. If one party has strong or uncomfortable feelings, it will be difficult to communicate.
2. Define needs.	Needs are defined by listening and sharing with each other. It is important to discover the basic needs of each party at the start, and not jump in too early with solutions.
3. Brainstorm solutions.	It is important to list every solution suggested and not evaluate or judge any of them at this stage.
4. Evaluate solutions.	Everyone must do more listening and talking ('I' statements) here so all ideas and feelings about each proposed solution are heard and valued.
5. Choose solutions	Pick solutions that everyone can agree on, then plan when and how to carry them out.
6. Carry out solutions.	Check to see how the solutions are working. Listening and sharing at this point are important to resolve any further problems.

FEEDBACK IS PART OF REVIEW

Once we have obtained some feedback, it is sensible to think about how valid it is and if it should be acted upon.

A common way to assess if feedback is valid and worth acted on is to discuss it with other people. Quite often, we can get a better understanding of feedback by getting someone impartial to have a look over it - that way we remove any of our own biases. Be careful, however, because you might simply be replacing your own biases with someone else's. A way around this is to involve more people, including people who might be in no way related to the thing that you have collected feedback about.

Once you have decided to act upon your feedback, then you must decide what is the best way to improve your work practices.

The following table shows us some the things that might be changed after we receive feedback within the VET sector:

FEEDBACK

- amendment of materials
- addition of new materials
- reorganisation of materials
- omission of materials
- clarification of information
- alternative examples and scenarios created
- alternative assessment methods developed
- alternative venue or location
- additional equipment
- alternative equipment
- different trainer or assessor
- change to duration of learning
- change to class numbers.

REVIEWING OURSELVES

There are a number of ways that we can reflect on our abilities. Some of these are shown below.

- asking critical questions about our own ability, what did not work, and how the relationship-building process could be improved
- reviewing records and journals on sessions and critically evaluating our own performance
- reviewing feedback from learners and colleagues and identifying critical aspects and areas for improvement
- comparing our practice to industry standards
- comparing our practice to colleagues
- analysing statistical data on the success rate for learners with regard to the learning program and post-program progress

Ideally, we will do this sort of reflections on an ongoing basis to ensure our skills stay current and appropriate to the needs of learners.

IMPROVING OURSELVES

Reflection is only effective if we act on it. If we find areas in which we could improve then, just like we do with our learners, we need to plan for that. And, just like our learners, we can undertake a range of [structured and other learning activities](#) that are developed as part of a [Personal Professional Development Plan](#).

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 2 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

MANAGING OUR WORKLOAD

It will come as no surprise that a key to doing good work is being able to manage your workload. So, if we are to ensure that we work well in the VET sector, we need to be able to manage that work. That is why this course includes the following tips for how to plan, prioritise and organise our work.

PLANNING OUR WORK

Some of the things we can do to plan our work are:

- planning your work or projects in line with time frames for company goals
- analysing your workload to see if any tasks or projects can be delegated
- analysing your workload to see if additional resources can be called on to assist you
- establishing milestones and deadlines for projects or tasks
- factoring in leave, holidays and weekends
- using realistic time estimates for completion of work.

PRIORITISING OUR WORK

Some of the things we can do to prioritise our work are:

- aligning your work with the goals of the company by prioritising the work or projects that will help to achieve the goals of the company
- determining if it is more beneficial to do a little of each task at a time or concentrate on just one
- adjusting the priority of tasks in line with changes to company goals and priorities
- analysing which tasks have the biggest impact on other areas if they fall behind or are not completed
- analysing your work to determine which tasks can be completed with the least effort and time (biggest return for smallest investment).

ORGANISING OUR WORK

Some of the things we can do to organise our work are:

- determining which software and systems will most assist us in our work
- establishing a uniform systematic approach to tasks
- establishing a systematic approach to file naming, saving, filing and archiving
- using a daily, weekly and monthly diary or planner
- organising our workspace so we can clearly identify incoming, pending and completed work
- organising your workspace so others can clearly identify important information from redundant information.

ORGANISING OUR DOCUMENTS

Being able to organise our written records is very important. RTOs are required to keep student records for 30 years, and all written and printed records are required to have evidence of some sort of version control.

Most organisations have requirements for how documents are produced, including things like logos, naming structures, text size & font requirements, etc. Quite often, they will have templates for the most common types of documents that they use, such as letters and assessment record sheets.

This means that if you are involved in producing documents, it is a good idea that you first find out any requirements that your organisation has for the following:

- record keeping and filing systems
- planning, preparing and storing business documents
- distributing workplace information

To make sure that we do not end up with masses of documents, but little in the way of useable information, it is worth the time and effort to set up good procedures for collecting and storing documents in such a way that they can be accessed at a later time.

SEEKING HELP & SUPPORT

No one is expected to be able to do everything all the time. Nor are they expected to know everything.

When we are working in an organisation, there are often issues that arise that require the support or guidance of other people. Some of the more common issues are:

- time pressures
- work overload
- competing demands
- unexpected events and contingencies
- technology problems
- relations with other staff
- client issues and relations

Because these things are usually caused by other factors within the organisation, it is important to involve others in finding ways to deal with them. Speaking with supervisors, coordinators, managers and sometimes colleagues can often lead to these issues being resolved very easily.

COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS

No doubt we have all heard the saying, *two heads are better than one*. But, what does it mean when it comes to work?

In simple terms, it means that if we get together with a specific task or outcome in mind, then chances are we will achieve more than if we were to just do it by ourselves. This kind of working together is called **Collaboration**.

Workplaces where collaboration is common can be identified by these features:

- a focus on team and company goals
- a willingness to work on multiple projects
- empowerment of staff to undertake new and challenging tasks
- open communication
- vertical (between organisational levels) and horizontal
- flat management structures
- multiple communication methods and channels
- transparent decision making
- collaborative decision making
- frequent opportunities for feedback and input

- communication channels (between colleagues)
- information sharing.

HOW TO WORK COLLABORATIVELY

It is one thing to say that collaboration is a good thing. But it is another to know how to do it, and even harder to actually work in such a way that we encourage collaboration. Some of the most important skills for collaboration are related to communication.

We can see some of these in the following checklist.

As I Work in a Team, do I:	Very Successfully	Successfully	Unsuccessfully
Listen?	?	?	?
Give feedback?	?	?	?
Ask questions?	?	?	?
Present ideas?	?	?	?
Influence others?	?	?	?
Handle conflict?	?	?	?
Contribute to decisions?	?	?	?

An easy way to check if you are likely to be encouraging collaboration in your workplace is to ask yourself the above questions. If you answered unsuccessfully for any of the questions, then that tells you an area in which you could improve your collaboration skills.

BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Of course, it is very easy to talk about what good communication involves. But it is also important to recognise the things that can get in the way of good communication, especially those things that might never actually get said. These are the barriers to communication, and if they are not recognised then they cannot be addressed. And if they are not addressed, then whatever it is that we need to communicate about will not get done.

Common barriers to communication in VET include:

- lack of understanding of specialist issues, such as a need for [using plain English](#) or for focusing more on candidate safety.
- explanations that may not be easily understood by everyone present, because the words that are used might not be familiar to everyone (think of some VET words, like pathway, validation, framework, etc)
- conflicting interests, when the motivations for the people are different. The [case of me assessing Steve](#) as competent could lead to communication difficulties and challenges to [group dynamics](#).

The following video introduces many of the benefits of collaboration, in the context of a large multinational business. While it might seem a bit out of our league, there are many aspects of what Caterpillar has done that we too can adopt in our own work.

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mNCb7QsAb3I>

CONTINUALLY IMPROVING CLIENT SERVICE

As part of our commitment to focusing on [clients' needs](#), we can put in place some things that will enable us to continually get better at what we do.

This is called **continuous improvement**.

WHAT IS CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT?

The first thing to note is that Continuous Improvement is part of a [Quality Assurance](#) system.

An effective quality system needs to include processes that encourage and achieve Continuous Improvement - that is, systematic, ongoing efforts to improve an organisation's performance against the attributes of quality which are most important to consumers, employees, board members, funding bodies and the community.

Continuous Improvement goes under many different names - sustainable business excellence, continual process improvement, best practice. Whatever terminology is used, though, the essential features remain the same:

- **WHO** - all stakeholders in the organisation should have the opportunity to be involved - managers, staff, consumers and their advocates. To ensure a systematic approach, clearly defined responsibilities and resources are needed.
- **WHEN** - Continuous Improvement is undertaken as an ongoing cycle, which is repeated over and over. As customers' requirements and the service delivery environment changes, organisations need to respond with new ideas and new ways of working.

- **WHAT** - the focus is on the key processes an organisation uses to meet the needs of its customers. For example with disability employment services and rehabilitation, services, these requirements are defined by the Disability Services Standards.
- **WHY** - Continuous Improvement makes good business sense. It's about working smarter in striving to achieve our stated goals. particularly when it's so easy to become overwhelmed by the day-to-day demands of keeping the business going.

HOW DOES CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT LINK WITH QUALITY ASSURANCE?

Continuous Improvement is an integral component of a new quality system for any enterprise.

For example, with disability employment services and rehabilitation services for example these go along with quality assurance and the complaints and appeals mechanisms.

Continuous Improvement is generally conducted internally by the service, and allows the service to constantly review its performance against the particular Standards and to plan ongoing improvements.

The real value of Continuous Improvement as part of the overall quality system is its potential to create stronger, more sustainable businesses that better meet the needs of all consumers. A Continuous Improvement culture means that businesses, RTOs NGOs, Services can accommodate change and continually develop a service quality that is of value to all of its consumers.

HOW DO WE DO IT?

Quite simply, we do it by not getting too set in our ways. Instead, we keep looking at what we are doing and how we are doing it to make sure that it is client-focused and customer friendly. To help us to do this, we need to collect feedback from our clients.

The sorts of processes that can be used include:

- feedback forms
- questionnaires
- oral surveys
- analysis of complaints
- analysis for clients terminating services
- competitor surveys
- rewards programs
- collaborative work practices
- work practices compared to benchmarks.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

To get an idea of how the idea of continuous improvement applies in the world of business and industry, have a look at the following clip. Since our work in the VET support business and industry, it is a good idea to understand some of the common links between what we do as trainers and what industry wants to achieve. Continuous improvement is one of these common links.

Video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Ckkcl_QmZM

Information in this section relates to TASK 7 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

FOCUSING ON CLIENT NEEDS

Focusing on the needs of our clients just makes sense. After all, it is their needs that we are trying to meet. If we meet their needs, then we have done a good job, and will probably get more work. If we do not meet their needs, then we might find that our work runs out (and that our RTO registration is at risk).

WHO ARE OUR CLIENTS?

To work out if we are focusing on our clients' needs, we must first work out who our clients are. This might sound a bit silly, but quite often we can forget that the person who we are training is just one of many clients. The following list shows some internal and external clients:

- individual learners
- students
- apprentices/trainees
- candidates for assessment
- enterprises or industry
- other part of the training and assessment organisation
- government departments or agencies.

Here's an example.

I deliver this TAE10 Certificate IV course to Jan. Jan is employed by ABC Enterprises, who have given her time off to do the course. But, she is not paying for the course herself. Instead, she is receiving funding from the government to help her to return to work.

In this situation, who are my clients? Jan, ABC Enterprises and the government department who is paying for the course.

By knowing that there are more clients than just Jan, I can better plan a course to meet all of their needs.

UNDERSTANDING NEEDS

Although what clients want can vary quite a bit, there are some fairly common needs and expectations:

- include a focus on individual learner objectives such as new skills, specific competencies, target qualifications, new career, career advancement, improved language, language and numeracy skills
- include a preference for particular learning styles
- involve specific learning support systems
- reflect individualised enterprise or organisational training and skill requirements
- be impacted upon by national and State and Territory policy and funding parameters.

DISCOVERING NEEDS

When it comes to training and assessment, the easiest way to find out what our clients' needs are is to ask them.

It is surprising how often this does not happen, and how many issues that come out of training could have been avoided if clients were asked first.

The way I do it is to give my students a phone call. I find that spending a few minutes doing this is a great way to start an effective learning relationship and helps me discover any particular needs that I should plan to cater for.

A more common approach is to include a participant survey form at the time of enrolment. An example of one is included here:

Name:

Course:

We would like to find out about you before the course begins. Please answer the questions that apply to you, and add any other comments or suggestions. This information will be kept private and confidential.

Question

Answer

What is your current level of skill?

What level of skill would you like to have?

What do you hope to achieve by completing this course?

Do you have any specific needs or concerns that might affect your learning?

Are there any specific ways we can help you complete this course?

Any other comments or suggestions?

Thank you for your time.

COMMUNICATING FOR LEARNING

Being able to discover and meet the needs of our clients requires that we have some key interpersonal and communication skills. If we have these skills, then we are better able to create a relationship with our clients that enable them to see our point of view and understand why we do what we do. This is important, because there are often times when we just cannot meet their expectations (such as when a [Unit of Competency](#) requires us to go over some material that the client does not want to do). In these situations, being able to communicate well can lead to our client shifting their expectations. If they can shift their expectations, then they will be more satisfied with the outcome.

There are some wonderfully simple things that we can do to improve our ability to communicate with our learners and clients. The following clip shows us a few, including pausing for effect, leading conversations and observing responses.

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6YduUhMmIU>

Some effective **communication** and **interpersonal skills** are listed below.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- use ice-breakers as appropriate
- build rapport with the learner
- use effective verbal and body language
- demonstrate a capacity to communicate clearly to facilitate the learning
- use critical listening and questioning techniques
- provide constructive and supportive feedback accurately interpret nonverbal messages
- assist learners to paraphrase advice or instructions to the trainer or facilitator
- provide clear and concrete options and advice
- use appropriate terminology and language of the industry or profession

- ensure language, literacy and numeracy (LLN.) used is appropriate to the learner

EFFECTIVE INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- show respect for the expertise and background of the learner
- demonstrate sensitivity to diversity, disability, culture, gender and ethnic backgrounds
- model facilitation and learning behaviours
- engage in two-way interaction
- encourage the expression of diverse views and opinions negotiate complex discussions by establishing a supportive environment
- use language and concepts appropriate to cultural differences
- accurately interpret non-verbal messages
- demonstrate empathy
- use open non-verbal communication
- acknowledge the other person build a positive relationship

These are all great ideas, and they can be really effective if we base our choice of communication skills on the preferred learning styles of our learner. We have learned elsewhere that there are different ways of learning, with a common way to classify learning styles including three categories: Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic.

The following video introduces some of the ways that learning style can influence communication.

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6DGrb8QTpR4>

ENCOURAGING RESPONSIBILITY

To encourage responsibility and active participation among your learners, it is essential to state clearly:

1. what the outcomes are
2. what the learning activities are.

As part of the learning process, adult participants will gain more than simply the information provided in a training session. They will also learn:

- generic skills
- organisational skills
- management skills
- creative thinking skills

But, to gain the most of the opportunity to learn these things, we must encourage participants to recognise that they have certain responsibilities for their own learning. These include:

- self-management

- how to learn
- initiative, enterprise and innovation
- team work.

Let's look at each of these in a bit more detail.

SELF-MANAGEMENT

Participants must understand that nobody will police their self directed learning activities. Weaknesses in these key areas may necessitate additional training in perhaps a time management course.

HOW TO LEARN

Participants' previous training may have provided them with all the required texts, research and reading, so it may come as a shock if they have to source much of this material themselves.

As we mature, it becomes more difficult to retrieve information from our memory banks. You may be able to help participants recognise and understand their individual learning styles and choose appropriate strategies to fit.

INITIATIVE, ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION

Through their work and life experiences, adults are likely to have identified different, more creative ways to undertake and complete projects.

A successful trainer should endeavour to identify, support and recognise this skill and its contribution to peer learning.

TEAM WORK

Group-based activities enable the participant to gain or enhance their team-work skills. Effective team activities include:

- group discussion
- case studies
- group activity and projects.

Role play requires individuals to work together and enhances:

- collaborative skills
- acceptance and tolerance

- open communication
- setting, achieving and recognising group objectives.

SETTING THE SCENE

The most effective learning occurs when the learners take responsibility for their learning and actions.

Some people in our training will be feeling uncomfortable. This could be because it is a new environment, because they are there begrudging, because they have not been involved in learning for a long time, or any number of other reasons. It is up to us to make them comfortable.

One of the easiest things that we can do improve learner comfort is to let them know what to expect during the session/s and how to use the resources.

What You Will Use

How You Will Use It

Materials

- If you use a workbook, explain its layout. This will help participants refer back to other material as they progress.
- If the session is broken down into sections, explain how the material corresponds to those sections.
- Explain how any loose sheets may be coded.

Resources

- Clarify how and why you will use any overhead projections, flip charts, audio/visuals, computers and the like.
- You might explain that overheads are a bullet point summary of a particular idea and that more detailed information is available in the support material.
- Explain your session won't be just chalk and talk.
- Sell what you have on offer - promote your enjoyable learning activities.

Activities

- Explain why you use case studies.
- Clarify the informal rules for group work, such as allowing everyone in the group to have an opinion and contribute.
- Reassure the group that the tasks will be within their capability and that you will give clear guidelines for all activities.

VALUING CONTRIBUTIONS

It is also important to make learners feel that their contribution is highly valued. This is especially critical when our group of learners presents us with a range of learner diversity. We must [encourage individuals](#) and [communicate respectfully](#). One way of doing this is to demonstrate empathy wherever possible.

Empathy is the ability to understand another person and feel as they feel.

Empathetic people:

- listen actively to what is being said
- are objective
- understand the feelings of others
- recognise nonverbal clues
- understand the content of the message
- communicate their understanding to others

When you work one-on-one with learners:

- speak clearly
- be specific about what is to be done
- be specific about time, quality, quantity and safety
- be calm and confident in your delivery
- make sure your instructions are understood
- seek feedback
- monitor progress
- provide feedback, thanks and praise as often as possible.

WHY USE A TRAINING PACKAGE OR OTHER ACCREDITED COURSE?

Before we deliver any training to people or client organisations, we must first work out what is it that training can provide to those people or organisation that they do not already have.

In some cases, there may not be any benefit of additional training. This is especially the case when:

- the training is a repeat of something that has been done before
- the training is not relevant to the actual needs of the people or organisation

So, to make sure that we can work out which training/assessment is most appropriate, we are wise to first find out what are the actual needs of the people/client.

HOW DO WE FIND OUT THE NEEDS?

We ask.

The easiest and most time effective way to find out what clients hope to achieve is by asking them. These conversations give us the chance to confirm that what the client is asking for is really matched to what it is that they need.

Think about it: If we chose a Training Package before understanding the needs of our client, then it is possible that our client would be receiving training that in no way gives them what they want, let alone what they might actually need.

What types of needs are there?

Let's face it, there are as many needs as there are people. But, if we narrow ourselves to the most common client groups, then we can also narrow down the possible people who we can talk to to find out what are the needs that we might have to address.

Our clients could be:

- A group of learners
- An individual learner
- Candidates for assessment
- A business or enterprise
- Organisations such as government departments or agencies
- Internal clients such as other staff within an RTO or training organisation

This means that people who could be helpful for us to talk to about the training needs could include:

- The people in the organisation who are responsible for training
- Supervisors in the organisation, who may have themselves experienced inadequate work practices and/or gaps in worker performance
- Representative groups from within your client's industry, who might know what some common training requirements are

And, let's not forget, we can also learn much about the training needs by talking with the learners themselves. By having conversations with these people, we can find out what they hope to achieve from the training.

Once we have talked to our clients, we can better understand what their training, assessment or learning needs are. Common needs include:

- Individual or multiple competencies from one or more Training Packages.
- Full qualification from a Training Package
- Traineeship/apprenticeship or other work requirement
- Upskilling in some areas
- Professional development

- Promotional pathways
- Maintaining currency
- [Recognition of Prior Learning](#) (RPL) and/or Recognition of Current Competency (RCC)

Whatever the need, it is important that we first discover what the client's needs are, then we select a Training Package/s to meet those needs.

TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS

A training needs analysis (TNA) is a great tool because it gives a really clear idea about what we should include in a learning program. It highlights where gaps exist in skills or performance, and points to where training is required. It can be used in groups or with individuals, and can be completed by individuals, a colleague, supervisor or someone else. An effective TNA helps us to make sure that we provide the right training, and it helps us to justify the need for training (let's face it, not everyone is keen on training).

The steps involved in a training needs analysis are not complicated.

1. Consult others to find out the competencies required to complete the task required
2. Consult others to find out the competencies and standard of competencies currently held by people involved in that task'
3. Compare the current competencies and standards against the required competencies
4. Recommend training to fill the gap that you just identified.

An easy way to do this is to use a checklist that has the required competencies listed, such as the following example for operating a photocopier:

Name:				
Section:				
Job Role:				
Skill/Knowledge Area	Low	Good	High	Comments
Operate photocopier				
Load paper and toner				
Adjust settings				
Manipulate key document				
Occupational health and safety				
Maintain usage record				

By looking at the results in this checklist, we will be able to identify the gap that exists between what the person (or group) can do, and what they need to be able to do. Once we know that, we can choose the training that will best fill that gap.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRAINING PACKAGE FOR OUR CLIENT

Perhaps the easiest thing to do first is to ask the client if they are aware of any Training Packages that include the training that you have identified as being needed.

Other than that, there are some other things to help you find an appropriate Training Package:

- Go to the Training.gov.au website and search for Training Packages using some key words related to your client.
- Do the names of the qualifications listed in a Training Package sound relevant?
- Do the names of the Units of Competency within a Training Package sound relevant?
- Do these names sound like they match the client's industry?
- Do these names sound like they match the client's learning needs?
- Do these names sound like the sorts of things that your client's business does?

Once you have narrowed it down to a few possible Training Packages, then you go back to your client and check with them that your ideas match with their needs. If you are on the same page, then it is time to go a bit deeper into the selected Training Package to work out which bits are going to be best for the client.

WHICH BITS OF A TRAINING PACKAGE DO I USE?

You may recall that a Training Package contains both endorsed and non-endorsed components.

The first thing we need to work out is which endorsed bits are best for our client. Essentially, this means working out three things:

1. Which Units of Competency from the Training Package are suitable for our client?
2. Which Qualifications from the Training Package are suitable (if any) for our client (remember that sometimes our client may be best served by having a cluster of Units of Competency delivered instead of a complete Qualification). Note: while Units of Competency can be delivered and assessed by a suitably qualified trainer/assessor, only a Registered Training Organisation can issue a Qualification of Statement of Attainment.
3. Whether the Assessment Requirements from the Training Package are suitable for your client

Let's look at an example.

Let's say that John and Jane are both working for the local council. They have been working there for about a year doing some entry-level administrative work. One day at lunch time, they get to

talking. The conversation goes something like this:

Jane: *I like working here.*

John: *Me too. But I don't want to be doing this stuff forever.*

Jane: *Me neither. What job would you want to do instead?*

John: *Something with computers, helping people to fix them when stuff goes wrong. How about you?*

Jane: *Oh, I would like to be able to work in the accounts department and help with bookkeeping.*

Since this is all pretend, let's also say that I was there and overheard this conversation. I take it upon myself to give some thought to John's and Jane's situation.

I start with John, and the first thing I ask myself is: **What are John's training needs?**

Well, I start by thinking about what he is doing now. He is at entry level, which means he is expected to do tasks with maybe a little bit of supervision, but he is not expected to be able to supervise others doing them. This sounds to me like it is about Level 3 of the Australian Qualifications Framework.

So, I know that John needs something to do with fixing computers at or near AQF Level 3.

I turn to the TGA website, and run a search on "Computers" from Training Packages and Qualifications. A list of possibilities comes up, and I see that there is a Certificate III in Computer Equipment - that sounds like what I am after; it is at the right AQF Level (Cert III) and it sounds like it is about the sort of thing that John is after (computer equipment). So, I select that one, but it turns out it is old news, and has been superseded by a more recent Training Package.

So, back to the list, and I find the more recent Electrotechnology Training Package. I select it and download the Qualifications Framework. In there, I go straight to the Table of Contents (after all, these are very large documents - often put together by multiple committees...), and look for something like "Qualifications in this Training Package" and that takes me to a list of the various qualifications. What's really good is that they are grouped according to AQF Level.

I head straight for the Level 3 section, and find that there are a couple of possibilities:

- Certificate III in Business Equipment
- Certificate III in Computer Systems Equipment
- Certificate III in Appliance Servicing

But where can I go from here? I could look into each of these qualifications to see what Units of Competency are involved. But, there is a problem with that.

Quite simply, I don't know enough about what John needs in order to make a specific recommendation.

I would need to know what jobs there actually are within the council that relate to John's desire to fix computers. I could find this out by asking his manager, and by looking at position descriptions. I could ask people who are already doing those jobs what training they have received, and I could

contact other councils where they employ people in those roles. Then - and only then - I could come back to the TGA and download the information about each of these three certificates to see which - if any - is most suitable.

So, what have I ended up with?

Situation	John has little actual skills but wants to work fixing computers.
Training Needs	AQF Level 3 training related to repair of computers or office equipment
Training Options	*Certificate III in Business Equipment *Certificate III in Computer Systems Equipment *Certificate III in Appliance Servicing
Other Information I Need	*what is involved in the actual position? &&& *what training have the current people in those jobs been required to do?
How I Could Obtain This Info	*ask supervisors/managers *examine position descriptions &&&*talk to people who are currently doing that job &&&*ask other councils

Now, what about Jane? I'll leave that to you...

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 8 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

RPL is based on the idea that we are not blank slates. Instead, we each have a wealth of life and work experiences that might be relevant to a qualification that we are studying.

RPL lets us give credit for the knowledge and skills that a person might have, meaning that they might not need to complete all parts of the qualification. It does not matter where or how you gained the knowledge/skills, as long as it is clearly linked to the Units of Competency from the Qualification.

RPL commonly involves:

- Previous study – both formal (eg, TAFE, school) and informal (eg, community education, workplace training courses)
- Work experience – both paid and unpaid
- Life experience

As said before, it does not matter how or where the knowledge/skills were gained. What does matter is that the knowledge/skills can demonstrate your competency in the parts of the qualification that you are seeking credit for.

RPL can be granted for part of a qualification (in which case a Statement of Attainment might be issued to list the Units of Competency that were awarded) or for a full qualification.

ADVISING CANDIDATES

We must let all candidates know that they have the right to apply for RPL or RCC. If they want to go down this path, then we are obliged to support them through this process. The best thing that we can do is to give them as much information as possible to help them to collect evidence that can support their claim. As with [training & assessment pathways](#), there are many different methods of assessment that we can use. In all cases, we must provide support to the candidate to assist them in determining the best types of assessment that they could be using.

As with all assessment, it is essential that the evidence we collect meets the principles of assessment and the [rules of evidence](#). Part of doing this involves us explaining to our candidate:

- what are permissible forms of evidence
- what competency standards will be assessed
- what qualifications are available through these competency standards
- how to appeal an unfavourable decision.

We should also make sure that our recognition assessment process is transparent and that our candidates clearly understand:

- the intent of the assessment (ie, what is it for?)
- exactly what will be assessed
- how assessment will take place
- what criteria will be used to judge performance.

The [assessment tool/s](#) that we use to support a recognition claim can contain a lot of useful information. We also tend to find that if the information is included with an actual assessment item, there is a better chance that it will actually get read. Some of the types of evidence that we can use are shown below. Note that there are many more sources of evidence than perhaps you experienced when you were at school (and for good reason!).

Multiple Sources of Evidence

Performance needs to be consistent over time and in a number of contexts, so this will need to be reflected in the range of assessment strategies selected.

Appropriate Assessment Methodologies: Methodologies using the evidence from the workplace are preferred, such as Portfolio of Evidence and Third Party Reports.

Candidates are to supply evidence of competency using the below strategies. Refer to the additional information supplied with the unit for specific recommended strategies.

Assessment Strategies for the Unit Handle and Transport Explosives

Type	Example
Direct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observation - Demonstration - Simulations - Role Play
Indirect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work Samples - Workplace Documents - Third party reports - Projects - Portfolio of Evidence
Supplementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questioning - Test - Oral presentation - Hypotheticals

A common way for a candidate to demonstrate RPL is to collect a [portfolio of evidence](#) to support their claim against a variety of competencies. Our candidate should be able to gather examples of direct evidence, which the assessor can easily evaluate.

WHAT ON EARTH IS A THIRD PARTY REPORT?

In its simplest form, it is just another type of evidence that we can assess.

To answer this question, let's look at an example.

Sally has been working as a nurse for a long time. In that time, she gave lots of presentations to lots of other nurses. Sally comes to me and says that she wants to do the TAE, and wants to get as much RPL as possible. She tells me that she has done lots of training and that she is competent.

My challenge as the assessor is to advise Sally on the sorts of evidence that she could provide me so that I can make a judgement that she is indeed competent. So, I ask her to submit some session plans, and maybe some feedback forms from some participants, and also a couple of the resources that she used. They are all things that I can use.

The other thing I ask her to do is to get someone who was there to write a statement to say that she did conduct some training and to comment about the standard of the training. This would be an example of a Third Party Report."

Sally is the "first party". I am the "second party". A "third party" is anyone else who can provide us with some information that we can use.

In this course, we have templates that you can use to give those people. But, templates do not have to be used. Instead, you can ask someone to write a reference for you. The important thing is that it has their full name and contact details and signature. The reason for the contact details is so that we can give them a call if we want to clarify anything that they might have said.

Third Party Reports are rarely sufficient by themselves. But, they do fit nicely in a portfolio of evidence.

RECOGNITION AFFECTS DELIVERY

If a candidate can demonstrate their competency then they really do not need to learn how to do that thing. This means that we might need to change our delivery plan to reflect what the learner can and cannot do, instead of presuming that they cannot do anything.

Commonly, the sorts of changes that we will need to make include:

- adjusting timelines
- omitting some content/skills
- allowing some individuals to miss some sessions
- creating learning situations where different learners can be learning different things, but at the same time.

Because any of these changes can affect the workplace, it is important to discuss RPL and RCC with other people, including:

- supervisors
- other candidates (who may not understand what is going on and accuse us of favoritism)
- candidates

- other trainers/assessors

If our candidate is claiming recognition for current competency, real examples of current work are often used, as these will satisfy the currency requirement for evidence.

SELECTING A TRAINING PACKAGE

UNDERSTANDING THE PATHWAYS

The Australian Qualifications Framework gives us a range of pathways that we can choose for our clients. These have been set up to allow links across different educational sectors (such as schools and RTOs; industry and RTOs; RTOs and universities). By removing boundaries between educational sectors, people have a wide range of opportunities to move through a range of qualifications.

Common ways include:

- [Recognition of Prior Learning](#) – which uses a person’s knowledge and skills gained elsewhere as evidence for credit to be granted towards a qualification
- Articulation & Credit Transfer – which allows RTOs and Universities to recognize the qualifications issued by each other
- VET in Schools – which offers young people the chance to gain industry skills and training while still enrolled at school

By understanding these possibilities, we can better select a training program that reflects not just the current needs of our client, but the learning and life experiences of the training recipients before we even begin.

UNDERSTAND THE QUALIFICATIONS

Each [Training Package](#) will include a list of possible qualifications. More detail will be provided about each of these qualifications, including:

- The number of Units of Competencies that must be included
- Which Units of Competency are compulsory
- Which Units of Competency are optional/elective
- Which Units of Competency can come from other Training Packages (these are called Imported Units)

Together, these things are known as the Qualification Packaging Rules. They are the bits that can and cannot be changed.

By knowing what we can and cannot include in a Qualification, we are well placed to decide if it is appropriate for our client.

LET'S LOOK AT AN EXAMPLE

Let's say that we are looking to see what the Packaging Rules are for qualifications within the Tourism, Hospitality and Events Training Package.

We have gone to the TGA website and found the [Training Package](#). (this link will open in a new window so you can toggle between the two windows)

When we scroll down, we can see that this Training Package has qualifications ranging from Certificate I up to Advanced Diploma:



Australian Training Products
Service Industries Skills Council
Table of contents
Volume 1 Volume 1 - Overview, Qualifications Framework, Assessment Guidelines and Competency Standards
Modification History
Preliminary Information
Summary mapping
Overview
Introduction to the Industry
Qualification Framework
Certificate I (3 qualifications)
Certificate II (4 qualifications)
Certificate III (11 qualifications)
Certificate IV (7 qualifications)
Diploma (3 qualifications)
Advanced Diploma (3 qualifications)
Employability Skills
Assessment Guidelines
Competency Standards
Appendices

Let's have a look at the Certificate III qualifications:

Training package components

Qualifications	
Code	Title
➤ Qualification Level: Certificate I	
➤ Qualification Level: Certificate II	
▼ Qualification Level: Certificate III	
FNS30410	Certificate III in Mercantile Agents
FNS30110	Certificate III in Financial Services
FNS30210	Certificate III in Personal Injury Management (Claims Management)
FNS30710	Certificate III in Life insurance
FNS30510	Certificate III in General Insurance
FNS30310	Certificate III in Accounts Administration
FNS30610	Certificate III in Insurance Broking
▼ Qualification Level: Certificate IV	

From this list, we might decide with our client that [FNS30110 Certificate III in Financial Services](#) is likely to be the ideal course. So, we open it up, and see that this qualification has 30 different Units of Competency available to choose from!

How do we know how many are required or which are core or electives?

Now we have to download the full version of the qualification, either in the Word format or PDF. Links to these are listed in the top Summary section

Opening up, say, the [PDF version of the Qualification](#) we can look at the Packaging Rules section, and find that to be awarded the qualification a learner will need to complete four specified core units, and 9 elective units. It then goes on to tell us about where those 9 units can come from. If we have a look through the rest of this document, we will actually discover whether it matches our client's needs.

With this knowledge, we can make good decisions about the training that is needed.

WE MUST FOLLOW THE RULES

It really is quite simple: If we do not follow the Packaging Rules, then we cannot issue a Qualification.

To be sure that we understand the Rules, it is a good idea to ask for help and to get advice. Specifically, we can get help to:

- Work out how to apply the rules to meet our client's particular needs
- Confirm that what we intend to do (or what we have done) is correct
- Find other ways of packaging relevant Units of Competency to best meet our client's needs

Common sources of advice are:

- The TGA website
- The Training Package itself, which might include a list of additional resources
- Other trainers or people who have experience with the Training Package
- The Industry Skills Council who "wrote" the Training Package, which you can find from the top of the TGA page for the Training Package. In the example above, it looks like:

Industry skills council

Organisation: **Innovation and Business Industry Skills Council**
 Web address: <http://www.ibsa.org.au> 
 Address: **Level 11**
176 Wellington Parade
East Melbourne VIC 3002

DOUBLE-CHECK WITH THE CLIENT

I remember when I was learning woodwork at school. My teacher told us time and again that a good woodworker always measures twice, and cuts once.

Preparing training is much the same. Once we have worked out the training that we think is best for the client, it is always a good idea to double-check to make sure that what *you are thinking* will fit with *what they need*.

At this stage of planning, it is a good idea to talk with our client about the following:

- How the proposed qualification will meet their needs?
- How relevant are the proposed Units of Competency for the required workplace activities of the client?
- What Qualifications, Units of Competency might participants already possess?
- What existing skills might the participants have that could be used for RPL?
- What is the timeframe for training/assessment

- What resources are available, and what limitations might exist to the selection of learning activities (eg, limited site access due to safety concerns)

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 9 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

UNDERSTANDING THE STRUCTURE OF A UNIT OF COMPETENCY

The terms Unit of Competency and Competency Standard mean the same thing.

A Unit of Competency is a complex thing. It has many parts. If we can understand these components individually, then we are better able to understand how to use the Unit of Competency to plan, deliver and assess training.

It does not matter which Training Package it might come from, every Unit of Competency will have some common sections. It is important that we understand all sections, because no single section is more or less important than any other section.

PARTS OF A UNIT OF COMPETENCY

Each Unit of Competency will have, as a minimum, the following parts, whose purpose is shown in the table below.

Part of Unit	What it tells us
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tells me in general terms what the unit intends to do: what it covers, and what skills and knowledge it involves
Performance Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • made of two parts: <i>Elements</i>, which tell me what I should be able to do if I am competent in the Unit; and, <i>Performance Criteria</i>, which tell me how I can show that I am competent in the Element
Key Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • this is an often overlooked section, although it is just as important as every other part. It tells us about the generic work skills that are included in the Unit, with a number (often 1 to 3) telling us the level of performance of this skill that is expected for each of these generic skills
Range Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gives me more information to understand the performance criteria, by telling me some situations that could be included. In many Units, there are bold or <i>italic</i> words/phrases in the Performance Criteria, which tells me that there is more information about them in the Range Statement

- Evidence Guide**
- tells me the evidence that I need to show in order to demonstrate that I am competent. It can give me a list of required knowledge and skills, and sometimes gives suggestions for how to assess the Unit

Other sections that may be included are:

<i>Part of Unit</i>	<i>What it tells me</i>
Holistic Assessment of Units	this is sometimes called Integrated/Interdependent Competency Assessment. This section tells us how we can assess this particular Unit of Competency in conjunction with other Units within the same Training Package
Resources Required	not surprisingly, this tells us the main resources that we will need to be able to effectively assess competence in the Unit.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

See if you can find each of the above parts of the Unit of Competency for AHCCCF416A - *Present Proposed Courses of Action to Meeting*, which you will find at the following location:
<http://training.gov.au/Training/Details/AHCCCF416A>

MATCHING COMPETENCY STANDARDS TO CLIENT NEEDS

To make sure that we make informed decisions about the Units of Competency to deliver for our clients, we must collect as much information as we can. Ways that we can collect this information include:

- talking with individuals/groups in person or via the telephone
- examining past, current and future trends (eg, what skills were, are and will be required)
- surveying employees
- testing (informally or formally - always get permission first) employees to discover their needs and existing knowledge/skills
- observe workers doing their jobs
- look at employment records, CVs, position descriptions
- compare your client organisation's skills levels with those of similar organisations or industry benchmarks
- talking with line managers to discover gaps in skills/knowledge among workers

Another way to work out if a Unit of Competency matches our client's needs is to have a look at the **Dimensions of Competency**. There are four dimensions:

Dimension	What the Participant must Demonstrate
Task skills	The specific skills needed to do the task as described in the unit of competency
Task management skills	Effective management of a number of interrelated tasks, all of which make up the job outcome being assessed
Contingency management skills	The ability to cope with irregularities or breakdowns in routine
Job or role environment skills	Dealing effectively with the expectations of their work environment, working well with others and under instruction as required

By now, we will have looked at all the information in the Unit of Competency from the point of view of how it might meet our client's needs. With this understanding, we can determine the impact that it might have on our planned training/assessment, and decide whether to go ahead.

LOOKING FOR LINKS

It is rare that we will be looking at delivering just a single Unit of Competency. In most cases, we will be delivering/assessing a number of Units. For this reason, it makes sense to see if we can find links to connect the Units. Not only does this make the training more time and cost effective, it also makes the training more relevant to people's ways of learning. You see, people learn a whole lot better if they cannot just see *but also experience* links between one thing and another.

An example of this is this course. By placing all of the content for all 10 Units together, and linking between them, we are able to avoid duplication of material. You, the learner, are able to experience how each part of information is linked to all other parts. This makes it easier for you to create a mental filing system that creates understanding and memory. It also makes it a whole lot quicker for you to do the course!

Let's look at this example in more detail using the section entitled *Understanding the Structure of a Unit of Competency*.

TAEASS401A includes the following Performance Criterion:

2.2 Select **assessment methods** which will support the collection of defined evidence, taking into account the context in which the assessment will take place

Clearly, this requires that the learner understands the structure of a Unit of Competency. There are a few others through the TAE40110 course that also require this understanding. So, instead of having a separate section for each time it is required, we create a single section that addresses all of the understanding required.

This concept also relates to [Contextualisation](#), which we will visit at another point.

CONSIDER LANGUAGE, LITERACY & NUMERACY

Not all Units have the same requirements for background knowledge or skill. This is especially so when it comes to language, literacy and numeracy requirements of a Unit.

For this reason, even though a Unit or Units may seem to be highly relevant for our client, we must also consider whether the levels of language, literacy and numeracy of our participants are sufficient to allow them to do the Units.

Some simple things to think about when looking at using a Unit of Competency are:

- if it requires that a learner explain something, then the learner must first have the English language skills to do this
- if it requires that a learner follows written instructions, then the learner must first be able to read
- if it requires that a learner to measure or calculate something, then the learner must first be numerate

Mind you, just because a learner may not possess these things is not sufficient reason to abandon your training. Instead, it is a good opportunity to speak with your client about how the learners can be supported to still let them do the training that they require. When it comes to assessment, this is called Reasonable Adjustment.

DOCUMENTING OUR DECISIONS

Remember, we do not work in isolation.

What we do is linked to national standards. To make sure that what we decide can be easily understood by other people, it is important that we record the following:

- how we interpreted the parts of the Unit in terms of how they might meet the client's needs
- how the range of variables applies to the planned training
- our initial plan for meeting the requirements of the evidence guide

We should do this for each individual Unit of Competency. Then, by comparing these records, we can identify areas of overlap - such as in shared learning activities, assessment tasks, work tasks - which tells us about whether we could assess holistically, ie assessment across more than one Unit at a time.

SO, HOW DOES A UNIT OF COMPETENCY HELP TO DELIVER INDUSTRY STANDARDS?

Units of Competency do not exist in isolation. Instead, they are part of a Training Package which has been developed by an industry or group of industries to provide a guide for the skills they require.

If we want to be very simple, then we can say that the **Description, Elements and Performance Criteria** tell us what industry wants.

The rest of the parts of the Unit tells us how we can train and assess others to ensure that they can do what industry wants them to do.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 10 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

CONTEXTUALISATION ADDS MEANING

If we want to make training meaningful, then we really need to make it fit within the learner's world of experiences.

For example, let's say that we were going to deliver the [Unit, SITTGDE001A: Work as a guide](#).

Performance Criterion 4.4 is:

*Communicate according to **social, cultural and business requirements***

Being in bold type, tells us that we can find out more information about "social, cultural and business requirements from the Range Statement section of the Unit. So, we scroll down and find:

The screenshot shows a list of requirements. A box highlights the requirements for 'Social, cultural and business requirements'.

- use of industry codes of conduct or ethics
- formal and informal research
- internet research.

Social, cultural and business requirements may relate to:

- body language
- cultural customs and mores.

Tourism operators may be:

- suppliers of any tourism product or service that is a component of the touring itinerary, including:
 - coach company

What does this tell us? It tells us that we can choose which body language and cultural customs and mores that best suit the social, cultural and business requirements of the industry that our learner is going to be working in.

For example, a guide working at Uluru may learn and demonstrate body language appropriate to the Pitjantjatjara people. There would be little point in that guide being require to learn and demonstrate body language appropriate for working among the Jewish community at the Sydney

Holocaust Museum.

This means that we can create learning/assessment opportunities that are more relevant to our learner. When we do this, we link the Unit of Competency to the client's needs using language that they understand.

This is called **contextualization**.

The following table shows us another example, with examples of how part of the Unit, *BSBCMN102A Complete Daily Work Activities*, can be contextualised.

What Appears in the Competency Standard	How it can be Contextualised to suit the workplace
Element	
1. Seek assistance to plan work schedule	Ask for help when you plan what you will do each day
Performance Criteria	
1.1 Assistance is sought from appropriate persons to identify work goals and plans	1. Ask the Office Manager what you are expected to achieve each day, and how you should plan for it
Range Statement	
Factors affecting work requirements may include: - competing work demands - technology/equipment breakdowns - environmental factors such as time and weather - resource issues - changes to procedures	Factors affecting work requirements would normally include: - number of telephone calls to be answered - number of orders generated by telephone calls - number of personal enquiries - number of orders generated by personal enquiries - covering for absent office staff as required - downtime of photocopier, printer and computer system due to servicing
Evidence Guide	
Critical aspects of evidence: - uses available business technology appropriate to the task, under direct instruction	The participant must demonstrate effective use of the telephone system, photocopier, printer, computer system for ordering and administration, and email messaging system, while being supervised.
Resource implications: - Personnel, materials and	For training and assessment, the following must be available: - telephone, - photocopier,

equipment specific to job tasks must be available.

- printer,
- computer system for ordering and administration,
- the correct
- stationery items,
- and email

Key Competencies

Working with teams and others; completing scheduled tasks

Working with teams and others; the participant needs to talk to an work with customers, the two other administration staff in the office, the Office manager, the orders, processor, and others who may come into contact with the participant for work purposes, to get their job done as planned.

How to Contextualise

Contextualisation is achieved by including, modifying or substituting text within units of competency and usually within the range statement or evidence guide. It is about providing training and assessment that is specific to an enterprise or individual learner.

Any modifications to a unit of competency must maintain the integrity of the industry skill and portability requirements, including all legislative, licensing and any other regulatory requirements.

The following are some suggestions for contextualising units of competency to make them more relevant for specific industries or workplaces:

- Refer to the guidelines in the relevant training package. Usually, it will be possible to replace generic terms and general descriptions of equipment or processes and procedures with specific examples. The wording of range statements and the evidence guide can also be altered to make it more specific.
- Analyse the generalised statements about the range of work and job tasks specified in the units of competency. These may need to be aligned to a particular job profile and translated to highlight particular tasks and levels of performance that are relevant to a particular workplace.
- Identify the kinds of evidence that candidates may be able to provide in their job roles to satisfy the requirements of a particular unit of competency.
- Prepare evidence plans for the candidates, showing how they might collect the identified kinds of evidence.

Let's have a look at some examples:

If the Competency mentions *Machinery*, then we could use the exact name of the machine used.

If the Competency mentions *Equipment*, then we could use the names of each item of equipment

If the Competency mentions *Location*, then we could use the exact location, eg, Shed 1, kitchen bench, etc

If the Competency mentions *Relevant Procedures*, then we could use the exact title of the procedure manual

If the Competency mentions *Relevant Personnel*, then we could use the names of the people and their positions

CONTEXTUALISE, BUT FOLLOW THE RULES

When it comes to contextualisation, we can be very creative. But, we need to make sure that we do not change the standards required of us. Remember: we must always follow the Qualification Packaging Rules of the Training Package.

When contextualising units of competency, teachers and trainers:

- must not remove the number and content of elements and performance criteria
- may add specific industry terminology to performance criteria where this does not distort or narrow the competency outcomes
- may make amendments and additions to the range statement, as long as such changes do not diminish the breadth of application of the competency and reduce its portability
- may add detail to the evidence guide in areas such as the critical aspects of evidence or resources and infrastructure required, where these expand the breadth of the competency but do not limit its use.

To make sure that we still follow the Training Package rules, we can read the Training Package itself, or we can get the advice of others, including:

- The Industry Skills Council responsible
- DEEWR
- Our colleagues within the training industry or within the industry for whom we are delivering the training

Accessing the Support Resources available for each Training Package at TGA can also give us some great ideas of what is appropriate.

When we are contextualising, it is a good idea to speak with our client to make sure that we really are going to link the Unit of Competency to the participants' actual work.

When we are contextualising, it is a good idea to speak with others to make sure that we really are going to be delivering the Unit of Competency in accordance with the [Training Package](#) rules.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 11 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

TYPES OF HAZARDS

Health and Safety are critical aspects of all workplaces. For this reason, it is common that training is contextualised to reflect the OHS situation of the place of training and assessment.

As trainers/assessors, one of our [Legal and Ethical Responsibilities](#) is a Duty of Care. This means that we are required to identify and manage any hazards that may threaten the health and safety of people associated with our training/assessment.

So, what is a hazard?

From the [TAA Training Package glossary](#), we learn that a hazard is

a source or situation with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health.

But, before we can manage a hazard, we have to know what types of hazards there are.

TYPES OF HAZARD

Hazards can be broadly grouped based on their nature. This is shown below:

Hazard	Example
Physical hazards	Wet floors Loose electrical cables Objects protruding in walkways or doorways
Ergonomic hazards	Lifting heavy objects Stretching the body Twisting the body Poor desk seating
Psychological hazards	Heights Loud sounds Tunnels Bright lights
Environmental hazards	Room temperature Ventilation Contaminated air Photocopiers Some office plants

Hazardous substances	Alkalis Solvents Acids
Biological hazards	Hepatitis B New strain influenza
Radiation hazards	Electric welding flashes Sunburn

SOME MORE WORKPLACE HAZARDS

If we take the above table one step further, we can begin to think about some of the hazards that we might find in actual workplaces.

Workplace Hazard	Effect on human health
Chemical hazards	Effects on central nervous system, lungs, digestive system, circulatory system, skin, reproductive system. Short term (acute) effects such as burns, rashes, irritation, feeling unwell, coma and death. Long term (chronic) effects such as mutagenic (affects cell structure), carcinogenic (cancer), teratogenic (reproductive effect), dermatitis of the skin, and occupational asthma and lung damage.
Noise	High levels of industrial noise will cause irritation in the short term, and industrial deafness in the long term.
Temperature	Personal comfort is best between temperatures of 16°C and 30°C, better between 21°C and 26°C. Working outside these temperature ranges: may lead to becoming chilled, even hypothermia (deep body cooling) in the colder temperatures, and may lead to dehydration, cramps, heat exhaustion, and hyperthermia (heat stroke) in the warmer temperatures.
Being struck by	This hazard could be a projectile, moving object or material. The health effect could be lacerations, bruising, breaks, eye injuries, and possibly death.
Crushed by	A typical example of this hazard is tractor rollover. Death is usually the result
Workplace Hazard	Effect on human health
Entangled by	Becoming entangled in machinery. Effects could be crushing, lacerations, bruising,

	breaks amputation and death.
High energy sources	Explosions, high pressure gases, liquids and dusts, fires, electricity and sources such as lasers can all have serious effects on the body, even death.
Vibration	Vibration can affect the human body in the hand arm with 'white-finger' or Raynaud's Syndrome, and the whole body with motion sickness, giddiness, damage to bones and audits, blood pressure and nervous system problems.
Slips, trips and falls	A very common workplace hazard from tripping on floors, falling off structures or down stairs, and slipping on spills.
Radiation	Radiation can have serious health effects. Skin cancer, other cancers, sterility, birth deformities, blood changes, skin burns and eye damage are examples.
Physical	Excessive effort, poor posture and repetition can all lead to muscular pain, tendon damage and deterioration to bones and related structures
Psychological	Stress, anxiety, tiredness, poor concentration, headaches, back pain and heart disease can be the health effects
Biological	More common in the health, food and agricultural industries. Effects such as infectious disease, rashes and allergic response.

MANAGING HAZARDS

Common ways of managing hazards are shown below:

Steps	Roles And Responsibilities
<p style="text-align: center;">Step 1</p> <p>Codes of practice, policies and procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsibility of organisations - Must be compliant with the various OHS Acts - Should involve employees on a cooperative basis
<p style="text-align: center;">Step 2</p> <p>Workplace method statements</p>	<p>Responsibility of organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Written in cooperation with employees - Must be compliant with various OHS Acts
<p style="text-align: center;">Step 3</p> <p>Worksafe instructions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiated by organisation with cooperation of employees - Must be compliant with the various OHS Acts - Must be followed by employees
<p style="text-align: center;">Step 4</p> <p>Wearing of protective clothing or equipment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provided by organisation - Must be compliant with the various OHS Acts - Must be worn by employees as directed by management

Step 5
Hazard and risk
management

- Senior management must:
- ensure that legislative requirements are complied with
 - provide adequate funding for implementing safe workplace strategies
 - work in cooperation with others to provide a safe workplace
 - liaise with relevant personnel such as unions supervisors, OHS committees, OHS representatives
 - lead by example.

Step 6
Incident or accident report

- Employees must:
- observe established safe work practices and procedures
 - be involved in the identification of various substances or chemicals
 - be proactive in OHS meetings or other communication opportunities
 - report any situation that involves risk or hazard to the appropriate person.
- Accident or incident report prepared on workplace checklist
 - Management inspects accident or incident area
 - Management evaluates the outcome of the investigation and makes recommendations
 - The report tabulates inspection findings which include employee input and enables management to determine appropriate action.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 12 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

ASSESSING FOR CLIENT NEEDS

A Unit of Competency tells us the standard to which a person is meant to be able to perform some task in the workplace. How we work out if someone can actually do that is assessment.

When we are working out how to meet a client's needs, we must not just think about the training that is needed. We must also think about the assessment.

Just as we need to understand the structure of a [Unit of Competency](#) to plan the training that we will deliver, we must also understand the Assessment Guidelines of our chosen [Training Package](#) (or other accredited course).

Just like we looked at all parts of a Unit to work out how it could be applied to meet a client's training needs, we look at all parts of the Assessment Guidelines to work out how they could be applied to meet a client's assessment needs.

The three main things that we need to consider are:

1. What are the qualifications or other requirements that an assessor of this Training Package must possess?
2. What are the recommended guidelines for planning assessment in this Training Package?
3. What are the recommended guidelines for conducting assessment in this Training Package?

Of course, if our training comes from more than one Training Package, we need to be familiar with the rules of each Training Package.

ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

For reasons that are no doubt political, not all Training Packages use the same structure/titles when it comes to their Assessment Guidelines. However, they all have most of the following (although some may go by a slightly different title):

Assessment Guidelines

Applying it to your Assessment Situation

Assessment in a simulated environment	Tells you why you might need to assess this way, and suggests how it can be done.
Assessment requirements for RTOs	If you are working for an RTO, this tells you what you must do.
Reasonable adjustment	Tells you how to adapt an assessment tool or method to meet the special needs of a learner.
Recording assessment outcomes	The RTO that issues the qualification or statement of attainment is responsible for recording, storing, retrieval and accessibility of the assessment outcomes - if you work for an RTO and procedures that you can use for this don't already exist, they must be developed.
Training and assessment pathways	Tells you how learners can achieve competency standards in ways other than the traditional train then assess pathway.
Assessor qualifications	Specifies the qualifications a person must have in order to be a qualified assessor under the Training Package. Includes options such as a partnership arrangement where an assessor with little experience in the industry can assess in partnership with a technical expert.
Assessment resources	Tells you about the requirements any assessment resources you use must meet.
Conducting	Includes details about how to:

assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establish the assessment context - prepare the candidate - gather evidence - make the assessment decision - provide feedback - record and report results - review the assessment process - deal with appeals and reassessment.
Key competencies	How to include them in the competency standards you are assessing.
Cultural sensitivities	Provides information about working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in particular.
Additional resources	Lists sources regarding issues such as designing assessment tools, assessor training, conducting assessments, gathering evidence, designing and managing assessment systems.

PLANNING TO MEET CLIENT'S ASSESSMENT NEEDS

One way to make sure that we meet the assessment needs of our client is to follow the **Seven Step Process**:

- Consult with the client to:
- identify skill gap and how the skill will be developed (mentoring, training, on-the-job coaching, other)
 - determine the activities to be assessed and the dimensions of competency to be assessed.
- Step 1** Consult with the client to:
- identify skill gap and how the skill will be developed (mentoring, training, on-the-job coaching, other)
 - determine the activities to be assessed and the dimensions of competency to be assessed.
- Step 2** Determine the competency standard or module relating to the activity to be assessed.
- Step 3** Write a purpose statement for the assessment.
- Step 4** Analyse the elements of competence, performance criteria, evidence guide and range of variables that apply for the particular client.
- Step 5** Establish suitable assessment methods.
- Step 6** Discuss with the client to ensure the methods meet their requirements.
- Step 7** Make revisions (if necessary).

This process shows us that both client and trainer have responsibilities for the assessment planning process.

Just like we analysed the Training Package/s to find content that meet client needs, we do the same thing with the Assessment Guidelines to plan specific arrangements for our intended assessment. This ideally will occur with the client, to ensure that decisions are made about:

- Timing and timeframes
- Costings and budgets
- Impacts on other aspects of the business, and these can be reduced
- How best to prepare participants and resources
- Methods of assessment that are most suitable

REFLECTING ON OUR WORK

Because [quality assurance](#) is required within the AQTF, it is a good idea for us to reflect on the work that we have done to make sure that is of a suitable quality.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 13 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

CLARIFY THE PURPOSE OF THE LEARNING PROGRAM

GETTING STARTED

Before we start to think about what our students will be doing, and what resources we will need, we must first make sure that we are clear about the purpose of the learning program.

This is a simple point – if we don't know what it is that students are meant to be learning, then we cannot be confident that we will plan to meet those learning needs.

For example, if the learning program is intended to introduce a new procedure to all staff within a large workplace, then we would plan it very differently to when a learning program is intended to develop the machinery operating skills of a single person in a small business.

Because of these differences, we are well-advised to make ourselves aware of the reason for the learning program. Common **purposes** include:

- Skill development – using new equipment, or doing something in a new way
- People development – gaining management skills, or improving people's work ability in some way
- Organisational change – changing the way that work is done by people, such as introducing new procedures, policies and standards
- Meet legal requirements – doing things the right way, such as fire evacuations and other OHS requirements

- Modification of an existing learning program – changing a new-employee induction program to reflect other changes in the workplace

The other thing that will influence the design of our learning program is its specific **focus**. Common focuses include:

- Short courses
- Professional development program
- Community education program
- Apprenticeship/traineeship component
- Work-transition program

Within specific work-places, we can expect that there will be specific purposes for learning. The following table shows some common ones.

Purpose or Objective	Example
To cover a skills gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - new computer program - workplace assessor
To upskill their workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introduction of email - change to a data base - introduction of a new product
To bring a better level of service to the customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - handling complaints - building a cross functional team culture - quality assurance
To bring about a change in culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - move to self directed work teams - multi-skilling - becoming a learning organisation
To conduct mandatory training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OHS - first aid - WorkCover - safety rules - inductions

GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL?

A very important thing that we need to work out sooner rather than later is if the program is intended for a group of learners, or just an individual. This is usually fairly obvious once we start talking to the person requesting the training, but sometimes it can be less obvious, especially in

larger organisations.

So, once again, we find ourselves in a situation where should ask someone.

The thing we need to discover is the [learner's goals](#).

You should always invite the learner to discuss their needs and goals with you rather than imposing your requirements on the learner. Create a relaxed and inviting atmosphere, so your participant will feel comfortable discussing their goals and reasons for training (which can sometimes relate to sensitive issues).

Other relevant people to involve in the discussion about goals for learning could include:

- the workplace supervisor, coordinator or manager
- other team members
- other trainers, facilitators, teachers or lecturers.

Once we understand the purpose for what we will do, we can begin to look at the details. This generally leads us to two documents:

1. Learning Program
2. Delivery Plan

LEARNING PROGRAM

The Learning Program provides a documented guide to support a cohesive and integrated learning process for the learner. It includes:

- the competencies or other benchmarks to be achieved
- the specific learning outcomes derived from the benchmarks for each chunk or segment of the learning program
- an overview of the content to be covered in each chunk or segment
- learning resources, learning materials and activities for each chunk or segment
- number and duration of training sessions or classes required and overall timelines delivery methods for each chunk or segment OHS issues to be addressed in delivery
- identification of assessment points to measure learner progress
- assessment methods and tools to be used to collect evidence of competency, where assessment is required.

DELIVERY PLAN

The Delivery Plan is used by the trainer or facilitator to guide and manage delivery to a group. It includes:

- individual and group learning objectives or outcomes for the segment of the learning program to be addressed the number of learners and their specific support requirements
- content of sessions as specified in the Session Plans
- timelines or duration of activities within sessions
- learning resources, learning materials and learning
- activities to be used in sessions
- other resource requirements
- OHS considerations, including incident or hazard
- reporting and emergency procedures.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 14 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

FIND OUT THE CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUR LEARNERS

People are not the same. Some people learn better by reading things. Others learn better by doing things. Others learn better by talking about them. Some people cannot read. Other people cannot read English. Some have never had a job. Others have a number of jobs. Some have short attention spans. Some can concentrate for hours. Some cannot sit still and need to be active. Others cannot stand up at all. You get the idea...

There are many ways that people learn, and there are many needs that people may have. The learning **needs** of people are influenced by their other characteristics. This is because people:

- Learn in different ways
- Learn at a different pace
- Have different backgrounds (educational, ethnic, employment, etc)
- Have different reasons for learning
- Are motivated in different ways and by different things
- Respond differently to challenges presented in learning programs

We often find that the training that we are planning is targeting a particular group of learners, who share at least some characteristics. This does not mean that they are all the same or that they all have the same learning needs. It does mean, however, that there might be a narrow range of learning needs that we need to plan for.

Common **groups** of learners that we come across include:

- Employees
- School leavers and people who are new to the workforce
- Apprentices & trainees
- Individuals wanting to improve their own skills



- Unemployed people
- New arrivals to Australia
- Employees requiring skills to meet legal requirements

The third thing that we consider before designing our learning program are the actual characteristics of the learners themselves. These are the things that will directly affect how each learner will respond to any part of your learning program.

The Learner Characteristics Table on the following page gives some examples of these, and how they might affect your learning program.

CHARACTERISTICS OF LEARNERS

Characteristic	How it affects your learning program
Level And Breadth Of Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Lots of experience</i> · Pace of activities may be faster <i>Narrow breadth</i> · Need for detailed explanations may be required
Special Needs, Physical Or Psychological Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Advanced development</i> · Learner will require stimulating activities <i>Poor vision</i> · Large print tasks, with emphasis in verbal learning
Motivation For Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>High motivation</i> · Lots of discussion and range of activities <i>Low motivation</i> · Short bursts of highly personally relevant activities
Language, Literacy And Numeracy Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Low literacy</i> · Avoid use of written activities <i>Poor English skills</i> · Use non-technical language
Learning Style And Preferences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>auditory</i> · Focus on spoken tasks <i>kinaesthetic</i> · Focus on tasks that have a physical component
Socio-Economic Background Cultural Background And Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Unique culture</i> · Ensure activities are culturally appropriate <i>Low income background</i> · Provide all resources that are required (eg, stationery, morning tea)
Level And Previous Experiences Of Formal Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Incomplete high school</i> · Need for high levels of support for how to learn as well as what to learn <i>University professor</i> · Opportunities for peer learning to use their knowledge for other learners
Skill Or Competency Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Already competent</i> · Move toward RPL/RCC <i>Very low levels</i> · Move toward bridge training before entering course related to actual training needed
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Older</i> · Include opportunities to share experiences <i>Younger</i> · Provide context and relevance for training

CONTEXT INFLUENCES CHARACTERISTICS

The influence of any particular characteristic on a learner's training experience will very much depend of the situation in which that training occurs. If the person is comfortable and supported, then it will have a lesser effect than if the learner is placed in an unfamiliar environment with little idea of what is going on.

This means that when we think about the possible impact of a learner's characteristics, we should do so with an understanding of the context of learning in mind. In this way, the effect of a person's particular characteristics could be:

- determined by the area of learning
- determined by the trainer or facilitator and the learner
- defined by the work or learning activities
- in a classroom, tutorial room, meeting room, office, or any agreed meeting place
- in a workplace, training or assessment organisation,
- college, community, university or school
- defined by the time requirements for individual facilitation and how these will be built into learning activities
- impacted by the health, safety and welfare of the learner.

Understanding the interplay between characteristic and context helps us to better work out the support that our learner/s may need.

IDENTIFYING LEARNER SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

Some learners will have different support requirements than others. But before we look at this in more detail, we need to get something straight. The word "support" is sometimes taken to mean burden. Some trainers view the whole idea of learner support as an inconvenience and an unnecessary trouble that they would prefer to do without. This is a problematic sort of view, because it does two things.

1. it makes people who have more obvious support needs out to be somehow less worthy of individual attention to their needs
2. it makes people who do not have more obvious support needs to be somehow less worthy of individual attention to their needs

You see, the word *support* just means to assist. So, if we are involved in any sort of training, then we are assisting someone to learn new things. How we assist someone to learn new things depends on what they can already do and what they already know, and what they are wanting to know and do. As trainers, we need to recognise that all people have a need for support. It is not just the people who have certain 'cultural' or 'disability' or 'intellectual' or other needs - everyone we are involved in training is deserving of the assistance that is needed to get them to bridge the gap between what they can do and what they want to do.

You may recall that the AQTF2010 has standards for Registered Training Organisations.

Standard 2: The Registered Training Organisation adheres to principles of access and equity and maximises outcomes for its clients.

These policies and approaches ensure that vocational education and training is responsive to the diverse needs of all clients. Through the implementation of the policies and approaches, the benefits of participating in vocational education and training are available to everyone on an equitable basis, including: women where under-represented; people with disabilities; people from non-English speaking backgrounds; Indigenous Australians and rural and remote learners.

Learners can have many different support needs and you must correctly identify these needs before you can plan effective support mechanisms. Equity or additional support needs may include:

- English language, literacy and numeracy support
- disability support
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) support
- ethnic support services
- interpreting services
- counselling services
- community support.

We can use both formal and informal ways to find out what the particular support requirements of our learner/s might be. These include looking at:

- the information provided on the enrolment forms
- talking with other trainers or supervising staff
- referrals from other agencies (eg, Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services (<http://www.crsaustralia.gov.au/>))
- talking with the learners
- observing the learners.

Let's think about this last one. A common misunderstanding here is that when you get the enrolment form, you need to go around to the person's place of work and watch them. This is not true (although with permission - and if you had the time - it may provide useful information). What it really is means is that once we start training, we need to observe how our trainees respond to the things that we do. If they have difficulty reading lots of words, but respond really well to hands-on types of tasks, then we can reduce the written tasks and add more hands-on activities.

In an workplace setting, there are a few different people that we can speak with to gain a better understanding of our learners and the sorts of support that we could provide to better assist their learning. These commonly include:

Position**Type of Information**

Human Resource section	<p>If the organisation has a separate division, the personnel in this section will be responsible for overseeing the training level of all employees in the organisation. Their processes may identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - specific training requirements -general training requirements -support requirements.
Workplace managers and supervisors	<p>They may be aware of problems and support issues from their own experience their observation or feedback from others</p> <p>Whether you are internal to the organisation or working with an external consultancy, you can get an objective viewpoint from your own:</p>
Your own supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) supervisor b) coach c) mentor d) other training personnel,
Employees	<p>Employees can let you know if they have any support requirements. Do not ask other employees for information on the support needs of another learner, unless you are given permission to do so from the learner.</p> <p>Either directly, or as a committee</p>
OHS representatives	<p>** May offer specific guidance on specialist knowledge areas where they believe improvements need to be made.</p>

Outside the workplace, there are many specialist support services that can help us to further understand - and meet - the needs of our learner/s. These include:

- specialist staff in government and non-government agencies
- care workers and case workers
- advocacy groups
- professional agencies

We do often find that we do not need to know all of these. This is because quite often a learner may already have support systems in place, and know of people who we can call upon to assist us.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASKS 15 & 16 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

WRITING A SCOPE STATEMENT

Okay, so you have spoken at length with your client to determine the purpose of the learning program, which competencies you will be using, and the characteristics of the learner group.

By doing these things, we now are clear about what the learning is intended to achieve. To communicate this, we write a Scope Statement.

Scope Statements simply make clear to everyone involved what we are planning to do. Each scope statement will include three things:

Goal of the learning program

Target group and any characteristics that need to be considered

Content/information to be covered

Some people find it hard to write a Scope Statement. This is a good thing, because, as my Year 11 Biology teacher once told me: *if you can't say it, you don't know it*. For this reason, writing a scope statement is very important to make sure that we know ourselves what we are doing and why we are doing it.

Here's two examples:

Example 1: *Take a day to train the group how to operate the computer so they can all be using the same software.*

Example 2: *The goal of this learning program is to improve skills of current administrative staff. People involved will be six women from the office, who have been working with the organisation for 15 years. Training will involve 8 hours targeting the use of mail-merge, advanced editing and formatting tools in MS Word, and will be credited towards ICAU1129B: Operate a word processing application.*

It goes without saying that Example 2 is as clear as Example 1 is vague.

My experience is that delivering training based on the information is dangerous for me as a trainer. Not because I might not do a good job. But, because the expectations of the client were not clear to both of us, so I might not have actually done the job that they wanted.

By taking the Scope Statement to the client, we can focus any further conversations on:

- the number/type of competencies to be achieved
- the vocational or generic skills to be developed - generic skills apply across a range of job and life contexts, such as teamwork or leadership, while vocational skills relate to the job itself
- subject or technical knowledge and theory to be learned
- the work activities to be encompassed

- the specific organisational needs to be addressed.

If there are any changes to these things, then we change the Scope Statement accordingly. And, we keep doing that until the client agrees with what the Scope Statement says. If it seems like an awful hassle, then just think about the hassle that might come from an important client not being happy with the work that you have done because you didn't have a clearly agreed idea of what it was you were meant to have done....

Having a Scope Statement that we all agree to gives us all confidence that we are doing what is needed.

It also allows us to then focus on the actual content of the learning program.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 17 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

CONFIRMING THE CONTENT OF OUR LEARNING PROGRAM

Once we have agreed to the Scope Statement, we can start to get into the details of our planning.

The first question we need to ask is:

Is the learning program intended to meet an industry or national accreditation standard or is it intended to meet an organisational requirement?

If the answer is industry or national accreditation standard, then we need to focus on formal standards.

If the answer is organisational requirements, then we need to focus on informal standards.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FORMAL AND INFORMAL STANDARDS?

Formal standards are the ones that we can find in Training Packages. With formal standards, we find the level of performance required from the endorsed parts of the Training Packages. Specifically, we can look at the Elements and Performance Criteria in the Units of Competency to guide our development of content.

Informal standards are the ones that we find or adapt from those that we find in places other than Training Packages. Common places where we might find the level of performance required from previous training undertaken by the client or other organisations, by reviewing the client's policies/procedures, and from the statements of line managers and supervisors.

Note that because informal standards have not been part of a Quality Assurance process, it is very important that you frequently consult with relevant people to ensure that the standards you are intending to deliver are valid.

BENCHMARKING FOR INFORMAL STANDARDS

When it comes to **Formal Standards**, the Elements of a Unit of Competency tell us what the learners are meant to be able to do, and the Performance Criteria tell us how they might show us that they can do it (remember that from the very front?). Training Packages are good that way – they give us the guidance we need to plan learning programs.

When it comes to **Informal Standards**, however, we are very much on our own. It is easy to get a bit lost and confused. That's why it is a good idea to follow a simple process:

1. undertake a task analysis
2. define what it means to be competent
3. define the content involved

EXAMPLE: MAKING A CUP OF COFFEE.

Let's say that we want our learners to make a cup of coffee. It is a simple task, but when we think about it, to make a cup of coffee involves knowing quite a few things, and being able to do quite a few things. Of course, the first thing we need to clarify is: instant or espresso or filtered? Then we need to clarify whether sugar and/or milk is required. This becomes part of our Scope Statement. Once we have agreed to the details, then we can get started on developing our own Informal Standard.

I like to use a table to help me go through the three step process from above.

Step 1: *undertake a task analysis for making a cup of instant coffee. I put this in Column 1.*

Skill Required	Competency Definition	Knowledge Area
	<i>Make a cup of instant coffee</i>	
Locate and gather correct resources.		
Set up resources correctly.		
Undertake process in correct order		
Ensure safe workplace environment for personnel		

Step 2: for each step of the task (ie, for each competency), define what it means to be competent. I put this in Column 2. This is not complete - you may like to think about how you would make it more comprehensive.

Skill Required	Competency Definition	Knowledge Area
<i>Make a cup of instant coffee</i>		
Locate and gather correct resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify equipment & ingredients - Relocate equipment & ingredients to correct place. 	
Set up resources correctly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check for hazards in the area. - Fill kettle, plug in kettle and turn kettle on. - Prepare ingredients in cup 	
Undertake process in correct order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boil water before adding it to cup - Add coffee to cup before water 	
Ensure safe workplace environment for personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check power supply safe. 	

Step 3: for each step of the competency, define the content that is involved. I put this in Column 3. Again, you may like to consider how you would make the Standard more comprehensive.

Skill Required	Competency Definition	Knowledge Area
<i>Make a cup of instant coffee</i>		
Locate and gather correct resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify equipment & ingredients - Relocate equipment & ingredients to correct place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equipment involved in making cup of coffee - Ingredients used
Set up resources correctly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check for hazards in the area. - Fill kettle, plug in kettle and turn kettle on. - Prepare ingredients in cup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hazards associated with using equipment - recipe for coffee, and options for how to make it

Undertake process in correct order - Boil water before adding it to cup
- Add coffee to cup before water

Ensure safe workplace environment for personnel - Check power supply safe.

Now we have a Standard that we can use to plan our training. While we may have created it ourselves, we use it just like we would use a formal Competency Standard: to develop specific objectives for our learners.

JOB ANALYSES

This way of working out the skills required to perform a particular task can also be applied within a workplace situation. By working out the skills that are required, we can more easily discover the skills that employees do and don't have. This lets us know what gap training might be required, which we can proceed to plan by developing specific objectives based on our job/task analyses.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 18 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

WRITING LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objective means the same thing as **Learning Outcome**.

A learning objective tells us one of the specific things that we want to get from the [Learning Program](#).

By looking at our [Scope Statement](#), we find out which Standards are appropriate. By looking at our Standards, we can work out the specific things that we want to include in our training.

By specific, we mean that it will tell us (and everyone else who reads it) three things:

1. What the learner will be able to do
2. How it will be measured
3. How they can demonstrate the learning

If we know these three things, then we can make good decisions about the types of things our learners could do to learn the things that are needed, and how we can assess whether they can do them. If we do not have clear objectives, then our learning will not be clear, and nor will our assessment be clear; in this situation, how can we be confident that we will be meeting the training needs of our client? Also, how can our client be confident their employees? Or in us?

In my mind, the key to writing a really good (ie, really clear) learning objective is to approach each of the three parts separately. Once we have answers for each of the three parts, then we can bring them together. It might seem a bit cumbersome doing it this way, but it doesn't take much practice before we can do them in our heads and very quickly.

PART 1: WHAT WILL THE LEARNER BE ABLE TO DO?

What the learner will be able to do is the key to how we will train them. We find this out by completing a **Task Analysis**.

Warning: this next bit is going to seem a bit repetitive because it refers to the Task Analysis that you just looked at a few pages back. Stick with it – it is important.

For example, if we want the learner to list the steps in making a cup of coffee, then we will probably get them to write down a list of the steps. If we wanted them to actually describe the steps, then we might get them to tell us about the steps. If we wanted them to demonstrate the steps, then we might actually get them to follow the steps.

In this example, there are three action words (in italics). An action word is what tells us *what the learner will be able to do*. Some people say that you should use an action word if you can. I say that you should use an action word in every learning objective. Why? It is my thinking that if you don't know which action word to use, then you probably don't fully understand what it is that you want your learners to do.

Ask yourself: If you don't know what you want learners to do, then do you think that your learners are going to know what you want them to do?

Common action words include:

Explain, describe, demonstrate, assemble, perform, plan, repair, sort, list, build, conduct, erect, draw, arrange, align, inspect, decide, write, operate, name, select

The thing that every one of these has in common is that they tell us what action the learner is meant to be doing.

For our cup of coffee, we want them to be able to *make* the coffee.

When we do a task analysis, we can also divide the task into Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes, such as the following example for operating an automatic toaster (I won't overdo the coffee example – although if you would like to pause to test how accurate were my steps for making a cup of coffee, then please feel free to do so!).

TASK ANALYSIS SHEET

JOB: Breakfast Restaurant Staff TASK: Operating an Automatic Toaster

Basic Parts or Steps	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
1. Check toaster	- Effect of using an unsafe toaster	- Place toaster in a safe location - Check toaster cable for safety - Connect to the power supply and turn on	- Choose to accomplish task safely
2. Use toaster	- Use types of bread suited to toasting - How to turn toaster on - Safe handling techniques	- Place bread in toaster (if required slice to required width) - Adjust time as required - Activate toaster to start - Toast bread and remove	- Willing to use appropriate breads
3. Shut down toaster	- How to disconnect from power supply - How to clean	- Turn off toaster at power supply - Unplug toaster - Clean and remove loose objects (once toaster has cooled down)	- Choose to use toaster safely - Willing to keep equipment clean

PART 2: HOW WILL WHAT THEY CAN DO BE MEASURED?

There is no point getting our learners to do things if we are going to not know whether they can do them properly or not.

For our coffee making example, we might consider that the performance will be measured by the coffee being made safely and of a taste that is suitable for the assessor.

Other types of things that we can use here could be:

- Without error
- First time
- Time limits

PART 3: HOW THEY CAN DEMONSTRATE WHAT THEY CAN DO (IE, THE LEARNING)?

So, now that we know what action they will be undertaking (eg, making), and what standard they will be measured against (eg, safely), we need to decide how they are going to show us that they can do this (eg, make the coffee safely).

This is where we start to think about assessment. In all cases, we need to make sure that

assessment is valid, flexible, reliable and fair (something that we will spend a whole lot of time on a bit later in the sections on assessment). This basically means that we have to make sure that the way we assess our learners will really let us make a decision about whether they can do what they are assessing them in.

So, how can we assess our coffee making?

The key to this one is the action word. If our **action word** involves making something, then it is logical that we would get them to show us that they can make something. Think about it...if we are assessing the ability to make something, and we got them to do a written test, then can we honestly say whether they can or cannot make it? Sure, in a written test they might be able to describe the steps, or explain why it is important to do things in a certain way, but these action words are not part of this objective.

For our example, it would be appropriate to have them demonstrate how to make the cup of coffee.

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

From these three steps we have:

Steps	Key Focus	Our Example
1. What the learner will be able to do?	Action words	- Make a cup of coffee
2. How it will be measured?	Ways to measure the action	- Safely - Satisfactory taste
3. How they can demonstrate the learning?	Ways to show the action	- Demonstrate

Our Objective:

Our learner will be able to *demonstrate* how to safely make a cup of coffee that *tastes satisfactory*.

Another thing we can do is to apply the [SMART formula](#).

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 19 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

USING THE SMART FORMULA TO WRITE OBJECTIVES

Many of us will be familiar with the SMART way of writing goals. Some people like to use this process when writing their learning objectives, so it is a good idea to become skilled at it.

The following table tells us what the parts of SMART mean, and how we can use it to develop a learning objective.

S	Specific	Is our learning objective very clear?
M	Measurable	Is our intended learning able to be measured?
A	Achievable	Is our learning objective able to be achieved by learners?
R	Relevant	Is our learning objective needed by our client and learners?
T	Time Limited	Is our learning objective going to be limited to a set time frame?

Some people swear by this way of writing Learning Objectives. You can make your own choice.

If we look at our example Learning Objective from above, then we can see that using the SMART approach may have some benefits:

Our Objective:

Our learner will be able to demonstrate how to safely make a cup of coffee that tastes satisfactory.

Is our learning objective very clear?	YES
Is our intended learning able to be measured?	YES
Is our learning objective able to be achieved by learners?	YES
Is our learning objective needed by our client and learners?	YES
Is our learning objective going to be limited to a set time frame?	NO

In our coffee example, using the SMART approach tells us that our learning objective is *not time limited*. If this is important – which it often is – then we can rewrite our objective to include an element of time:

Our learner will be able to demonstrate how to safely make a cup of coffee that tastes satisfactory. This will be demonstrated one week following training.

Once we have a clear learning objective, we can really start to focus on how we can train people to do this, and choose the resources that we could, should and should not use.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 20 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

CHOOSING RESOURCES FOR THE LEARNING PROGRAM

Before we get our hands dirty with planning our learning program, we should work out what resources are available to us. If we do not do this first, then we might discover a bit too late that something that we needed is not available - or not appropriate ... or not safe - and we will have to begin our planning from scratch.

Something to bear in mind when it comes to any resource is: will the time and effort and cost involved in getting/using this resource result in learners being better able to learn and demonstrate the learning objective?

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

There will be many sources of information that will help you. Some of these will be internal (ie, within the organisation) and some will be external (ie, outside the organisation).

INTERNAL INFORMATION:

- Job/position descriptions
- Employment records
- Performance appraisals
- Company reports, policies and other documents
- surveys

EXTERNAL INFORMATION:

- Surveys
- Industry body reports
- Environmental scans
- Government policy papers
- Market research reports

Important: many sources of information that we may wish to access involve personal or commercial information. It is important that we obtain permission before accessing any information. If we are given permission, it is important to respect the privacy of everyone, as required by law.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Just as there are many sources of information, there are usually many options for where we can conduct our training. Of course, some are more appropriate than others. As with all other decisions we make, we should choose the one that best allows our students to develop and demonstrate the intended learning, and do so in a safe way.

Some of the common learning environments are:

- an operational workplace
- a simulated workplace
- a training room
- classroom
- online
- a community setting
- at home.

There is not one single environment that is better than the others. This is because different environments will suit different learning experiences. For example, learning to drive a tractor might be better suited to a simulated workplace than to a training room.

To help us make a good decision about where is best for our training to occur, we should consider two things: the environmental requirements, and the operational requirements of the training.

Things to consider

Specific things to look for

Environmental

Will the learners be comfortable?

Comfortable seats, access to amenities

Will the learners be able to learn?

Noise, light, distractions

Operational

Will the learners be safe? Existing hazards, Risk controls (including Personal Protective Equipment)

Will others be safe?

Hazards from learners practising

We can also think about the way that training is best delivered to achieve our objectives. For example, if the training involves learning practical skills, then training will be best if it is skills-based, hands-on using standard **workplace** equipment and materials. The types of workplaces where this might apply include:

- an engineering workshop
- a supermarket checkout
- a bakery
- a cattle yard
- a nursing home

Classroom based training is most appropriate in situations where a group of people are required to learn some theory or skills. The participants might attend one-off training, regular or semi-regular training, and it may be on their work premises or somewhere else, for example:

- at an RTO or college
- a school
- a community centre

Laboratories are great places to provide training that requires highly specialised equipment that may not be available in a normal classroom environment, or which may be too hazardous to use for training in a functioning workplace. Laboratories could include:

- computer labs, where networked specialised software packages might be available
- science labs, where chemical, engineering and other scientific operations may be undertaken

Online learning, such as that which we have a lot to do with, offers more flexibility than many conventional training options. Participants can potentially access the online environment to learn at various times, including during work or home hours. Online learning is a term that involves all sorts of things, including:

- providing text in a non-paper form
- giving more entertaining learning opportunities
- greater learner-centred progress through courses

Note: while Fortress Learning believes that online learning offers many benefits for learners, we are also aware that it does have its limitations.

A way of delivering training that can include all of the above is within **simulated environments**. A simulated environment is simply a place that is somehow organised to reflect what might happen in a real situation. For some of our blended courses (where students have a combination of face-to-face and online/distance delivery), we often do simulations involving course participants setting up the room as a training facility, and delivering training that I can assess. That's an easy one. More complicated things include simulated supermarket environments, where the training occurs outside the workplace (or at the workplace but outside of work hours) because delays caused in training are too costly for the organisation if actual customers were involved. Other situations where simulation is appropriate include:

- first-aid training
- heavy machinery operation
- flight training

- nursing & allied health
- counselling

RESOURCES INFLUENCE THE ENVIRONMENT

It is essential that before we choose the learning environment that we understand fully the resources that we will need.

Specific facility, technology and equipment needs may include:

- specific location or room
- availability of appropriate furniture
- adequate lighting
- comfortable seating and temperature
- overhead projector
- computer hardware and software
- video equipment
- audio equipment
- technical machinery or equipment
- working tools
- scientific laboratory and equipment.

You will be able to identify if you require any special equipment, technology or facilities by consulting:

- the Session Plan
- the Learner Support Requirements List
- other trainers or facilitators.

As always, work with the organisation and relevant personnel to arrange these special requirements.

LEARNER NEEDS INFLUENCE THE RESOURCES

Additional resourcing to meet identified [learner support needs](#) includes (but is not limited to):

- providing referrals to internal services such as
- language, literacy and numeracy support unit or individual learning unit
- providing referrals to external services such as community language, literacy and numeracy programs, disability support services, counselling support, and so on incorporating techniques such as modelling/demonstrating, chunking, visual/diagrammatic, opportunities to practise skills, peer support, and repetition
- drawing on a range of resources from first language, including peer support
- ensuring appropriate physical and communication supports are available
- listening to problems and helping with own area of responsibility or knowledge building required knowledge and skills using support materials.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 21 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

DEVELOP POSSIBLE LEARNING STRATEGIES

Once we have decided on the Learning Program, we can turn our attention to how we are going to take that Learning Program and turn it into a reality.

The way that we do this is by developing a **Learning Strategy**.

As we would recall, a Learning Strategy is a non-endorsed part of a [Training Package](#).

The National Council on Vocational Education Research (NCVER) publishes an excellent glossary of terms related to the VET sector. In it, we learn that a Learning Strategy is:

a non-endorsed component of a training package which provides information on how training programs may be organised in workplaces and training institutions. This may include information on learning pathways, model training programs, and training materials.

What this basically means is that the Learning Strategy is something that we trainers develop to help us deliver endorsed components of the Training Package. In practice, it means that we put together a document that we can use to work out what we are going to train, in what order, and with which resources.

But, as with many things in the VET sector, we do not have to reinvent the wheel. We can find learning strategies in existing documents that we can use to help us. For example, support materials that are accessible for Training Packages through the TGA can assist us.

With many Training Packages, we are fortunate enough to also be given a Facilitators' Guide. This Guide is an excellent tool, since it can get us started by giving us ideas for learning activities and practical advice about how to deliver the endorsed components of the Training Package. A commercial source for Facilitators Guides is [Australian Training Products](#).

The way our Learning Strategy takes shape will depend on a number of things, including:

- existing resources
- learner needs
- adult learning styles
- other people and operational factors

DECIDING ON A LEARNING PATHWAY

Your learning pathway may be as simple as:

1. Establish goals or objectives for the learning
2. Analyse the job tasks and activities to be included in the learning
3. Sequence the job task(s)
4. Model the tasks for the participant
5. Participant practises the task(s).

If your participant is to be assessed at the end of workplace learning, we will need to consider additional stages of the pathway and whether external agencies, such as a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) may be needed.

A complex task or process may require a learning pathway spanning several stages, with an allowance for recapping information and revision.

If our process aims to achieve recognised formal qualifications, our pathway will represent the stages of study and the assessment tasks for each stage. This type of learning pathway is more complex and we may need to consult an RTO to work out the best strategy.

Let's look at an example.

Bruce has been working at Gulargambone Swimming Pool for about 20 years. He has all of the relevant qualifications, and has never had time off due to injury. A change to the compression ratios for CPR means that he needs to update his qualifications. He has his CPR updated every 12 months as part of his resuscitation update. This happened 2 weeks ago.

At the same time as the new ratios were introduced, Gulargambone Pool also took on a trainee, Sarah. Sarah has just left school, and possesses a life saving certificate from Girl Guides.

Does Bruce need to do the whole CPR and resuscitation training again? Probably not. Providing he had evidence of competency in those things, then it is probably sufficient to just run through the new ratios with him and get him to demonstrate them on a dummy.

What about Sarah? She needs to do all sorts of training. We would need to find out what training is required, and work with her and the pool managers to determine a pathway for Sarah to develop all of the knowledge and skills required to do her job.

DECIDING ON A LEARNING STRATEGY

Now we get to the pointy end of this process: deciding what we will do.

By now, we will have considered all sorts of possibilities, and have many ideas. It is worth reviewing everything that we have done so far, including:

- learning strategy
- scope statement
- learning objectives
- learner profiles
- existing program resources
- options for content
- documented time, cost and logistical considerations.

Now, think back to why the training is needed.

Regardless of how exciting our possible resources or content options might be, we need to make a decision that:

- Reflects the learners' needs
- Meets the agreed outcomes
- Fits within the Scope Statement
- Is practical to deliver

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 22 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

EXISTING RESOURCES INFLUENCE OUR LEARNING STRATEGY

In addition to Facilitator Guides, there are also lots of other resources available for you to use and adapt for your own learning programs. Common sources of resources are within the client's organisation, within our own organisations, and within representative (eg, industry) bodies.

In most situations, documentation of a learning program will help us to work out how to deliver the training. This means that it will include:

- what each of the individual guides covers (in situations where there might be several guides, such as the Assessor Guides for a Training Package)
- an overview of the qualification (after all, we need to make sure that we are delivering the qualification, not just the bits of the qualification that we might like best or be good at)
- the assessment requirements (so we know what type evidence to collect and how we can collect it)
- the steps a participant needs to complete

In many training situations, however, there are no guides for us. This is especially the case if our training is not related to an accredited program, such as a Training Package. In that situation, we need to develop our own program documentation, and we can base it on existing resources. A tip here is that the four dot points that are listed above are a good thing for us to prepare for any training program that we are developing.

The following table tells us some of the more common resources that are available, and how they can be relevant for us.

Support material/ resources	Relevance/quality
Training Package material and resources including competency standards	Verify whether the Training Package itself or competency standards have been upgraded to a newer version.
Audiovisual resources and equipment	Test for faults that may have developed such as scratched DVD's; newer versions of training films may be available.
Activity sheets, case studies, worksheets	Are they suitable to this learning group which may have different characteristics from the last group? A more up-to-date format may be appropriate. Reproduction quality may be impaired by the age of the material.
Information sheets	If the program is to be customised, it is easy to overlook the fact that the information/overview data will also need updating.
Support material/ resources	Relevance/quality
Overheads and presentations	Globe life remaining in the equipment may be minimal transparencies can fade over time, perhaps colour transparencies may need to replace black and white ones, information may need to be upgraded.
Role plays, scenarios, assignments and so on	May have old information, scenarios could be dated, layout and format may need upgrading.

We need to be careful when thinking about using an existing resource.

Why?

Because it has not been developed with our particular needs in mind, nor with the particular needs of our client, nor with the particular needs of our learners.

So, it is worthwhile to develop for ourselves a set of criteria that we can use to “test” the usefulness and relevance of existing resources. The following are some examples of these:

1. Will this information require complex explanation or can it be summarised for a handout reference?
2. Is this information relevant to the program objective and the learner group?
3. Could this concept be summarised easily for an overhead transparency?
4. Would this suit the learning styles of the majority of participants?
5. Could this be effective as a self-directed research activity?
6. Will this be new information for the group?
7. Is the style of presentation appropriate for the group?
8. Are there copyright issues?
9. Is the language appropriate for the group?
10. Does it suit people of varying levels of literacy and numeracy skills?

If the resources fit our needs, then great. But, if they do not, then we may need to either modify them to fit our needs, or to create our own. In any case, we must always be aware of our legal and moral obligations to the copyright owners of any resources that we want to use or adapt.

LEARNER NEEDS INFLUENCE THE LEARNING STRATEGY

If some of the people who are going to be involved in our training are already competent in some parts of it, then it would be a waste of time to train them as if they were not. This might sound a bit obvious, but it continues to be surprising how often we hear teachers and trainers say that repeating something is “good revision” and that “it won’t hurt”. In reality, it is often not good revision, and it can have very damaging impact on the training as a whole and the workplace in which the training occurs.

So, it is worthwhile for us to work out the level of competency and general educational profile of our learners. This is called a **Learner Profile**. What it does is give us a snapshot of the learner group’s characteristics, so that we can plan ways to best meet the needs of that particular group.

The characteristics that are commonly included in a Learner Profile are:

- gender
- age bracket
- level of education
- employment status
- level of English
- specific cultural requirements
- particular skills or expertise in the area
- positive or negative attitude to learning and training
- language, literacy or numeracy needs

SO, HOW DO WE FIND OUT THIS INFORMATION?

We ask.

We can talk to supervisors and managers and the people who organized for the training to occur, and they can give us some good information about our learners. But, to be honest, the best way is to ask the learners themselves. As with most things when it comes to learners, there is no one right way to do it. Whatever we do, we should make it as easy as possible for both the learners and our client organisation in general.

For most of my own training, I usually just like to make a phone call to each participant. This suits me since most of my training involves groups of no more than 8 at a time. For larger groups, this may not be the best way. Instead, we could put together a simple survey and email it to each participant, via their manager. An example of this is shown below:

Question	Yes/No	Comments
Have you done this sort of training before?		
Do you know many other people who are doing the training?		
What is the highest level of education that you have completed?		
Do you enjoy working in groups?		
Is there anything that you would like me to know to help me plan better for your needs?		
How old are you?		
Is English your first language?		

Some trainers get a bit concerned about putting together a profile of learners. Others feel as though they are wasting the learners' time. My thought is that if we use the information wisely, then the training will obviously be of a better standard because it reflects the needs of the learners.

But, let's be mindful of one thing. Just because we write something on a piece of paper does not mean that someone else is going to read it. I remember seeing a survey along the lines of the above one that was used by an RTO who trained migrant groups: the RTO was obviously very aware of the many possible needs of these learners, but the problem was that most of the learners had very poor functional English language literacy, and I doubt that anyone with impaired vision would have been able to read Do you believe that you have impaired vision or any condition that limits your eyesight?

 THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 23 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

ADULT LEARNING STYLES INFLUENCE THE LEARNING STRATEGY

There are many theories about how people learn. For us, it is worthwhile to know just a few.

Theory	Description
Sensory Stimulation Theory	<p>Learning happens when instruction stimulates the senses of the learner. Therefore, more attention is paid to sensory experience than to mental processes or emotional involvement.</p> <p>Advocates of this theory maintain that 75% of what is learnt is acquired through the eyes. Hearing accounts for 13%, and the remaining 12% through touch, smell and taste. Other ratios suggest people retain about one-tenth of what they have heard 72 hours after hearing it, while 30% of what is seen is retained in the same time period.</p> <p>The advocates of this theory would design material that involved as many senses as possible - strong statements, loud sounds, a lot of colours, big pictures, shapes, models and multimedia presentations.</p>
Reinforcement Theory	<p>Reinforcement Theory is based on a theory that behaviour is controlled by its consequences. People will repeat a behaviour that seems to produce pleasant consequences and will avoid behaviours that lead to unpleasant consequences. This implies people learn because of what happens to them.</p> <p>According to Reinforcement Theory, in a trainer and learner relationship, the trainer can cause learners to behave in desired ways by providing positive reinforcement.</p>
Andragogy and Facilitation	<p>Andragogy is a term used to describe a unified theory of the way adults learn. As a theory it examines how adults learn in ways that are different to how children acquire new behaviours. Adults are self-directing. Children expect to have questions answered by outside sources, adults expect to be able to answer questions from their own experience. Facilitated learning designs would involve a number of features that recognise the adult learner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - problem-centred rather than content-centred - permit and encourage active participation of the learner - encourage the learner to introduce past experiences in order to review that experience in the light of new data set up a collaborative trainer/learner climate activities are experiential, not information transmittal and absorption - evaluation is a mutual activity between trainer and learner and leads to reappraisal of needs and interests.

Also, when developing content, we should always keep adult learning principles in mind. Generally:

- adults have a need to be self-directing
- adults have a range of life experiences and connecting learning to experience is how they add meaning to the learning
- adults have a need to know why they are learning something
- training needs to be learner-centred to engage learners
- the learning process needs to support increasing learner independence
- the emphasis should be on experimental and participative learning
- the use of modelling (watching and copying others) assists adults to learn
- reflecting individual circumstances is a useful tool.

Additionally, there are a number of ways of learning. We each have a preference for one or two of them. The [Learning Styles Inventory](#) that we use tells us more about some learning styles and gives an example of how this course can be undertaken in different ways to reflect the individual needs of individual learners – you can link to it from www.fortresslearning.com.au. Also, the information provided about [Learning Styles](#) in this course offers you another way to classify learning styles.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 24 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

OTHER PEOPLE INFLUENCE THE LEARNING STRATEGY

By now, it has become fairly obvious that training is not a solo event. We might end up being the only person delivering or assessing, but to get to that stage is very much a team effort. As with all cases where there are many people involved in something, it is a good idea to sort out who is doing what and, perhaps, more importantly, who is responsible. Some of the things that I like to nail down are:

- Which parts of the delivery, the learning strategy, or the program will be your responsibility?
- Exactly how many sessions will you provide?
- Should you liaise with other delivery personnel?
- Will you assess as well as deliver?
- Will you also undertake summative assessment of work based projects?
- What reporting arrangements are in place?
- If other trainers are delivering as well, who has ultimate responsibility?

Sorting these things out can save lots of time and embarrassment (and money) later.

WE AREN'T ALWAYS THE EXPERT

Just because our client has ideas about how things could be done - and just because we have some ideas of our own – does not mean that we have harnessed the best ideas available. New research is

being published regularly, and lots of people are trying new ways of doing things. Likewise, industry standards change, as do groups of learners themselves.

We can learn from others, so that others may learn from us. The people I commonly involve when planning a [Learning Strategy](#) are:

- My colleagues
- Other trainers/teachers from other places
- Human resources managers, workplace supervisors
- Industry representatives, eg, Industry Skills Council, Associations
- OHS representatives
- Language, Literacy and Numeracy Specialists
- My wife
- Past trainees and students
- Researchers (such as those who do research for NCVET)

OPERATIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCE THE LEARNING STRATEGY

Quite often what we can do is constrained by things like:

- Time limitations
- Cost limitations
- Logistical limitations

As with most things, it is best to know of these limitations at the planning stage. To help us make sure that our Learning Strategy will not be unexpectedly limited, we can ask ourselves the following questions.

Consideration	Description
<i>Time frames</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How long will the program run for? - When should it be conducted? - How often should it be conducted?
<i>Cost</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How much will the venue cost? - Does equipment and technology need to be purchased or hired? - Do I have to purchase a Training Package? - Do I need to buy support materials? - Are there any production costs? - Do I need to hire other staff?
<i>Logistics</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the venue appropriate? - Is the venue available? - Are the necessary tools and equipment available and working? - Can all the participants attend at the same time? - Can any participants with special needs be catered for?

CONSTRAINTS AND RISKS

It is touched on in the logistics section above, where we look at how well we can cater for the people attending our training - not just in terms of cater for their learning needs, but for their need for safety and comfort.

"If I cannot find a room that is big enough to let the learners do the activities that I want them to do, then my first-aid training will be constrained.

If I cannot access the industry expert I need to help me design my learning program, then my training on the use of data-loggers to collect water quality samples will be constrained.

If I cannot schedule a venue outside school hours, then my training on child protective behaviours for school teachers will be constrained.

If I am sharing training with another person, and they fall ill on the day, then my training will be constrained."

A **constraint** is a restriction.

It is something that will get in the way of us doing what we want/need to do. They happen all the time, and can range from big things like when I cannot get a flight to Brisbane to attend a Learning Day for a client, or little things like when the tin of International Roast runs out before morning tea on Day 6 of a training block (although some would argue that this is, indeed, a Very Big Thing!).

Common constraints to look out for include:

- access to workplaces
- costs of training or resources
- time required
- scheduling difficulties
- not reaching minimum numbers required for certain tasks, or exceeding the maximum number
- parking difficulties

Whenever our training program is constrained, there is a risk that our training may not deliver what we hoped for. So, to be sure that we can reduce the likelihood of not being able to achieve our objectives, it is a really good idea to include a **Register of Constraints and Risks** for our proposed training. When it comes to planning how to respond to these, we can involve others who may help us. Having it in a register such as the one below can work wonders with managers and supervisors, especially if we get them to sign off on it!

Register of Constraints and Risks

Risk/constraint	Plan (ie, what are we going to do about it?)
<i>Finding parking</i>	Include marked parking stations on the map, with a list of prices
<i>Late arrivals</i>	Start 15 minutes after advertised start time
<i>Training room has no fresh air ventilation</i>	Have tea breaks in a room with window

SOMETIMES NOBODY KNOWS

There is one situation that comes up time and time again, and it always surprises me. This is the situation where no one seems to know that the learning needs to happen. This can be because the person who initially requested it has moved somewhere else or is on leave, or it could just be that no one actually remembers that it was requested.

Another situation where this occurs is if we deliver some group training, and identify that an individual may require some additional assistance.

In these situations, we need to be very prepared with answers to the following questions:

- why is this learning needed?
- how will this learning benefit the organisation?
- how will this organisation benefit the learner?
- why are the required learning techniques so important, and are they really worth the time and effort?

At first it may seem a little odd that this bit of information is included after risks/constraints. But, this is intentional, because in my experience one of the biggest risks to my delivery of training, and the biggest constraint on my delivery of training, is the lack of understanding by other people of what it is that I am trying to do. Even if what we are doing is ultimately for their benefit, if they do not fully understand that benefit, then we can easily be seen as an unnecessary and self-serving inconvenience.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

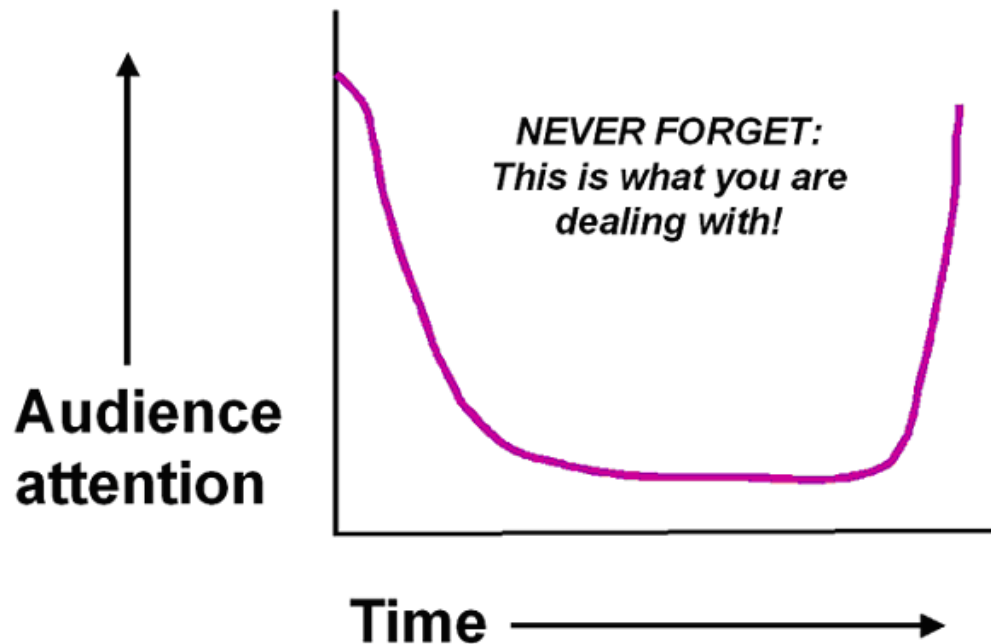
Information in this section relates to TASK 25 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

LEARNING STRATEGY INFORMS THE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

By this stage we will have a good idea of our learners and our resources. To combine these two things – learners and resources – is the basis of effective session planning.

The principles of adult learning tell us that learning is best when it is active. Active learning involves doing things. Compare this to the passive training that is all too common, where we are sitting still while the trainer talks. I never really understood this – why is the person who has least to learn the one who gets to do the most?

An important thing to bear in mind is that our attention span changes in time. We pay most attention at the beginning and at the end, as shown below:



USING A VARIETY OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES

One way to avoid the plunging attention span is keep tasks short and sweet, and to mix them up. Instead of having a single activity that goes for a whole hour, have three that take 20 minutes each. And, make sure that these activities are varied.

The following list gives an example of some commonly used learning activities.

- Group-based activities
- Role plays
- Written activities
- Case studies

- Simulation
- Audio or visual activities
- Practice or demonstration
- Individual assignments
- Individual group projects
- Workplace practice
- Research
- Panel discussions
- Brainstorming
- Demonstrations

LEARNING ACTIVITIES SHOULD REFLECT LEARNING NEEDS

It goes without saying that the activities that we include in our delivery should match the types of learning that we want to occur. In general, learning involves 3 things:

1. supporting and reinforcing new learning (knowledge and/or skills)
2. building on the learners' strengths
3. identifying areas for further development

Since our focus is on vocational education & training, it often makes sense to structure learning activities that closely reflect workplace activities. Doing this allows for learning to occur in a context that is immediately relevant. These sorts of activities are called **Structured Learning Activities**.

Common Structured Learning Activities include:

- direction, guidance and mutual discussion
- role-plays
- written exercises
- demonstrations
- practice opportunities
- role modelling
- projects
- readings
- research
- video or audio analysis
- a learning journal.

Regardless of the type of activities chosen, it is always important to be sure that it supports the learning that is required, and that it reflects the assessment that will be undertaken afterwards.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES SHOULD REFLECT ASSESSMENT

If we have written them well, then our Learning Objectives will make clear not just what we want our learners to learn, but how we plan to measure that learning.

Measuring the learning is called **Assessment**.

At this stage of our planning, we ought to consider the types of evidence that we will collect to measure the learning that has occurred. To do this, we need to be familiar with the three types of evidence:

1. **Direct** – usually evidence that is observed by the assessor themselves
2. **Indirect** – usually evidence that is observed by someone else
3. **Supplementary** – evidence that is found in written assessments, video recordings, questioning, and documented evidence of past performance

There are all sorts of methods or tools to collect evidence. Some common ones are shown here:

Method or Tool	Description
<i>Real work and time activities</i>	Performed in the actual workplace in real time; examples are direct observation and third party reports
<i>Structured activities</i>	These include simulation exercises, demonstrations, activity sheets
<i>Questioning</i>	Learners responding to targeted knowledge or skill area questions (these may be done via computer/online, verbally, or in a written format such as question/answer sheets, examinations and so on)
<i>Portfolios</i>	Where the learner gathers pieces of evidence to build a collection of relevant tasks, activities and such to demonstrate competence across a range of skills and knowledge
<i>Historical evidence</i>	Evidence such as previously acquired qualifications, certificates of learning and so on which show proof of having already gained the skills

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 26 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

WRITING A SESSION PLAN

Session Plan means the same thing as **Training Plan** which means the same thing as **Lesson Plan**.

So, we know what we want to do.

How do we do it?

Preparing for learning to occur requires that we plan three things:

1. The sequence of information/activities is logical
2. The sequence is engaging
3. The information/activities are manageable

A commonly accepted way to communicate this is through writing a **Session Plan**. Having a plan for each session helps to guide our training to ensure that we do what we intend to do. They are also evidence that we did what we agreed to do, so keep them in a safe place.

If it is to be useful, then our Session Plan will include the following information:

- time schedule
- content
- trainer activities
- learner activities
- assessment strategies
- assessment criteria
- resources and other materials that you need

SEQUENCING SESSION PLANS

A popular way to sequence and structure training sessions is to use the **GLOSS OFF** process. If we follow this in our session planning, we can be confident that we will cover everything and in a logical order.

GLOSS stands for:

- G** gain the learner's attention, interest and involvement
- L** link the learning to the learners previous experience
- O** outcomes of the session are identified
- S** structure of the session is previewed
- S** stimulate the learner's motivation

OFF stands for:

- O** outcomes are reviewed
- F** feedback to individuals and the group provides encouragement and motivation for future learning
- F** future outcomes and where the learning is leading learners.

There are many ways to format and design a Session Plan. The following is just one template that you could use - it is by no means the only design that you can be used.

Whichever design we use, it is good practise to get into the habit of using a structured document to guide us in the development of our sessions.

SAMPLE SESSION PLAN TEMPLATE

One way that we can write session plans is to use the following template.

Target Group:			
Session Title:			
Learning Outcomes:			
Assessment Criteria:			
Time (mins)	Main points, methods and learning aids		
	Introduction		
	G L O S S		
	Body		
	Presentation	Activity	Summary
	Presentation	Activity	Summary
	Conclusion		
	O F F		
Comments:			

TIMING OUR SESSION PLANS

Chances are that time constraints were worked out when we were putting together our [Learning Strategy](#). In addition to those operational constraints, we must be aware that how long we can allocate to different parts of our session will depend on:

- **The organisation** and how much time they have allocated to us
- **The learner**, and how much time they require to achieve competency
- **Our judgement**, and how much we believe we can “get done” in the available time

Other factors will also affect the timing of our sessions. Many of these factors are unexpected (eg, fire drills), but many are common enough that we are wise to plan for them:

- whether the learning is to be done on-the-job, off-the job or a combination of both
- if the delivery method is to be face-to-face, online, by distance or a combination
- the availability of learning facilitators
- staff scheduling issues
- whether the training is for new staff (induction program) or existing staff (refresher training or new information).

With these things in mind, our job is to break down our activities into chunks of time, and add record this in our session plan. An example is shown below:

Target Group: New Employees			
Session Title: Induction Training TEST Pty Ltd			
Learning Outcomes: After the half-day session, new employees will be introduced to the policies and procedures of TEST Pty Ltd, enabling them to start their work fully informed.			
Assessment Criteria: Questions during the session, informal monitoring for the next two weeks.			
Time (mins)	Main points, methods and learning aids		
	Introduction		
	G History of the company. L Company products overview. O S S		
2.5 Hours	Body		
	Presentation	Activity	Summary
30 mins	Overview of org. structure	Fill out practice sheets	
30 mins	Procedures for timesheets: leave applications, and so on		
	Specific procedures for employees' section (if any)	Tour	- Look around plant areas, - areas to avoid and so on
60 mins	Tour of plant		
	Presentation	Activity	Summary
10-15 mins	Conclusion		
	O Questions, review of info, person to contact if any further questions or problems. F F		
Comments:			

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 28 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

CONFIRMING AND DOCUMENTING OUR DECISIONS

CONFIRMING OUR INTENTIONS

We began the planning process by seeking to understand our client's needs. It will come as no surprise then that before we go and actually deliver our training we should once again consult with others to identify anything that might affect the planned training.

As with our Learner Profiles, an easy way to find this out is to ask. By doing this, we can make sure that we avoid inconveniences such as double booking of resources, people forgetting that we are coming, and other such calamities.

Since we will already have a good idea of the client organisation from our earlier planning, and we will know what it is that we want our learners to be doing during our training, we can put together a simple checklist to guide us. Some common questions to ask include:

- Is the room booked?
- Are the correct templates loaded?
- Is there wheelchair access?
- Have all the attending staff been notified?
- Are all the attending staff confirmed?
- Have any staff been omitted?
- Has management approved the program content?
- Has management approved the staff time?
- Are there any other issues to check?

DOCUMENT OUR INTENTIONS - BUILDING A PROGRAM SUMMARY USING AN 8 PART PLAN

To make sure that everything is in place, and that we have evidence of our planning, we can now put together a Program Summary. We can think of a Program Summary as a roadmap that can guide others. It will include:

- the competencies or other benchmarks to be achieved (phrased in action terms)
- the specific outcomes for each session or part of the learning program
- learning activities for each session or part of the learning program
- delivery methods for each session or part of the learning program
- workplace tasks or applications
- practice opportunities

- identification of assessment points to measure learner progress
- assessment methods and tools to be used to gather evidence of competency.

The following template is an example of how a Program Summary could be constructed.

Program Summary for (Title)	Time Frames	Key Objectives	Target Group
Competencies			
	<i>Session 1</i>	<i>Session 2</i>	<i>Session 3</i>
Learning outcome			
Learning activities			
Delivery methods			
Tasks/applications			
Practice opportunities			
Assessment points:			
Assessment methods/tools:			
Prepared by:..... Date:			
Validated by:			

Congratulations, at this stage of the planning process you now have a DRAFT that can be reviewed.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 29 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

REVIEWING THE PROGRAM

We are probably all familiar with the evaluation form that most trainers get us to complete when we have finished a training session. This is only one form of review.

The other form of review happens before we deliver the training.

BEFORE DELIVERY

Before we deliver anything, we have to do one more check. This is the final check to make sure that our program really will:

- *Reflect* the learners' needs
- *Meet* the agreed outcomes
- *Fit* within the Scope Statement
- Be *practical* to deliver

We also need to be sure that our resources are going to be appropriate, and prepared in time. This means that we need to leave enough time for things like photocopying (and the time it takes to fix the jam in the photocopier, or find the extra toner cartridge or extra ream of paper, or whatever else photocopiers always seem to need just when we need them to work...).

The people we can involve in this final check are many and varied, but will probably include some of the following:

- other users of the program
- trainers, teachers, assessors
- learners and end receivers
- supervisors or team leaders
- management
- employers
- technical and subject matter experts
- OHS experts
- LLN (language, literacy and numeracy) specialists
- other training providers
- HR personnel
- assessment or training partners
- government departments
- unions
- industry or employer group representatives.

An easy way to do this is to decide who you would like to review your program, and then give them a list of criteria that they can use to decide if your program is ready to go or not.

These criteria can be part of a checklist, such as the following example:

Training Program Title:			
Client:			
Proposed Delivery Date/s:			
Criteria	Yes	No	Suggestions
1. Do the content and structure address all aspects of the required competencies or other benchmarks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Does the learning sequence facilitate effective and manageable blocks of learning?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Are the activities interesting, relevant and appropriate to both the outcomes and learner characteristics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Are the assessment points, methods and tools appropriate and effective?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Are access and equity needs effectively addressed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Have risks and contingencies been identified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Name:			
Signature:			
Date:			

We can then use the information from this process to refine our Learning Program and Session Plans. However, it is important that we must only respond to those suggestions that will make learning better. It is equally as important to remember that any changes will not cost too much, will not reduce the focus on the Scope Statement, and will have a clear benefit for the overall program.

A common mistake is to change one part of a training program without considering its impact on other parts of the program. For example, increasing the time allocation to one section may lead to insufficient time being available for another – and possibly more important – section.

Once we have decided on our changes, we have the program reviewed again.

OBTAINING FINAL APPROVAL

Because we are planning to deliver, the documentation we have put together so far is referred to as the Delivery Plan. Not surprisingly, it shows how we plan to deliver the training. Chances are it will include some or all of:

- individual and group learning objectives or outcomes for the segment of the learning program to be addressed
- the number of learners and their specific support requirements
- content of sessions as specified in the Session Plans
- timelines or duration of activities within sessions
- learning resources, learning materials and learning activities to be used in sessions
- other resource requirements
- OHS considerations, including incident or hazard reporting and emergency procedures.

At this stage, we are ready to go. The last thing we need to do is to get final written approval from our client. This is often because organisations have their own processes and procedures that will be affected by our training. These can include:

- Budgets
- Resource allocation (including rooms, computers, equipment, people)
- Communication protocols
- Quality Control

Who we get this approval from will depend on the client organisation. It is likely, however, that it will be one of the following:

- program manager - or whoever has the final say on the program development and where a team of individuals have participated in the project
- head of department
- senior teacher
- apprenticeship or traineeship supervisor
- training coordinator or manager
- HR manager.

AFTER DELIVERY

We also review our program once we have delivered it. This involves us doing three things.

1. GATHERING INFORMATION FOR REVIEW

As with our pre-delivery evaluation, this can involve:

- Participant surveys
- Interviews
- Focus groups

Whatever your method, the purpose of this review should be the same:

Discover how well your program met your intended outcomes.

Perhaps the most frequently used method is a participant evaluation form, which is completed by participants before they depart at the end of a training session. An example of an evaluation form that we use with our face to face sessions is provided here:

Participant Evaluation Form - Learning Day						
Trainer's Name:						Focus of Training
Date of Training:						<input type="checkbox"/> ENV <input type="checkbox"/> DES <input type="checkbox"/> DEL <input type="checkbox"/> ASS
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Comment
Course Content <i>The Learning Day was taught at a level I could understand.</i> <i>The Learning Day was relevant to my job.</i> <i>The material was interesting.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Course Structure <i>There was the right mix of practical and theory.</i> <i>Participation was encouraged</i> <i>The training aids and notes were effective.</i> <i>The length of the Learning Day was about right.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delivery <i>The aims of the Learning Day were clearly stated.</i> <i>The trainer was enthusiastic about the course material.</i> <i>The trainer was easy to understand.</i> <i>The trainer allowed enough time for questions.</i> <i>The equipment and facilities were satisfactory.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Overall Learning Day Evaluation <i>The skills I learnt from this Learning Day will be often I used in my job.</i> <i>I learned what I came for.</i> <i>I would recommend this Learning Day to others.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
This course is about training and assessment. Is there anything about today's delivery that you would like to see repeated or removed from the next Learning Day that you attend?						
Completion of the following question is entirely optional; there is no advantage or disadvantage in doing so. Your name:						
To enable us to continually tailor our programs to the needs of our learners, may I contact you directly to discuss your experiences of this training? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						

The AQTF2010 Quality Indicators for registered training organisations, and the Australian Centre for Education Research put together a Learner Engagement Survey that we can use. From the ACER website, we learn that this survey

“focuses on whether learners are engaging in activities that are likely to promote high-quality skill outcomes and includes learner perceptions of the quality of their competency development and of the support that they have received during their training.”.

2. SUMMARISING INFORMATION FOR REVIEW

Regardless of how we collect our information, it is important that we create some sort of summary of it. This lets us to discover any common experiences from among the participants, which can tell us what we did well and what we could improve upon.

If we are using surveys such as above, then we can summarise the responses from all participants into a table, which can be graphed.

Graphing the results gives us a visual summary, which is not only easier to understand than a table of data (or a pile of survey forms!), but it is easier to compare responses over time, such as when a program is repeated to a number of groups.

3. DRAWING CONCLUSIONS FROM REVIEW

By looking at our data, we can discover which parts of our training worked well and which did not work so well. As always, working well means that it did what we intended it to do.

Common areas that trainers look for when analysing their summary data include:

- 1. Did the content and structure address all aspects of the required competencies or other benchmarks?*
- 2. Did the learning sequence facilitate effective and manageable blocks of learning?*
- 3. Were the activities interesting, relevant and appropriate to both the outcomes and learner characteristics?*
- 4. Were the assessment points, methods and tools appropriate and effective?*
- 5. Were access and equity needs effectively addressed?*
- 6. Were risks and contingencies adequately identified?*

If you are wondering if this list seems familiar, then you are right. It is the same criteria that we used in our pre-delivery review. While we would not use these questions in our participant evaluation forms (let's face it, most people would not understand them), we should interpret participant responses in such a way that we can find out if our training achieved all of these things.

RECORDING OUR FINDINGS AND REVIEWING THE PROGRAM

The best time to revisit and amend our program is immediately after we have delivered it. It is at this point when our understanding is freshest, and chances are that if we leave it too long, we will move on to other things and never get around to doing it.

If the review of the training program suggested room for improvement or amendment, then these changes should be made immediately. By doing this, we can create a Dynamic Learning Program. Keeping the files in an electronic version with appropriate version control is an easy and convenient way to do this. However, just as there are disadvantages with keeping hard (ie paper) copies of things, electronic storage also presents some challenges: security, changes to the document (intentional or otherwise), losing documents that are not backed-up, etc.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 30 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 1.

Participant Evaluation Form

Course Name:
Date:

Trainer's Name:

Course Content	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
The course was taught at a level I could understand.				
The course was relevant to my job.				
The material was interesting.				
Course Structure	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
There was the right mix of practical and theory.				
The course encouraged participation.				
The training aids and notes were effective.				
The length of the course was about right.				
Delivery	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
The aims of the course were clearly stated.				
The trainer was enthusiastic about the course material.				

The trainer was easy to understand.				
The trainer allowed enough time for questions.				
The equipment and facilities were satisfactory.				
Overall Course Evaluation	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
The skills I learnt from this course will be often I used in my job.				
I learned what I came for.				
I would recommend this course to others.				

ASSESSMENT CONTEXT & PURPOSE

No doubt we can all remember tests from school. Sitting at a desk, pen ready, staring at the face-down test paper.... Well may we wonder what it was all for.

In simple terms, it was a way to work out what we knew (and, although a written test is not such a good way to do it), what we could do.

Chances are that not much has changed, and that today there are school kids sitting at desks with their pens, staring at face-down test papers.... But, that is not all there is to finding out what someone knows or what someone can do.

What we are talking about here is **assessment**.

WHAT IS ASSESSMENT?

From the glossary at [Australian National Training Authority](#), we learn that assessment is:

the process of gathering and judging evidence in order to decide whether a person has achieved a standard or objective.

That means that assessment involves working out a number of things:

- which standards or objectives are being assessed
- which types of evidence are best to collect
- which evidence is best for this particular candidate
- which evidence is the best indicator of achievement

But, before we can even begin to work out those things, there is a bigger picture that we need to think about.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT?

The first thing we need to know is why we want to assess in the first place.

There are many different reasons why we might assess someone, and each of them might lead to a different way of assessing. So, we need to be clear on our **purpose** before we start. Some of the more common reasons to assess that we encounter as trainers include:

- to recognise prior learning or current competencies
- to identify training needs or progress
- a component of a training or vocational pathway
- to establish candidate's progress towards achievement of competence
- determine language, literacy, numeracy needs of candidate's

- to certify competence through a Statement of Attainment
- to establish progress towards a qualification
- to determine training gaps of candidate/s
- to measure work performance
- to classify employees/support career progression
- to meet organisational requirements for work – operate equipment/ develop new skills
- to gain a particular qualification or a licence.

WHAT IS THE CONTEXT OF THE ASSESSMENT?

The purpose of the assessment is closely linked to its context. Actually, the context includes the purpose. But, the context also includes all those other things that tell us about the reasons for the assessment, and the things that we will need to consider when we are planning our assessment.

Some of the more common contexts of assessment that we encounter as trainers include:

- the environment in which the assessment will be carried out, including real or simulated work and occupational health and safety (OHS) issues
- opportunities for gathering evidence in a number of situations
- the purpose of assessment
- who carries out the assessment
- relationship between units of competency and the work activities in the candidate's workplace
- relationships between competency standards and learning activities
- auspicing and partnership arrangements
- the period of time during which the assessment takes place
- apportioned costs or fees (if applicable)
- quality assurance mechanisms
- individual unit or integrated approaches to competency assessment.

So, how do we work out the purpose and context?

We ask.

That sounds easy enough, but who we have to ask will depend on all sorts of things. So, probably the best first step is to work out a list of all the people who might be affected by the assessment. These are the **stakeholders** – they have a stake in what we are doing, simply because they are affected in some way by it.

Mind you, not every stakeholder needs to be involved. More often than not, we will identify some key people who can help us to understand the way that lots of other people are going to be affected. These are the relevant people.

When it comes to consulting the right people, there are two groups: those who we absolutely **MUST** involve, and those who we **MAY** involve.

WHO MUST WE INVOLVE?

- The candidate/s
- The assessors who will be conducting the assessment (it could be us, or our colleagues)

WHO MAY WE INVOLVE?

- the client, company or organisation
- team leaders, managers, supervisors
- delivery personnel
- technical/subject experts
- training and assessment coordinators
- industry regulators
- employee and employer representatives
- members of professional associations
- Commonwealth department official/Centrelink personnel/caseworker
- Australian Apprenticeship Centre (AAC) personnel.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO ASK?

A common mistake made by trainers is to just ask about when and where the assessment could occur. This is important information, but it may cause us to overlook some **organisational, ethical and legal requirements** that we need to consider.

These requirements commonly include:

- assessment system policies and procedures
- assessment strategy requirement
- reporting, recording and retrieval systems for assessment
- quality assurance systems
- business and performance plans
- access and equity policies and procedures
- collaborative/partnership arrangements
- mutual recognition arrangements
- industrial relations systems and processes,
- awards/enterprise agreements
- Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) standards on assessment
- registration scope
- human resources policies/procedures
- legal requirements including anti-discrimination, equal employment, job role/responsibilities/conditions
- relevant industry codes of practice
- confidentiality and privacy requirements

OHS considerations include:

- ensuring OHS requirements are adhered to during the assessment process
- identifying and reporting OHS hazards and concerns to relevant personnel.

Of course, as with all other things we do, it is important that we document these requirements in our assessment plan, and confirm our intentions with the relevant people before going any further.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY & METHODS

How we go about assessing someone's performance is called the **Assessment Strategy**.

If the assessment is part of some training that is also being delivered, then the Assessment Strategy is generally included as part of the [Learning Strategy](#).

If we are using an Assessment Only pathway, then the Assessment Strategy will be a separate document.

In all cases, the important thing to remember is that the Assessment Strategy guides us as we organise and implement our arrangements for assessment. While each strategy will be unique - reflecting the unique [context and purpose](#) of each assessment situation - they commonly have some or all of the following features:

- the identification of the competency standards forming the qualification and interpretation of the packaging rules of the qualification, where part of a [Training Package](#)
- interpretation of the competency standards as the benchmarks for assessment (don't worry about this too much just yet - we have a good look at benchmarks a bit later)
- application of Training Package Assessment Guidelines, where part of a Training Package
- arrangements for [recognition of existing competence](#) (RCC/RPL), including provision of guidance and assistance to candidates in gathering and evaluating evidence
- determination of assessment methods for identified competency standards
- selection of assessment tools for identified competency standards
- organisational arrangements for assessment, including
- physical and human resources, roles and responsibilities and partnership arrangement (where relevant)
- nominated [quality assurance](#) mechanisms
- identified risk management strategies.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

The way that we go about collecting evidence of someone's performance is called the Assessment Method.

There are many ways to collect information about someone's performance. But, we will find that there will only be a limited number of ways that will allow us to collect the sort of information that will let us make an accurate judgement of the performance.

Common methods include:

- real work or real time activities (such as direct observation and third party reports)
- structured activities (such as simulation exercises, demonstration and activity sheets)
- questioning (oral, computer or written)
- portfolios (collections of evidence compiled by the candidate)
- historical evidence showing proof of prior learning.

The needs of our client/candidate must be considered when deciding on a method to use. Commonly, these needs include:

- a need to have a concrete understanding of the assessment process
- language, literacy, numeracy requirements
- provision of personal support services, for example
- reader, interpreter, attendant carer, scribe, adaptive
- technology or special equipment
- flexible assessment sessions to allow for fatigue or medication
- physical environment adjustments
- considerations given to age, gender, beliefs, traditional practices, and religious observances.

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

The main way that we decide which method to use is by choosing the method/s that best meets the [Principles of Assessment](#), which require that assessment must be:

VALID

One of the Principles of Assessment and also one of the Rules of Evidence. Assessment is valid when the process is sound and assesses what it claims to assess. Validity requires that:

(a) assessment against the units of competency must cover the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance

(b) assessment of knowledge and skills must be integrated with their practical application

(c) judgement of competence must be based on sufficient evidence (that is, evidence gathered on a number of occasions and in a range of contexts using different assessment methods). The specific evidence requirements of each unit of competency provide advice on sufficiency."

RELIABLE

One of the Principles of Assessment. Reliability refers to the degree to which evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and results in consistent assessment outcomes. Reliability requires the assessor to have the required competencies in assessment and relevant vocational competencies (or to assess in conjunction with someone who has the vocational competencies). It can only be achieved when assessors share a common interpretation of the assessment requirements of the unit(s) being assessed.

FLEXIBLE

One of the Principles of Assessment. To be flexible, assessment should reflect the candidate's needs; provide for recognition of competencies no matter how, where or when they have been acquired; draw on a range of methods appropriate to the context, competency and the candidate; and support continuous competency development.

FAIR

One of the Principles of Assessment. Fairness in assessment requires consideration of the individual candidate's needs and characteristics, and any reasonable adjustments that need to be applied to take account of them. It requires clear communication between the assessor and the candidate to ensure that the candidate is fully informed about, understands and is able to participate in, the assessment process, and agrees that the process is appropriate. It also includes an opportunity for the person being assessed to challenge the result of the assessment and to be reassessed if necessary.

Making sure that we only choose methods that meet these principles will also make sure that we are choosing methods that are best suited to our particular [context and purpose](#). This means that we will be collecting evidence that is meets the [Rules of Evidence](#) and which also uphold the [legal and ethical](#) requirements of our work.

RULES OF EVIDENCE

Just like there are many [Assessment Strategy and Methods](#), there are many types of evidence.

From the [glossary on the Training & Assessment Training Package](#) we learn that evidence can be defined as

information gathered to support a judgement of competence against the specifications of the relevant unit/s of competency.

Evidence can take many forms and be gathered from a number of sources. Assessors often categorise evidence in different ways for example:

- * direct, indirect and supplementary sources of evidence, or a combination of these*
- * evidence collected by the candidate or evidence collected by the assessor*
- * historical and recent evidence collected by the candidate and current evidence collected by the assessor.*

As indicated in the first dot point above, a simple way to classify evidence is to use three types:

- **Direct Evidence** – things that we, as assessor, observes first-hand, eg, observation, work samples
- **Indirect Evidence** – things that someone else has observed and reported to us, eg, third party reports
- **Supplementary Evidence** – other things that can indicate performance, such as training records, questions, written work, portfolios

If these seem familiar, it is because we have touched on them before. This is because it is one of the global concepts that underpins the whole TAE10 qualification.

SO WHAT ARE THE RULES OF EVIDENCE?

It is not good enough to just collect any evidence. Just as the way we collect evidence is guided by the principles of assessment, the way we collect evidence is guided by the **rules of evidence**.

Rule	Evidence must...
Valid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the elements and performance criteria - Reflect the skills, knowledge and context described in the competency standard - Demonstrate the skills and knowledge are applied in real or simulated workplace situations
Current	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrate the candidate's current skills and knowledge - Comply with current standards
Sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrate competence over a period of time - Demonstrate competence that is able to be repeated - Comply with language, literacy and numeracy levels which match those required by the work task (not beyond)
Authentic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be the work of the candidate - Be able to be verified as genuine

To better understand how these rules affect the way that we assess, let's have a look at each one in more detail.

VALIDITY

This is the degree to which evidence demonstrates what it claims to demonstrate. For example, the evidence will not be valid if you instruct a candidate to solve printer problems by simply asking: Type a standard office memo on a word processor. Validity is assured when the performance

required matches the performance described in a competency standard.

CURRENCY

Currency means evidence needs to be checked to ensure it shows recent performance.

SUFFICIENCY

A judgement has to be made concerning how much evidence to call for. How much is required for the assessor to accept the performance as competent? Too little evidence risks the assessment not being reliable; too much leads to waste of time and effort.

It is always a good idea to tell your candidates that the evidence they present for RPL or RCC should be organised and presented in a format that makes it easy for the assessor to make a judgement of competence.

AUTHENTICITY

Authenticity means evidence needs to be checked to ensure it actually relates to the performance of the person being assessed, and not that of another person. Checking for authenticity is important when some supplementary sources of evidence are used in assessment.

SUPPLYING THE EVIDENCE

It is very easy to get too much evidence. It is also very easy to get too much evidence that doesn't really help us to make good decisions. Because of this, it is in everyone's interests to guide our candidates through the selection, organisation and submission of evidence.

The first thing we need to do, however, is work out what makes **quality evidence**. The answer to this is quite simple. It is evidence that lets us make decisions about whether someone can do what it is that they are meant to be able to do, i.e., it will help us to recognise competency.

Specifically, quality evidence addresses the rules of evidence as described above and:

- reflects the skills, knowledge and attributes defined in the relevant unit of competency
- shows application of the skills in the context described in the range statement in the unit of competency
- demonstrates competence over a period of time
- demonstrates repeatable competence
- is the work of the candidate
- can be verified
- demonstrates the candidate's current skills and knowledge

- does not require language, literacy and numeracy levels beyond those needed for the performance of the competency.

In this respect, we need to ensure that our evidence and the way it is collected meets the [VET Policies & Frameworks](#) that influence our work, eg, Disability Discrimination Act, Racial Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act.

THE PORTFOLIO APPROACH

Just as one size does not fit all with learning styles, neither will a single assessment method always provide the evidence that we need to make a decision about performance across all elements within a competency standard, or across several units of competency.

For this reason, it is common to prepare a range of types of evidence. This is called a portfolio. While we will need to target the contents of each portfolio to the specific context and purpose of the assessment, each will usually include the following:

- contact details
- a declaration that the evidence is the candidate's own work
- experience gained (work-based experiences)
- units claimed
- unit applications (including self-assessment form, cover page for evidence, assessor report form).

INTEGRATION & CO-ASSESSING

We do not know everything. Nor are we expected to. This means that if we are going to be collecting quality evidence, we are often better off to involve other people in the assessment event. These might be people who have a better understanding of the work-based knowledge and skills that we are seeking to recognise in our assessment. People who work closer to the "coal-face" are often able to help us see opportunities to assess several competencies in an integrated way.

Commonly, the people who will know the job the best are:

- the candidate themselves
- supervisors and managers
- technical and industry specialists
- other assessors with experience in the area

From our conversations with these people, we might identify opportunities to better integrate the assessment activities. Doing this is a good idea, and for a number of reasons:

- it gets rid of repetition across assessment activities

- it tailors assessment so that it is more like what really happens at work
- it saves everyone's time

Let's look at an example.

Jamie is training to be a florist. Among the units that he is studying is Create floristry designs using hand tied techniques, an excerpt of which is shown here:

Element	Performance criteria
1. Develop design specification for hand tied floral arrangements	1.1 <i>Customer</i> and/or <i>supervisor</i> is consulted to identify <i>job requirements</i> and <i>relevant parameters</i> .
	1.2 <i>Potential problems</i> are identified and communicated to relevant personnel according to <i>shop/studio policies and procedures</i> .
	1.3 <i>Hand tied designs</i> are costed according to <i>relevant legislation</i> and shop/studio policies and procedures.
	1.4 <i>Design specification</i> is developed and confirmed with customer/supervisor and modifications to address customer requirements are implemented, if required.
2. Apply elements and principles of design to design specifications for hand tied	2.1 <i>Principles of design</i> are applied to the planning of the floral design to meet customer requirements and/or job requirement.

If we wanted to assess the individual performance criteria, then we might use the following assessment methods:

1. observation of Jamie creating a hand-tied arrangement
2. observation of Jamie following the specifications provided by a customer
3. a short written quiz that assesses Jamie's underpinning knowledge

Now, that is three things to do. Another way would be to undertake a single observation that looks at:

- Jamie consulting customer over arrangement specifications
- Jamie accurately recording customer details
- Jamie following the specifications that the customer requested
- Jamie creating the hand-tied arrangement

The first thing that many people say about this is that the second way will take longer. That is true. But, it is a part of Jamie's normal work activities, and does not require that he be taken away from work. This saves him time, and his employer money. Not only that, but it is a real example of direct evidence being collected in an authentic environment.

This [type of assessment](#) is also known as holistic assessment.

With this in mind, we can start to think about an [evidence plan](#).

EVIDENCE PLAN

The requirements for evidence in any particular situation will be determined by all sorts of things. Apart from [legal and ethical requirements](#), there are other documents that you may need to consider.

Commonly, these documents include:

- Training Package assessment guidelines
- competency standard information about assessment resources, context and methods
- other related accredited training courses or modules
- other relevant support materials
- any OHS, legislative, code of practice, or industry standards requirements
- organisational, industry or national reporting requirements
- product specifications.

A document called an **evidence plan** can help you check that the evidence you want to collect meets all appropriate requirements. An evidence plan usually contains a record of:

- evidence requirements as set out in the competency standard (ie, what are you gonna do to find out if the person is competent or not?)
- who will collect the evidence (ie, who is gonna do this stuff to find out if the person is competent or not?)
- the time period needed to collect the evidence (ie, when is all this gonna happen?)

Let's look at an example.

Let's say that I was planning to assess a particular Unit of Competency. It does not matter which one. Let's assume that this particular Unit has 4 Elements, and by downloading it from the [TGA](#), I discover that it can be assessed using Observation, Written Tasks and Third Party Reports.

So, I have a look at each element, and I work out which Assessment Tools could let a student demonstrate their competency in that element. When I have done that, I might end up with something like this:

Element	Observation	Written Task	Third Party Report
1	x		x

2			x
3	x		x
4	x	x	x

Now, that shows us the different ways that I can assess each of the different elements. But, really, it does not give me enough information. To be able to plan, I need to know what I will do, and when I will do it. But of course, the timelines depend on other aspects of my training such as whether it is occurring on-the-job or in a workshop or some other mode.

So, I use that one to make some decisions, and I can add some more information to better help me prepare.

Element	Observation	Written Task	Third Party Report
1	x		x
2			x
3	x		x
4 x	x		X
MY PLAN	all	4	none
WHEN	Week 4	Week 7	
RESOURCES	checklists	Task Sheet	

So, now I can see that I will use Observation in Week 4 to assess all 4 elements, and a Written Task in Week 7 to assess element 4. I can also see which resources I will need to prepare for these assessments.

Another example of an evidence plan.

Unit of Competency FPI

Assessment will confirm competency in the elements listed using the assessment methods indicated.	Demonstration/ observation	Questions	Log book/work records (optional)	Third party report
1. (Element 1)	x	x		
2. (Element 2)		x	x	
3. (Element 3)	x		x	
4. (Element 4)		x		x
5. Underpinning Knowledge	x	x		
6. Underpinning Skills	x		x	x

Unit of Competency to be assessed:

FPI

Key competencies: collecting, analysing and organising information (1); communicating (1); planning and organising activities (1); working with others and in teams (1); using mathematical ideas and techniques (1); solving problems (1); using technology (1).

* Level of key competencies will be determined by the certificate level: Level 1: basic Level 2: perform Level 3: plan, design

Ensure any assessment benchmarks can provide appropriate evidence to demonstrate competency.

If you use competency standards as benchmarks, you must be sure to include all component parts of the [competency standards](#), making sure that you say which evidence is going to be used to make the decision about competency in which benchmark.

BENCHMARKS AND STANDARDS

BENCHMARKS CAN INFORM ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

If assessment is about judging someone's performance, then it makes sense that we would be able to somehow measure that performance.

One way to measure performance is by comparing it to what is widely accepted as a reasonable standard.

Here's an example.

Let's say that the across all child-care centres in Australia, the average number of days lost due to injury is 3.4 per year. This is a benchmark because it lets us take a widely accepted standard and use it to judge the performance of any individual child care centre. Taking this example a bit further, we would say that a centre that has 7.8 days per year that are lost due to injury is well below standard. On the other hand, a centre that has .3 days per year lost is doing better than the benchmark.

In training, benchmarks allow us to judge someone's knowledge or skills by comparing it to what the generally accepted industry standard is. After all, the purpose of VET is about people developing the skills required by industry at standards required by industry.

From the glossary that we find in the Training Assessment Training Package, we learn that benchmarking for assessment is

the criterion against which the candidate is assessed which may be a competency standard/unit of competency, assessment criteria of course curricula, performance specifications, product specifications.

There are all sorts of benchmarks that we can choose. Not all of them will be suitable to our particular situation. This is another reason why it is important to talk with the relevant people.

Common benchmarks include:

- National Training Packages
- qualification descriptions
- assessment plan
- licensing requirements
- standard operating procedures or work instructions
- assessment instruments or tools
- evidence requirements
- organisational policies and workplace procedures
- occupational health and safety legislation, codes of practice, standards and guidelines
- course outlines.

Now, some of these are **accredited**, and some are **non-accredited**. Remember, they are accredited if they are part of the National Training Framework, eg something that you get out of a Training Package that you will find on the TGA website.

COMPETENCY STANDARDS CAN INFORM ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

One of the most common benchmarks that are used is Competency Standards.

Remember, a Unit of Competency gives us a snapshot of a set of knowledge and skills that can be performed at a particular standard.

Within the Unit of Competency, it is the Elements and Performance Criteria that describe for us the performance outcomes that we will be looking for when we assess. It will also include an Evidence Guide that tells us the sorts of evidence that we could collect to make our decisions about the person's performance.

Let's have a look at an example.

Bill is doing a horticulture traineeship with the local council. One of the units that he is studying is RTF32A Install Water Features. It includes the following Element and Performance Criteria.

Element	Performance criteria
1. Plan and prepare work	<p>1.1 Plans and specifications are interpreted and clarified with the supervisor.</p> <p>1.2 The quantity and quality of materials are checked to ensure they conform to design drawings and specifications.</p> <p>1.3 Tools and equipment are selected and checked for serviceability according to enterprise guidelines.</p> <p>1.4 OHS hazards are identified, risks assessed and controls implemented.</p> <p>1.5 Environmental implications of constructing concrete structures are identified and reported to the supervisor.</p>

Now, Bill's supervisor has come to us to find out how this could be assessed. The first thing we do is have a look at the Elements and Performance Criteria to find out what the action words are. By looking at the action words, we get a better understanding of what it is that Bill is meant to be able to do.

We find that Bill is meant to be able to:

1.1 *Interpret clarify*

1.2 *Check ensure*

1.3 *Select check*

1.4 *Identify, assess and implement*

1.5 *Identify and report*

Now, all of these actions are meant to take place within the context of planning and preparing to install a water feature. Since there is a specific situation where we wish to see Bill do these things, we can come up with **specific benchmarks**.

THESE ARE THE THINGS THAT WE LOOK FOR WHEN WE ASSESS BILL.

So, we look again at the action words, and we look at the **performance criteria**, and we pay close attention to the **range statement** (remember: these are the bits of the Performance Criteria that will be bold or italicised) and we contextualise the whole lot to make it suit this real life situation where Bill will actually DO what the unit of competency says he needs to be able to do.

Let's go.

For this example, Bill is installing a water feature. So, the first thing we can do is write a little story. That's right, we take ourselves back to primary school and we write a story about the day that Bill installed a water fountain.

Bill went to work and had to install a water fountain. To make sure he did a good job, Bill first looked over the plans and checked with his supervisor that he knew what to do. Then he thought about the materials he needed, and double checked that he had the right stuff and enough of it for his job. Bill then went to the shed to find the tools and equipment that he needs for this job, and checked that it was all there. For the bobcat and trench digger, he also checked the log books to make sure that they had been serviced recently. He also checked the oil and fuel levels, and wrote in the Equipment Register the date and time that he would be using them, and where.

Okay, I could go on, but I think you probably get the idea.

Essentially what I am doing is coming up with a picture in my head of what it would look like if this job was done competently. Once I have done that, then I pull out the main bits and turn them into statements that I can answer "Yes" or "No" to, where "Yes" means that they have done something satisfactorily.

So, looking at my story above, the first one would be:

Looks over the plans and checks with his supervisor that he understands them.

The second one would be:

Worked out the tools he needed and made sure that they were all there.

The third one would be:

Checked that the bobcat and trench digger had been serviced, and added fuel and oil.

I will stop there, because it is probably enough to give you an idea of how to write your own benchmarks.

Then, we think about some possible assessment methods, and think about whether they are suited to really seeing if Bill can do these things.

A written test would not be appropriate, since being able to write about these things would not necessarily mean that he could do them. In comparison, a simulation exercise would work, as would directly observing Bill while on-the-job.

OUR TARGET GROUP

In the above example, Bill was the target group. Clearly, the assessment that is planned for him will need to be different from someone who is working in a different context or who has a different purpose?. What this means is that once we have identified our benchmarks, we need to consider how we can contextualise them for our particular target group.

Common target groups include:

- an enterprise
- a department or division
- a job role or occupation
- an industry sector
- a professional association
- a trade
- a community enterprise
- a government enterprise

So, once we have worked out the evidence that we need, we can start to think about what **sort of tools** we could use to collect that evidence.

ORGANISING RESOURCES FOR ASSESSMENT

Having the correct resources can make the difference between a successful assessment event and a complete debacle. Not only that, but if we are not prepared and the candidate does not have access to the appropriate resources during their assessment, then chances are that we will not meet the [Principles of Assessment](#) nor the [Rules of Evidence](#).

To ensure that we are organised, we include resources as part of our assessment plan. Specifically, we include physical resources and human resources.

Clearly, some resources are easier to organise than others. Bear in mind that the more complex your resource needs are, the more time you will need to organise them, and the more people you may have to involve.

While the resources that we need will depend on the particular [context and purpose of assessment](#), there are some common ones that we should be familiar with:

- information
- documents needed for assessors and candidates,

- including competency standards and assessment tools
- plant and equipment
- technology
- personal protective equipment
- venues
- adaptive technology
- physical adjustments to the assessment environment
- additional personnel (including specialist support)

IDENTIFY SPECIALIST SUPPORT

Sometimes, we will need to get the help of specialist support people. These are the people who can help us to make sure that our assessment is fair for our students. While specialist support is often obtained to assist us when working with candidates who have special needs, this is not the only time that we use specialist support.

Common specialist support services may include:

- online assessment strategies
- support for remote or isolated candidates or assessors
- support from subject matter or safety experts
- advice from regulatory authorities
- assessment panels
- support from lead assessors
- advice from policy development experts
- third party assistance from a carer or interpreter.

We need to be aware that the cost of using specialist support can be substantial. Sometimes there will be government assistance with this, but not always. So, we need to make sure we work out who will be paying for this service before we get it.

Our use of specialist support services must meet not just organisational needs but ethical and legal requirements as well.

DEVELOP COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

In all cases, making sure that we discover and organise the best resources for our particular assessment event will require effective communication strategies. Commonly, this involves the same skills that we need when dealing with candidates:

- interview (face-to-face or telephone)
- email, memos and correspondence
- meetings
- video conferencing, e-based learning
- focus groups.

These strategies will work only if we combine them with effective communication skills. So, let's have a look at some of the skills we can use.

USING COMMUNICATION SKILLS

There are some basic skills that we will all need to have. While communication skills are most often associated with the delivery side of training, they are equally as important in the organisation of training and assessment.

Common communication skills that we may require include:

- an ability to establish rapport
- active listening
- assertiveness
- awareness of perceptual differences
- appreciation of cultural sensitivities
- an ability to recognise and check non-verbal cues
- an ability to prevent and overcome unproductive influences on communication relating to language, psychological factors and the physical environment
- an ability to recognise similarities and differences in values and attitudes of people within systems
- an ability to recognise significant features of the roles involved in any communication interaction within a system.

Effective communication will help us to develop an open relationship with your candidates and other stakeholders, and facilitate a constructive feedback and continuous improvement process. Understanding some of the differences between people can better equip us to respond in a way that will better meet their needs. Some of the differences that we encounter as trainers are:

- language barriers
- cultural images and perceptions
- psychiatric or psychology conditions
- intellectual impairment or disability
- learning difficulties
- physical impairment or disability (eg, involving hearing, vision, voice, mobility)
- hidden conditions such as arthritic, epilepsy, diabetes, asthma
- religious or spiritual observances

GETTING THE ASSESSMENT PLAN TOGETHER

Once we know what we are going to assess, who we are going to assess, the context and purpose of assessment, how we are going to assess, and the resources that we are going to use, we can start to put together an **Assessment Plan**.

It is at this stage of the process that we negotiate and document:

- the objectives of the assessment
- the process to be undertaken by the candidate, assessor
- and other relevant people
- an agreed timeline
- resources required.

Because no two assessment events are the same, we must consult with our client and candidates to ensure that our objectives, timelines and processes are appropriate for their needs.

The objectives of the assessment will be determined by:

- the need for the assessment
- the goals of the organisation
- the goals of the candidate.

Timelines may be necessary for:

- completion of the process
- delivery of learning
- compilation of evidence
- conducting assessment
- resubmission and re-assessment.

The processes that we commonly discuss before including them in our assessment plan include:

- candidate enrolment
- provision of materials and training
- support resources
- OHS issues
- recording and advising of results
- logistical and environmental issues
- candidate instructions
- assessor instructions.

At this stage, our **assessment plan** will have grown to:

- define the [purpose and focus](#) of the assessment process
- list those who will be involved in the process
- identify relevant units of competency to be assessed
- investigate possibilities for clustering units of competency
- identify [OHS hazards](#) including assessed risks and control strategies
- identify OHS reporting requirements
- specify any special candidate needs, such as protective equipment
- outline assessment milestones and target dates
- outline types of evidence that may be collected
- explain candidate self-assessment procedures
- specify evidence gathering techniques.

ASSESSMENT INSTRUCTIONS

To be sure that our candidates get the information, and in such a way that they can refer to it later, it is best to give them instructions about the assessment process that you plan to follow. For this reason, assessment should be seen as a process, not an event.

These instructions first are included in the Assessment Plan, and may then separately be given to the candidate/s.

Before the actual assessment event, we must ensure that the candidate understands:

- The assessment method being used (eg, observation, simulation)
- The assessment tool/s being used (see below)
- Any provisions for people who have special needs
- Opportunities for RPL/RCC
- How they will be graded
- How their performance will be reviewed, if required
- Which resources will be used, and which will be supplied

The following section shows us some ways of communicating the required information:

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

We recognise the need to make reasonable adjustments within our assessment and learning environments to meet your individual needs. If you need to speak confidentially to someone about your individual needs please contact your tutor.

RESOURCES

You should have received the recommended text with this information. Should you wish to access additional resources, they are listed in this text.

GRADING

The unit you are undertaking is graded competent or not yet competent. Upon successful completion of this unit, you will be issued with a Statement of Attainment.

If for some reason, you do not finish the course, you will be issued with a Statement of Attendance.

REVIEW PROCESS

If your tutor assesses you as being Not Yet Competent, you will be given oral and written feedback on areas needing improvement. You will have four weeks to resubmit your work for reassessment. While we pride ourselves on employing tutors that focus on meeting the needs of our learners and industry, it remains the responsibility of the student to consult with the appropriate tutor if further clarification is required.

A result of Not Yet Competent will be given to students who are unable to demonstrate competency after two unsuccessful attempts.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

You will be assessed the following ways:

- * practical exercises*
- * self-assessment checklist*
- * observation*
- * project.*

ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS

Assessment will be completed in your own time. You able to access any relevant resources. You must keep a copy of your assignment or project.

You will be allowed two attempts on for this assessment. That is, if your first attempt does not meet the performance criteria, you will be given the opportunity to resubmit once only. if you require a second attempt, this must be submitted within four weeks of the return of your unsuccessful attempt. Please ensure all original work is also submitted with your resubmitted work.

SUPPORTING CANDIDATE UNDERSTANDING

It is no good for us to assume that all candidates will be able to understand things in the same way. For this reason, we can use some strategies to support the candidates to understand the requirements of assessment. After all, if we are using assessment to make a decision about what they can do, then it makes sense that they would first understand what we are expecting them to do!

The first area that we can offer support with is confirming what will happen during the assessment. The things to focus on with our candidates are:

- what are the steps that are involved in the assessment
- when will the assessment take place
- when will questions be asked during the assessment (if at all)
- how long will it take
- when else could it be done?

The second area that we can offer support with is finding out if the candidates have any concerns. The things to focus on with our candidates are:

- are they ready to undertake the assessment
- are they satisfied with the arrangements
- can they ask questions

- can they stop the assessment
- what to do if they make a mistake

As with many other things that we do as trainers, we can use a checklist to help us support our candidates. An example is shown here:

Explain And Discuss

Confirm the purpose of assessment.	0
Ensure competency standards are available and understood.	0
Discuss qualification outcomes and the RTO issuing certificates.	0
Decide what will happen if the participant is competent.	0
Explain what will happen if the participant is not yet competent.	0
Explain the appeals process and ensure a copy of the policy is available.	0
Explain the assessment process, what evidence is needed and questions that will be asked.	0
Devise a schedule for the assessment and meeting times.	0
Ask if there are any special needs such as literacy, numeracy or physical.	0

USING ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Our assessment tool is the thing that we use to collect evidence. It must include two things:

1. The assessment instrument (ie, the thing that is used to collect the evidence)
2. The assessment instructions (ie, the steps involved in using the instrument)

Commonly, an assessment tool will include some of the following:

- templates and proformas for recording assessment outcomes
- assessment plans
- a profile of acceptable performance measures
- guidelines regarding decision-making rules for the assessor
- specific questions or activities
- information and instructions to the candidate and assessor, including OHS requirements
- evidence and observation checklists
- checklists for the evaluation of work samples
- candidate self-assessment materials.

Where a candidate has a special need, you must confirm what resources and allowances are available.

GOOD PRACTICE IN ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

To be sure that we are doing the best possible job, we need to ensure that our assessment tools are:

- stored securely
- readily available to the people who need them
- able to cater to the differing ways that people need information to be communicated
- routinely reviewed and validated
- part of quality assurance processes

One way we can ensure that we meet these requirements is to have an **Assessment System Policy**. Having such a document helps to make sure that everyone knows what the purpose of assessment is, the different pathways that a candidate can follow to gain a competency, procedures for recording results and recording feedback, and RPL.

The following example shows the first part of one such Assessment System Policy:

ASSESSMENT SYSTEM POLICY (EXAMPLE)

Introduction

This policy document describes the Assessment System for Company A. It follows the guidelines set down in the Industry Training Package and is designed to meet the principles of the Australian Recognition Framework (National Assessment Principles).

This document comprises sections:

- *Purpose of Assessment*

- *Pathways to Achievement of Competency* - Selection and Training of Assessors - Guidelines for Conducting Assessment - Appeals and Grievance Procedures

- *Procedures for Recording Results and Providing Feedback to Assesseees* - Issue of Certificates and Qualifications
- Quality Assurance and Review

- *Recognition of Prior Learning Procedures.*

Purpose of an Assessment Procedure

Assessment is a process of gathering evidence and making judgement as to whether competency has been achieved against performance standards. The purpose of assessment procedures described in this policy is to evaluate employees' performance and competency achievement in accordance with guidelines set down in our industry's Training Package.

APPEALS AND REASSESSMENT

From time to time, a learner may question our assessment decision. This may be because they disagree with our judgement of their performance, in which case they might make an **appeal**. Or, it

may be because they think that the performance that we based our decision on was not a good example of what they can do, in which case they might request a **reassessment**.

Both of these situations can be difficult. One of the main things that makes them difficult is a lack of understanding of what we - as assessors - can and cannot do. This can be our own lack of understanding, the candidate's lack of understanding, or both. Whatever the case, it can be resolved quite easily by including procedures for both appeal and reassessment in our **Assessment System Policy**.

APPEALS

If it is going to be effective, an appeals process needs to be a documented and formally agreed process that gives both formal and informal pathways to reviewed assessment and its outcome. Commonly, an appeals policy will include the following steps:

Step 1: candidate questions/disputes an assessment decision

Step 2: assessor checks to see if there are grounds for appeal

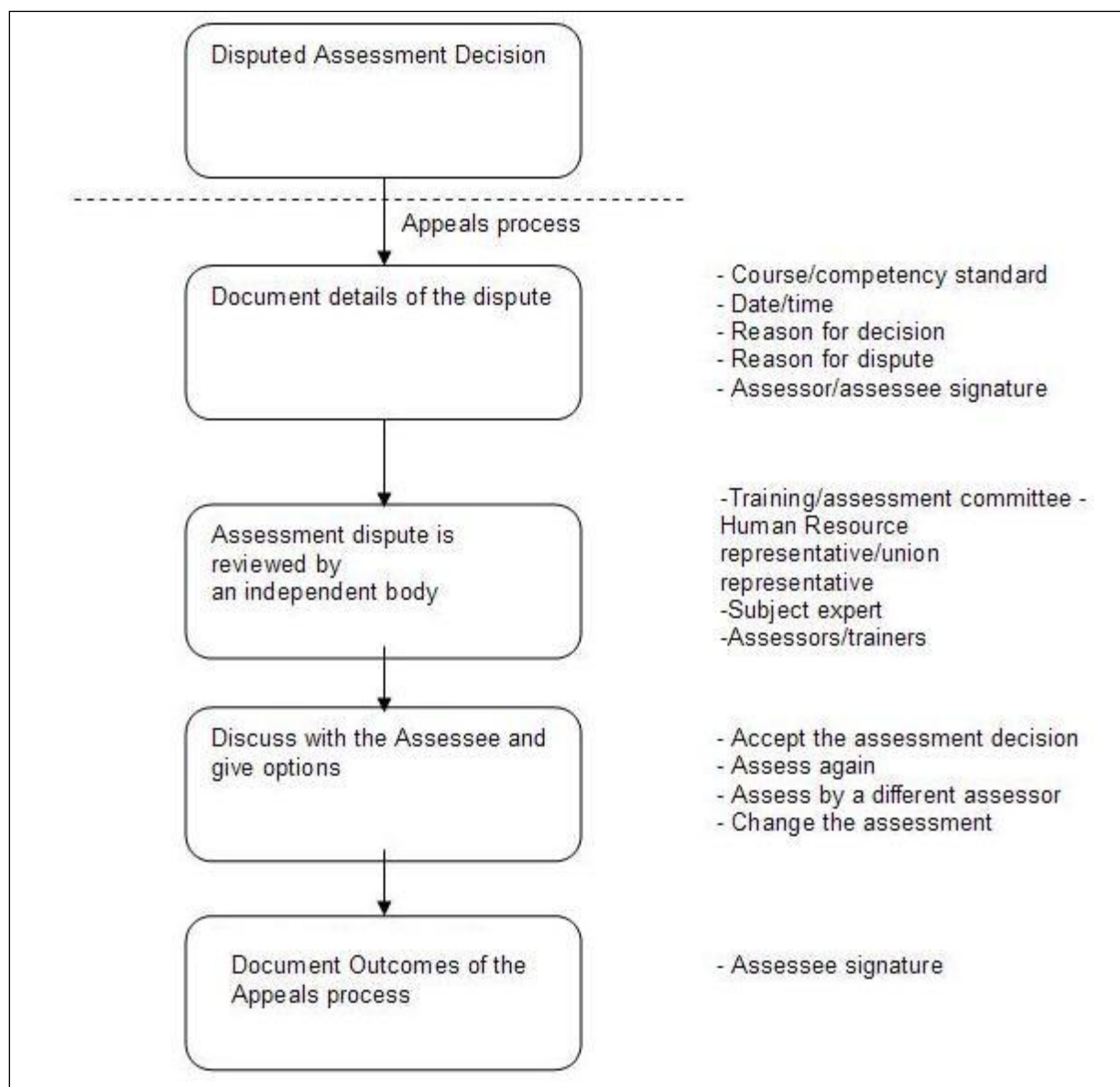
Step 3: candidate and assessor get together to discuss the dispute and try to resolve it

Step 4: if no resolution occurred at Step 3, then the candidate puts their appeal in writing (this has to happen within 12 months of the date of the assessment event that they are disputing)

Step 5: the appeal is passed to an independent (internal) panel for review and discussion with the candidate

Step 6: the panel makes the final decision, and communicates this to everyone involved

The following diagram shows the steps in another appeals procedure, and tells us who needs to be involved at each of these steps. This diagram is a good one because it can easily be adapted to suit a whole range of situations – all we have to do is add in our details, such as Position Titles.



REASSESSMENT

We generally find that most accredited courses and RPL processes allow reassessment within a certain time frame.

If required, the learner is required to submit or complete a new assessment. This can be in full, or just the parts where the candidate is yet to demonstrate their competency.

The decision to allow reassessment most commonly rests with the assessor, which is negotiated directly with the candidate. Of course, if the outcome of this reassessment request - or of the reassessment event - is disputed, then this can lead to an **appeal**.

CANDIDATE NEEDS INFORM ASSESSMENT PLANNING

All of our plans for assessment must include a consideration for the candidate. This might seem fairly obvious, but it is still surprising how often the candidate is left out of the planning process.

There are all sorts of things about a candidate that may impact on their ability to undertake an assessment task. We must remember that in all circumstances, we must uphold the [Principles of Assessment](#) – if we don't take into account the characteristics of our candidates, then chances are we will not meet those principles (and, let's face it, we won't be doing our job as Assessor).

So, what are some of the common characteristics that we may come across?

- industry or workplace requirements
- language barriers
- literacy and numeracy levels
- physical impairment or disability involving hearing, vision, voice, mobility intellectual impairment or disability
- learning difficulties
- psychiatric or psychological disability
- religious and spiritual observances
- cultural background or perceptions
- age, gender and sexuality
- level of work experience
- level and experiences of previous learning and assessment
- motivation for assessment (personal or organisational).

Of course, preferred [Learning Styles](#) should also be considered, since we do not all learn the same way.

Now, how we cater for these needs will depend on the context and purpose of the assessment. But, just like we must meet the principles of assessment, we must also meet the rules of evidence.

WHAT AM I TALKING ABOUT?

We cannot lower the standards that we are measuring performance against.

For this reason, when we make arrangements to change something for a candidate who has some special requirement, it is called a **Reasonable Adjustment**. What makes this sort of adjustment reasonable is that it still allows for an accurate decision to be made about whether the candidate has demonstrated the nationally agreed standard as set down by the Training Package. It would be unreasonable to make a decision if we only had information that they could meet a lower standard of performance.

But, reasonable adjustment does not just have to meet the rules of the Training Package/s from which the Unit/s of Competency came. There are also other requirements that may still need to be met. These commonly include:

- the requirements of individual state/territory registering bodies
- award or enterprise agreements and relevant industrial arrangements
- confidentiality/privacy requirements
- scope of registration
- relevant legislation from all levels of government (eg, OHS, EEO and others)
- environmental issues
- industry codes of practice

WHAT CAN WE ADJUST?

Reasonable adjustment can fall into the following categories:

1. Delivery Methods & Learning Activities

- | | |
|--|---|
| ✓ additional demonstration or time for practice | ✓ modified activities |
| ✓ additional one-on-one support and guidance | ✓ oral/signed information instead of written |
| ✓ use of material in alternative formats such as Braille | ✓ tactile diagrams, large print, audiotape, videotape |
| ✓ use of adaptive technologies | ✓ electronic resources |
| ✓ tutoring for specific skills and topics | ✓ use of alternative venues |
| ✓ using modified written, visual or auditory information | ✓ including handouts, information sheets, presentations |
| ✓ provision of personal support services, such as readers, interpreters. | |

2. Assessment Methods

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ✓ observation | ✓ demonstrations |
| ✓ oral instead of written | ✓ role plays |
| ✓ simulations | ✓ assignments |
| ✓ course work | ✓ technology-based |
| ✓ increased time | ✓ use of adaptive technology |
| ✓ modified assessment tasks | ✓ use of interpreters |
| ✓ alternative locations (isolation) | ✓ flexible assessment sessions to allow for fatigue or to administer medication. |

WHO CAN WE TALK TO?

Most of the time when we are considering reasonable adjustment, we will need to speak with some other people. This is usually to find out more details about possible alternative assessment situations, or resources, or requirements that might limit the extent of the adjustment.

Commonly, these people would include:

- other trainers and assessors
- specialist staff
- supervisors
- professional associations
- networks
- individual consultants
- government agencies
- support groups

Not surprisingly, all adjustments need to be included in our [assessment plan](#), and must be considered in terms of health and safety.

INTEGRATION OF ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

One way of meeting a number of needs of our candidates and clients is to [integrate assessment](#). What this means is that a single assessment event might allow us to collect information to judge performance in a number of Elements, and possible from a number of Units of Competency.

Not only does doing this often save everyone's time, it often lets us assess in a more real-world way

that better reflects the connectedness of the knowledge and skills that we are assessing. An example of this could be:

- an on-the-job observation combined with verbal questioning might collect evidence that meets most of the performance criteria
- copies of correctly completed documentation and a supervisor's report may meet the rest of the performance criteria.

In addition, assessment activities that can be integrated into a candidate's everyday work routine will help decrease workplace disruption. After selecting assessment methods and tools, review and adjust them where necessary to take into account:

- any [contextualisation](#) of competency standards
- evidence requirements as documented in your evidence plan
- characteristics and needs of candidates
- reasonable adjustments
- [integration](#) of assessment activities
- candidate's capacity to support an application for RPL/RCC.

WE ARE ALL INDIVIDUALS

I clearly remember the Monty Python movie, *The Life of Brian*. In it was a scene where a huge crowd had gathered and were agreeing with whatever Brian said. At one point he said

"You are all individuals".

The crowd all echoed

"Yes, we are all individuals"

followed by a lone voice that declared

"I'm not".

Probably the one thing that all people share is that we are all unique. One way that we seem to cope with so much variation among people is to group people according to some things that they share.

Chances are that every day we are identified by some of the following things:

PHYSICAL THINGS:

How well I can walk, see, hear, talk, write, sit, drive, what gender I am, what size I am, the colour of my hair, the illnesses I have,...

CULTURAL THINGS:

The language I use, the accent I speak with, the food I eat, the clothes I wear, the relationships I have, the religion that I practise, the morals that I live by,

MENTAL & INTELLECTUAL THINGS:

How well I learn, the years of schooling I have completed, the grades I get, how well I read, my emotional state, my mental health...

From this example alone, it is clear that individual difference takes many different forms, and is not always instantly recognisable. As trainers and assessors, we must be sure to seek out the things that make people different from each other, as these are the things that might make or break the success of our work for that person.

To help us to make good choices about the work that we do, it helps if we understand the variety of differences that exist, and the ways that we can respect all people.

RESPECTING DIFFERENCE

How we show respect is based on how we act. But, this is not just limited to how we act when a certain person is around.

Let's look at an example.

Emily once was training a group of about 20 people. There were all about the same age and all about the same level of ability and motivation. They represented the standard range of learning styles. However, there was one woman, Louise, who was not as interactive as others, and although she was producing excellent work at home, she did not seem to get much done during our sessions.

So, Emily sought her out.

Emily and Louise had a private conversation, where Emily asked how things were going, and commended the work that she did at home. Emily asked her what it was that helped her do such good work at home. The first sign that she had hearing difficulties was her leaning forward and tilting her head to one side when Emily was speaking to her. She simply said that she was able to focus more on her own. She offered no opinion for why she could not do as well in class.

Emily went to her enrolment form and noted that there was no explanation for this or of any particular needs.

Emily went to her supervisor, Roger. Roger told Emily that Louise was deaf in her left ear, and was losing her hearing in her other ear. She had a hearing aid, but because she was embarrassed about it, she concealed beneath her hair; this meant that the sounds that it amplified were often background noises. Sometimes, Roger said, Louise would just turn it off.

How did Emily respond?

The first thing she did was to rearrange seating in the room, and essentially switched the desks and students around so that they all moved, but also so that Louise had her good ear to the centre side of the room. Emily then returned to her planning to reduce the number of large group discussions, and increase the amount of small group conversations, and encouraged the groups to relocate to other areas where the level of noise was lower. She made sure that she adopted visual cues, such as writing the main sections of each session on the board, and ticking them off as they progressed. She made her instructions very simple, and retrievable for everyone. She included times in each session that were for individual silent activities. She looked for additional support resources to help understand what Louise was experiencing, and she could best respond; this included speaking with her colleagues, and accessing some online resources.

For someone with a hearing impairment, the first thing we might think of doing is to raise our voice and speaking clearly. As we can see from Emily's response above, that is just one way of respecting difference.

Indeed, there are many ways that we can acknowledge and respect differences. These commonly include the following ones:

- use of non-stereotypical groups in learning materials
- developing and utilising an inclusive curricula
- using language that includes individual differences
- open and honest communication regarding difference
- research and understanding of difference and its implications
- questioning of stereotypes and traditional power structures.

One of the things that Emily did is seek additional information. For our own training, there is a wealth of relevant research, guidelines and resources that we can use. These may include:

- DEEWR
- State and Territory guidelines and support materials on access, equity, disability, and inclusive practice
- organisational policies on access and equity
- materials produced by relevant agencies supporting target groups such as disability organisations, multicultural or indigenous groups and relevant government departments
- ethnic communities councils
- journals
- web-based resources
- texts and references.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 3 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

COMMUNICATING RESPECTFULLY

The way that we communicate with people is the front-end of our attitudes. This means that whenever we communicate, we need to be mindful of the attitudes that we are displaying to all others.

Our perceptions of people are very much influenced by how they communicate. Have a look at the following people, and try to work out:

1. What is your opinion of the person?
2. What do you know about this person?
3. What is this person likely to be thinking about?
4. What ways does this person like to learn?

Person 1



Person 2



Person 3



Person 4



Who are these people? The reality is that we do not know who they are. We also do not know the answers to any of the above questions.

If we think that we do know any of the answers, then we are making judgements based on presumptions instead of based on fact. If we make judgements in this way, and then we plan and deliver our training in this way, then chances are we are not actually delivering training that best meets the needs of the individuals. Instead, we will be delivering training that best meets the beliefs that we have about the individuals.

So, by becoming more aware of how we form opinions and judgements, we can improve the way we communicate, and ultimately improve our professionalism.

There are three main types of communication:

1. **verbal** - the spoken word between two or more people, or written words
2. **non-verbal** - such as facial expressions, body movement and posture, or format and layout of written communication
3. **graphic - ideas**, relationships or connections represented visually with shapes, diagrams and lines.

PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSIVITY

If we think back to [Emily's](#) situation, we can easily see that she was concerned for not just the majority of her trainees, but for all of them. Her approach to Louise's particular needs demonstrates for us the **principles of inclusivity**.

These principles are included in the following table. To help us understand how these actually can occur in practice, the table also includes how Emily demonstrated each one.

<i>Principle</i>	What did Emily do?
<i>equal opportunities for participation</i>	Created small group tasks in quiet places to allow Louise to participate in discussions
<i>independence</i>	Planned sessions that enabled Louise to participate without needing additional assistance
<i>cooperative approaches to learning</i>	Allowed group tasks to enable Louise to work with others
<i>learner-centred</i>	Planning was centred on learner activity at all times, rather than emphasising what the trainer wanted to deliver
<i>supporting, encouraging and valuing individual contributions</i>	Opportunities were provided for all students to learn in a way that responded to their particular learning styles, including Louise
<i>Principle</i>	What did Emily do?
<i>motivating</i>	Learner-centred activities allowed for more engagement and experience of success, which motivates further engagement
<i>creating opportunities for participation and success</i>	Using visual cues for stages of the session and providing retrievable task instructions reduced the need to hear all instructions
<i>modifying procedures, activities and assessment for equity.</i>	Rearrangement of seating to best cater for Louise's hearing ability, rather than focusing on her hearing impairment

One of the first things many people notice when they look at the above table is that much of what Emily did is beneficial for many – if not all – students. This is very true: catering for individuals is not the opposite of catering for everyone. Rather, we often find that putting in place a few things in response to the needs of an individual will improve the learning experiences of many other people in the same group.

So, what's this really all about?

What we are starting to talk about is **inclusivity**.

The essence of inclusivity is understanding and catering for the different potentials, needs and resources of our students. One important aspect of this is meeting the needs of all students through effective learning and training.

Inclusivity in education starts with the recognition of our diversity. It is treating students as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group. It is about involving all students in classroom practices by valuing their uniqueness and what they bring to the classroom. It is about valuing their interests, experiences, abilities, insights, needs, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, learning styles and intelligences.

Inclusivity embraces the idea that since everyone is an individual, we need to organise training and learning so that each student has a learning experience that 'fits'.

Catering for the educational needs of all students in our establishments is a complex issue.

The range of cultures, linguistic backgrounds, and social and economic situations within communities, the increasing demands of new technologies, accountability requirements in literacy and numeracy, providing enrichment and extension, and supporting students with special needs all add to this complexity.

WHY INCLUSIVITY?

Inclusivity arises from the objective of improving educational outcomes for students and broader social justice considerations of equity, access and participation. With a more globalised and increasingly diverse society, inclusivity recognises that the operation of a democracy requires an in-depth understanding of a variety of perspectives and contributions as well as the ability to listen and learn from the lives and cultures of a variety of people.

While there are legislative requirements to ensure all students have equitable access to education, teachers also have a professional responsibility to address inclusivity in their practice.

The link between socio-cultural factors and school success indicates that schools support the learning of some groups of students more than others. In particular, students from socio-cultural backgrounds which most closely reflect the culture of the school and the staff perform better at school.

It is important that rather than having an vocational education and training system for most

students, we ensure that we have an education system for all students. Herein lies the promise of democracy, equal opportunity, meeting personal aspirations and social cohesion.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 4 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

ACCESS AND EQUITY POLICIES

We have already looked at the [legislative basis](#) for inclusivity. We may wonder what these actually mean for our work in training. After all, I don't know of any employer that makes its employees read these laws before going to work.

Instead, training/assessment organisations have a number of their own policies that tell us how they intend to uphold these laws. Commonly, we can find this sort of information in the following documents, examples of which are easy to find using the Internet (some links have been provided for you to get you started; since the TAE requires students to research information independently, there are also some that you can search for using your preferred search engine):

- Code of Conduct
- [Equal Employment Opportunity Policy](#)
- [Positive Working Relationships Policy](#)
- [Customer Service Policy](#)
- Customisation of Training Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Human Resource Management Policy.

By following what these policies tell us to do we can be confident that we will be acting in accordance with the laws.

In basic terms, what these policies will tell us is that inclusiveness can be practised in the following ways:

- Acknowledge that all individuals bring multiple perspectives to workplace situations as a result of their gender, ethnicity, class, age, sexuality or physical ability.
- Respect and value the experience of colleagues.
- Use culturally appropriate language and gestures.
- Show sensitivity to issues regarding gender, ethnicity, class, age, sexuality or physical abilities.

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS & CONFIDENTIALITY

It can be really challenging for some trainers to work out the balance between finding out and sharing information to support a learner with the need to respect the rights and confidentiality of the learner.

It is a tricky area, and it makes sense for us to be familiar with some of the basic rights (legal and human) that we each have, regardless of whether we are a young trainee or a seasoned manager. The following table describes these rights.

Right	Description
Confidentiality	When discussing any matter that relates to the needs of an individual, they have a right to confidentiality and all discussion should be conducted in private and in a relaxed manner.
Contribution	Every individual has the right to contribute to their learning. This may be by sharing their experiences with the wider group or by wishing to create their own learning contract or plan.
Equity	Every individual has the right to receive the same level of instruction and have the same chance of succeeding in their assessment and activities.
Access	Every individual has the right to access learning opportunities based on merit.

As with other laws, organisations often put together their own policies and procedures to make sure that these rights are upheld. It is a good habit to ask for them when starting to work with or for a new organisation.

PRIVACY RIGHTS – A SPECIAL WORD

Many would argue that the right to privacy is no more important than any other right. Even so, it is certainly a right that has more than its fair share of laws that control what we can do with information about a person.

Most organisations will have a **Privacy Policy**, such as the following sample.

Identifying Personal Information:

We collect your personal information for the purposes of course administration, statistical analysis and evaluation of our programs. Some course administration details may be disclosed to your employer for administration and statistical/monitoring purposes if they make a written request to Fortress Learning. Your information will not be used for any other purpose except as required or authorised by or under law. Your information may be used to inform you about other Fortress Learning run or affiliated events.

ESTABLISHING GROUND RULES COOPERATIVELY

Working with other people is something that all trainers do a lot of. Be it working with trainees or other trainers or clients or managers or government staff, we seem to always something on the go that involves us working with someone else.

And, since everyone is different, having some **ground rules** worked out up front can help to make sure that we all create a working environment of inclusivity and respect. How we go about establishing these ground rules can be just as important as the rules themselves, since allowing people to influence the rules that affect them is a great display of respect.

So, to help us work out some ground rules, we can use consultation strategies that get people involved. Commonly, these strategies include:

- a group discussion
- a small group discussion, then the presenting of findings to the wider group
- a written contract prepared and agreed to by the whole group
- a series of investigations to be undertaken by small groups and the findings presented to the wider group for agreement.

Before we begin to consult, it helps to have an idea for the sort of things that we want ground rules for. With groups of trainees, rules are usually going to help with anything where there could be different ways of doing things.

Let's look at an example.

Gary and Anna are trainees in an aged care facility. They have been working together for a while now, and their supervisor has told us that Gary tends to step in whenever there is something physical to be done, but steps back whenever there is any sort of personal matter affecting an elderly person.

What do we do?

Well, the first thing we need to recognise is that they have both been employed to do a job. They have not been employed to do part of the job, and so we can create some ground rules so that they both know that they are both required to do all things. This does not mean that Gary cannot help Anna with physical tasks. Nor does it mean that Anna cannot help Gary with the personal interactions. What it does mean is that they are both responsible for their work and for allowing the other person to do their own work.

COMMON REASONS FOR GUIDELINES

For Gary and Anna, guidelines were needed to ensure that they did their jobs. Other situations where we might set some ground rules of participation and behaviour commonly include:

- setting guidelines for behaviour and acceptance
- establishing common understanding between learners
- about group interactions, respect and acceptance
- defining expectations of the learning experience and its requirements
- safety and comfort.

A good starting place will be the policies and procedures for the organisation for whom we are delivering the training. As with other things that affect inclusive practice, many organisation have something along the lines of a Good Working Relationships Policy.

An example of one of these is shown below.

Policy 18.3

Good Working Relationships Policy

It is the policy of ABC Training that all employees should enjoy good working relationships with each other and with management. This means that everyone should feel comfortable in the workplace and that differences should be respected. An important part of good working relationships is that everyone must be able to work in an environment free from harassment, that is, behaviour that they do not like or do not want to happen. All harassment which is sexual or sex-based, racial or relates to a person's marital status, disability, age, pregnancy, homosexuality or transgender (transexuality) is discriminatory and will not be tolerated in the workplace. Most types of harassment are also against State and Federal anti-discrimination law and may also be an offence under the Crimes Act.

Harassment also goes against our Equal Employment Opportunity policy and our Occupational Health and Safety policy by making the workplace unsafe.

It is ABC Training's policy that:

- Harassment will not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- Any employee can complain about harassment to their supervisor or other managers, Equal Employment Opportunity officers, their union or the Anti-Discrimination Board.
- All harassment complaints will be treated seriously, sympathetically, quickly and privately.
- All harassment complaints will be investigated fairly and impartially.
- Action will be taken to make sure that harassment stops.
- People making complaints and witnesses will not be victimised in any way for making the complaint.
- Complaints should be settled within the workplace wherever possible.

ENCOURAGING INDIVIDUALS

Learning is not a passive thing. When we talk about training, what we are really talking about is ways to get people learning. This involves activity, and being able to actively express one's self in our learning is a basic requirement for [adult learners](#).

Some people will happily express themselves in a whole host of ways; they will speak up, and they will write all sorts of things, and they will be socially active, and they will be the first to volunteer to do a presentation to a group.

Other people will not be so keen.

If we do not manage these sorts of interactions, then our whole training environment can become hostage to the preferences of one or only a few people. It is a classic case of the squeaky wheel getting the oil.

This is not fair to everyone. Instead, it is up to us as trainers to ensure that we create an environment where all people have the comfort and opportunity to express themselves.

Common methods of expression in training and assessment include:

- Verbally in large groups
- Verbally in pairs
- Written such as reports/emails
- Brainstorming contributions
- Socially via networking and social events
- Verbally by phone
- Verbally in small groups
- Practical expressions such as completing a task
- Expressions via artistic means such as drawing or painting
- Presentation to a community group

The way we can choose to encourage an individual can depend on the situation we find ourselves in. By doing it this way, we use the learners themselves as the cues, which means that our actions are more likely to be tailored to what is actually happening.

The next section tells us how we can respond to some of the common cues that trainers experience.

NOT CONTRIBUTING TO THE WORK OR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- Analyse cause - is it active avoidance, shyness, insecurity?
- Avoid rushing in.
- Find a task they might find more comfortable doing.
- Move on from a discussion to an activity.
- Clarify the issue - use pauses in your explanations.
- Provide an opportunity for success in discussions

DOMINATING DISCUSSIONS

- Limit the number of minutes.
- Speak to them privately.
- Offer opportunity for final comment but emphasise the need for everyone to contribute.

LITTLE GROUP DYNAMIC

- Use group techniques - pairs, focus groups and so on.
- Review method of presentation

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION DURING SESSION

- Bring back to task.
- Use alternative activity.
- Speak to the people privately.
- Lower your voice so theirs is the dominant sound.
- Move your position so that you are standing over them.

Remember that we are usually dealing with adults. Being sure to plan our sessions to make the most of adult learning preferences will remove many of the above issues. That way, our learning activities become the main management tool that we use. Then, if additional action is needed on our part, we are able to do that.

Let's look at an example.

In some of my own training, I have used a reflection box to allow all participants the opportunity to share anything that they have found productive or non-productive. At any time, they can just pop a note in the box, knowing that it will be posted on a wall for everyone to read. Whoever writes it then can take it down whenever they think that the thing has disappeared.

The amazing thing is that most things that get written are positive, which adds to a tremendous climate within the group. Then, if there is a niggly thing, someone (including me!) can include it. To have "some people talk too much" posted next to a dozen positive comments has an amazing effect. I do not remember any time where a negative comment has stayed posted for more than a single session.

This example is one way, and as with all strategies it must be undertaken in a responsible way. Additionally, in the workplace individuals can be encouraged to express themselves and contribute by:

- *holding group meetings*
- *forming focus groups*
- *email forums.*

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 5 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

LET PEOPLE SHARE THEIR NEEDS

The specific needs may include:

- physical environment adjustments
- adjustments to learning and assessment activities
- OHS issues to be addressed
- language requirements.

It does not matter if we think the individual's need is not such a big issue, we must always ensure that it is the learner who gets to control how public it becomes. For this reason, the opportunity to request help should always be provided in a private setting that is comfortable and relaxed for the participant. This will encourage open communication and discussion of the issues.

Finding out about the needs of someone usually depends on the particular situation. In some situations, we might get to speak with them before the training. In other situations, we might not recognise that there is a need for discussion until the training has commenced (such as in the example of [Emily and Louise](#)).

Depending on the situation, discussion with learners can be undertaken:

- by telephone, if appropriate
- in person
- during a specific needs meeting
- at an arranged meeting before a training session
- in the first break during a training session
- as soon as possible after the need is identified.

In all situations, we should always ask the individual to discuss what they might need, instead of deciding without them. We try to create a relaxed and inviting atmosphere, so they will feel comfortable discussing what might be sensitive and private issues. We reassure them the conversation is private and will not be mentioned in training or the workplace.

If an individual does not want to acknowledge a special need, we may need to involve another person in the discussion, like an HR officer, a supervisor or other representative bodies.

A useful tool can be a questionnaire all participants can complete before a course begins. This will help us gather information in a collaborative and private way, and can serve as a starting point for further discussions with the participant. A sample questionnaire is shown below.

Name:
1. What do you hope to achieve in doing this course?
2. Do you have any problems or issues that could affect your completion of this course?
3. Are there any ways we could help you complete this course?
4. Do you have any further comments or suggestions?

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to: Question 23 of Short Answer Questions 1

COMMUNICATING VERBALLY AND NON-VERBALLY

Most of what we communicate is not done with words. Our body language, facial expressions and mannerisms usually give away our true beliefs and reasons for communicating.

The sorts of things we can look for include:

- how people sit
- the expressions on their faces
- how they hold their arms
- how they use their hands
- the distance between their bodies
- the way their bodies are orientated.

COMMUNICATING WITH VERBAL AND NON VERBAL LANGUAGE

Let's face it, if someone is hostile or closed or aggressive, then we probably won't want to talk openly with them. Likewise if they use foul language or words that are offensive to us or to people we know, then I will not feel respected. Whenever I do not feel respected, I will not get involved.

However, if someone is calm and open and receptive to us, then we probably will talk openly with them. If they choose what they say and how they say it with my feelings in mind, then I will feel respected. When I feel respected, I will get involved.

The sorts of things that we can do to show our respect include:

- use of language that supports inclusivity
- language that is non-discriminatory
- language that does not devalue or belittle
- language that does not suggest fear, mistrust, lack of understanding
- language that does not label or suggest assumptions about capabilities.

Some other verbal and non-verbal ways that we can show sensitivity are shown below:

Verbal	Non-verbal
Speak in normal tones.	Don't stand over others
Speak with a regular, natural rhythm.	Sit at the individual's level.
If required, speak facing the individual.	Keep an appropriate amount of personal space.
Avoid the constant use of him or her in examples.	Avoid forming clusters of people that shut others out.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATING NON-VERBALLY

Non-verbal communication refers to communication that occurs without words. Non-verbal communication can be just as powerful and meaningful as verbal communication.

For facilitators, the most meaningful types of non-verbal communication for making observations are body movement and vocal qualities.

BODY MOVEMENT

This category includes the way we stand, sit, our posture, eye movements and facial expressions. If a learner is sitting back with arms crossed over their chest, this may convey a message such as I am not comfortable or I am paying attention to you - it depends on the context. You will need to pay close attention to the physical cues of your learner group from the beginning, as this will help you interpret their non-verbal communication throughout the session.

VOCAL QUALITIES

This refers to how something is said rather than what is said. The qualities of the voice that can affect the meaning of what is said include:

- pitch range
- pitch control
- rhythm control
- tempo
- articulation control
- resonance.
- Vocalisations such as yawning, sighing, whispering, clearing the throat, pauses, umming

EYE CONTACT

The fact is that if someone is making more than 60% eye contact with you during a conversation, they are more interested in you than in what you are saying...

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FEbfUDzNoI>

Now, I don't know if that is true or not, but it sure is interesting. It comes from a series of videos about all sorts of things to do with non-verbal communication. The presenter is Tracy Goodwin, and it is certainly worth taking the time to check out her MANY clips. You can find her on the web, although the last time I tried to find her with a general search, I had to wade through almost a thousand clips. While it was very interesting learning how to deliver a persuasive speech, deal with loneliness and improve my self-esteem, it would have been better if I just went straight to Expert Village, which you can do here.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 6 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

SUPPORTING LEARNERS

Who and what we involve to support our learners will depend on their particular needs and the services that are available.

There are a number of support personnel who could assist us. Some are professional services, others are more informal support services. These include:

- family members
- professional experts such as consultants to the various disability groups
- interpreters
- government liaison officers in specialist support services advocates for a person or group
- peer support
- support staff such as note takers, library, technical, human resources, administrative staff, career counsellors, student services officers or equity liaison officers.
- other trainers or assessors
- supervisors
- specialist staff
- associations and representative bodies
- support groups
- professional associations
- government agencies
- individual consultants
- networks.

Some organisations and institutions have a designated person (usually part of the HR team) who can provide information and advice in all areas of work-based special needs learning. Other trainers will have to refer to an external agency for assistance.

Whenever we involve other people, the roles and responsibilities of support personnel involved in the work and learning process should be identified and documented in our learning and assessment strategy.

A significant amount of information is available on the Internet, which offers a good source of contact details and preliminary information. But, as with many things to do with Internet, we can easily get a bit lost when we are looking for information or support. To help us stay focused on getting the information and/or support that we need, we can use a checklist such as the following example that has been completed to show you how it could be used.

Have I identified:	Yes	No	Unsure
Any special learning needs?	x		
Who has the special needs?	x		
When they will need support to learn?		x	
Who the appropriate support personnel are?			x
How I will record success in meeting those learning needs?			x
Comment <i>I know what the special need is, and who is affected. I need to work out when during my planned sessions my activities need to be adjusted.</i> <i>I think that the candidate has a support person who will be able to assist me, but I am yet to get in touch with them to see if they are willing to do this, and if they are suitable. I will need to amend my session plan to reflect these variations, and make sure that I get it approved by the manager and candidate before going ahead.</i>			

A completed checklist such as this one can be filed with the candidate's own files, as well as attached to the session plan.

PHYSICAL SUPPORT

One of the most commonly understood forms of support for learners is changes to the physical resources that are used. Quite often, support personnel will give us recommendations for how to

adapt physical resources to better support the learning needs of an individual.

Let's look at an example.

Roger has paraplegia and is able to access most places independently using his wheelchair. Of course, stairs are impossible, and he requires a bit more space between tables to get through.

Roger is keen to become a chef, and is studying towards a qualification in Hospitality. His trainer is Susan.

The training organisation has commercial kitchens on the second and third floors of their building, and other training rooms on the ground, first and second floor. There are no elevators, although there are ramps for wheelchairs. Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea breaks are usually held in the common room on the first floor.

The timetable for his classes has Roger attending a theory session first in a first floor training room, followed immediately by a practical session in the third floor kitchen. After morning tea, they are back in a first floor training room until lunch time. After lunch, they spend the rest of the afternoon on the second floor kitchen.

On the day before classes are scheduled to begin, Susan notices that Roger has added his need for wheelchair access to his enrolment form. Susan gives Roger a call to talk things over, and she discovers that while Roger is able to use the ramps, he is quite slow.

Susan gets in touch with the people who work out the room allocations, and arranges for all of the theory sessions to be held on the first floor. She also arranges for all practical sessions to be held in the second floor kitchen.

After the first day, Susan has a chat with Roger to see how things are going. He was grateful for the changes, but they agreed that the time it was taking him to get from the first floor training room to the second floor kitchen was still a bit of a problem. Roger said that he always gets there in plenty of time before the training begins in the morning.

Susan changes her classes so that the day begins with a practical session in the second floor kitchen. This gives Roger plenty of time to get to the room. He then gets to go down the ramp to the theory room and stay on the first floor until after lunch. Being a long break, Roger has enough time to have his lunch and get to the second floor in time for the practical session to begin.

In this example, Susan changed the schedule of learning activities to cater for Roger's needs. Other types of changes to the physical environment can include:

- modifications to the layout of premises, eg positioning furniture in clusters instead of rows for visually or hearing impaired learners
- equipment modifications, eg providing an ergonomic chair and footrest for someone with a back injury
- use of adaptive technologies eg, using a microphone tuned to a learner's hearing aid frequency
- changes to work schedules, eg, having all sessions in the one location for learners with mobility difficulties

- modification to job design, eg using large print for visually impaired learners

OHS CONSIDERATIONS

Of course, in all of these things we must be sure that we still meet OHS legislative and organisational requirements. And, we need to make sure that what we do makes the situation better for all learners, rather than creating new hazards.

Let's look at an example.

Susan changed the room locations to allow for the additional time that it takes Roger to get up and down the ramps in his wheelchair. But, in the second floor kitchen, the only space large enough to position Roger's wheelchair is in front of the fire exit. In the event of a fire, Roger's wheelchair could block the exit and prevent people from escaping the fire.

Or

Let's say that Roger's wheelchair did not block the fire exit. There was plenty of room for the whole class to move around the kitchen safely, so that was not a problem. However, since Roger is confined to his wheelchair, and is always sitting, he is unable to place saucepans flat on the stovetop, nor is he able to lift saucepans off the stove without first leaning them forward. While cooking, there is a real exist of dropping a saucepan on himself, or spilling its contents, which may be quite hot.

What do we do in such a situation?

Realistically, if we cannot find a way around this situation, then we need to seek the assistance of others. Ideally, our Hazard Inspection will reveal all of these possibilities, but if it does not reveal a solution, then we will have to get some specialist advice.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 6 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

Chances are that for every person who gets involved in some sort of training, there will be some others who decided not to. Now, that's fine. But, if they decided not to without first receiving good advice, then it is certainly not fine.

If we expect people to make good decisions about the training/assessment that they will undertaken, then we must recognise that they can equally expect that we will provide them with the information that they need to make their decision.

Clients and colleagues may need to be supported either financially, or by providing additional time and resources to assist them in their learning activities. Colleagues and clients will also need advice and guidance in selecting the appropriate learning pathway and in applying for RPL/RCC (where relevant).

The types of support and advice that we can provide to clients and colleagues include:

- financial support
- time off work to attend classes
- time off work to study
- time off work to attend exams
- counselling in time management
- counselling in stress management
- advice on appropriate learning pathways
- advice on appropriate courses of study
- advice on pattern of study (part-time, distance, other)
- advice on recognition of prior learning (RPL) and
- recognition of current competencies (RCC)
- advice on payment of tuition fees and loans
- advice on internal learning opportunities
- advice on internal mentoring systems
- advice on internal coaching systems.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 7 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

EXPLORE THE BENEFITS OF LEARNING

It is true to say that people are more likely to get involved in something if they see some benefit in it. When it comes to training, people are no different. Unfortunately, however, people do not always see the benefits of learning, and it may be up to us to encourage people to see how they and others can gain from learning.

Learning can benefit:

- individuals
- colleagues
- clients
- supervisors
- management
- the organisation.

The benefits may include:

- greater productivity
- better morale
- fewer errors
- less staff turnover
- increased communication options.

COMMUNICATING BENEFITS

Depending on the organisation, several strategies can be used to communicate the benefits of learning. Some of these are shown in the following table.

Strategy	Description
Reports to management	Reports can emphasise the benefit learning has for the organisation, in terms of greater skill and efficiency.
Newsletters	Staff newsletters can include reports on training held, comments of participants, and training schedules for the future.
Participant questionnaire	Include a question on the benefits a participant gained from training at the end of the training questionnaire.
Word of mouth	Word of mouth, particularly in a workplace environment, can influence others in a powerful way. Encourage participants to speak to others about the benefits they have gained from training.
Reports to supervisors	In some organisations, participants need to report back to their immediate supervisor on training, which helps them gauge its effectiveness.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 7 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

REWARD LEARNING

I remember getting stickers at school. I don't remember exactly why I got them. What I do remember clearly is the feeling that came from someone recognising that I had tried, and the feeling that I wanted to keep trying as a result.

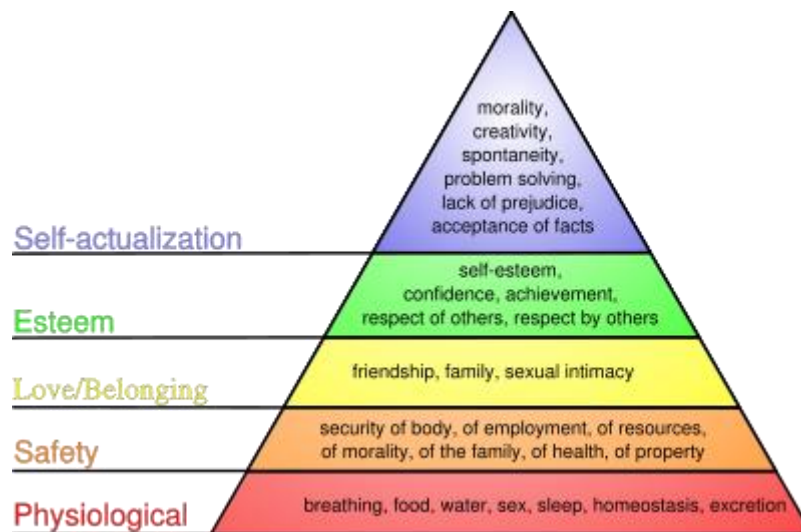
Grown ups aren't a whole lot different. While stickers are not always the best option to recognise

the efforts of adults, a combination of recognition and reward should be provided to staff undertaking learning, as this will foster motivation and enthusiasm.

In all situations, there are three questions that are relevant to motivation:

1. What are people's basic needs?
2. What do they need from their work?
3. What happens if their needs are not met?

Let's think about it. Actually, let's not. After all, a bloke called [Abraham Maslow](#) thought about it a whole lot more than any of us are ever likely to, so let's look at what he thinks. He came up with the idea that people have a series of needs. While we don't need to know them in detail for this course, lots of people find it fascinating so a diagram of his Hierarchy of Needs is included here.



You can see that second from the top of the pyramid is **esteem**.

At work, this can mean job responsibility, merit awards, praise, pay rise (of course!) and being granted additional authority.

At an organisational level, this can mean recognising what staff wants to achieve in their work, and helping them do so. The consequences of not providing the chance to achieve, and not recognising achievement, can be high.

RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT

Over at Business Coach, Gary Henson has written a very brief article about why it recognising employees is so important. It is worth the time to read. In it, Gary writes:

Since the 1940's, research in the field of employee motivation has consistently shown that recognition is at the top of the want list; followed by challenge, achievement, growth and

security. At the bottom of the list is money. Research done by the Xerox Learning System in the early 1980's showed conclusively that employees want to be recognized and given a pat on the back for their work.

Giving people stickers is one way to recognise achievement. But it is not the only way.

Let's look at an example.

I have a few different interests. One of them is gardening. I like to learn about how to grow things and how to cook things (and how to eat them). I have entered my produce in the local show (and won a few prizes), and entered my jams and preserves in the local show (and won nothing at all). I have been asked to speak about gardening with kids at the local Australian Breastfeeding Association group, and to show people how to save seeds using both wet and dry methods. I swap my surplus produce with other gardeners.

For me, my gardening achievements are fairly small. In fact, I am not very good at all. But, one of the things that does motivate me is when people recognise what I do. In the above example, there are a few different forms of recognition which can easily translate into our training and assessment work:

- Entering people's work in competitions (eg, a trainee welder's sculpture is entered into a local art exhibition or local show)
- Inviting people to share their learning (eg, an employee who has just attended a training course about frontline management)
- Arranging demonstrations of new skills (eg, after learning how to use a new software package to manage community care arrangements, a team of staff run workshops for other staff)
- Sharing knowledge and skills (eg, a group of staff from different departments get together each month to share the new things that they have learned)

These are just a few examples. There are many more, with the following ones being the most common in Australian workplaces:

- Certificates
- Promotion
- Addition of new responsibility
- Article in staff newsletter
- Pay increase
- Mention at formal and informal meetings
- Seek advice and feedback

GIVING FEEDBACK

Rewarding learning is not just about saying "good job" when things go well. Instead, it is about encouraging someone's involvement in the process of learning. By definition, learning involves doing something new. This means taking chances and taking risks and trying to work things out.

With this comes the potential for error. It is not incorrect to make errors while learning - it is however, critical, that as trainers we see these as an opportunity to guide the learning process.

I tend to believe that the best sort of feedback is situational. This means that it happens immediately when and where it is needed. While there is a very important place for formal feedback, the informal feedback that can occur during a learning activity can have an amazing effect on the quality of learning that occurs.

When it comes to feedback, there are some general strategies that we can use. The following table shows these.

Type	Purpose	Strategy
From trainer to the individual or group	<p>Constructive positive verbal confirmation or correction is vital to the learning because learners need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hear how they are progressing - know where there are any weak spots in their learning - work out ways to overcome weaknesses - receive genuine praise. 	<p>Provide verbal feedback at appropriate times for example during a practice activity.</p> <p>Feedback that is provided out of sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is ineffective in promoting learning - can harm the participants' confidence.
From participants to trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage participants to contribute information and comments about the learning progressively through the session. - Keep individuals motivated and involved in the session. - Encourage participants to request help if the learning level is too difficult. - Share relevant knowledge and experience to that will assist others in the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask open and relevant questions. - Confirm understanding. - Seek views. - Encourage anecdotal experiences. - Match your nonverbal and verbal communication. - Build their self-confidence. - Correct behaviour and actions not the person.

Within a positive learning environment, the use of feedback can make a valuable contribution to a learner's esteem, and from that to their learning.

But, while it is nice to feel nice, we should ensure that our feedback is honest. Telling someone that they have done well when they have not is creating all sorts of difficulties for ourselves and the learner (and other participants, employers, lawyers).

When it comes to giving feedback that is less than positive, it is useful to use the sandwich technique, where we say three things:

- **first we offer some praise** - *eg, Hey Stevie, I really appreciate how well you are concentrating on this wheel-changing stuff.*

- **then we offer some constructive criticism** - *eg, I have noticed that you seem to have having some trouble with getting the wheel nuts off. I wonder if it's because the wheel was raised off the ground before loosening the nuts? Sorry if I did not make that clear. Shall we give it a go?*
- **we finish with some encouragement** - *I'll come back in a while - I reckon the way you're going you will have it done in no time.*

For more serious difficulties, we can use a structured approach, such as the Four Step Feedback Procedure:

Step	Purpose
1. Ask the learners what they think/feel they did well.	To give them the opportunity to identify their own strengths and weaknesses,
2. Ask them what they would do differently next time.	To let the learners to self-direct as they choose a different strategy for next time.
3. Add constructive feedback both positive and negative.	To provide encouragement with positive feedback and in the case of negative feedback to offer alternative suggestions to improve performance after giving negative feedback.
4. End on a positive note.	To leave the learner with the knowledge, skills and confidence to continue practising a particular task.

MIXING IT UP

There are many ways to say that someone is doing well. Good work is perhaps the most over used. The following clip shows a few (!) other ways that we can say it:

<http://www.businesscoach.com/go/bc/index.cfm>

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 8 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

MULTIPLE PATHWAYS EXIST

Omnes viae Romam ducunt

We may not initially recognise the saying in its Latin form, but chances are we have all heard of it:

All roads lead to Rome.

What has this got to do with being a trainer?

For starters, it means that just as all people are different, there may be different paths for them to take to achieve their goals. Not everyone needs to do the same thing, and they especially do not need to be doing the same thing at the same place and at the same time in order to get to where they want to go.

Instead, we can help people see that they can follow different paths. Indeed, we can help them to create their own paths.

As trainers, this means that we can develop programs of learning based on project-based learning, work-based learning, action learning or traditional classroom-based learning off the job. It may also include distance learning, self-directed learning, e-learning, mentoring, coaching and on-the-job learning. What's more, we could do all of this within the one course, with different participants doing different combinations of these.

Of course, the sorts of things that we include in our training programs should not just reflect what is possible for the individual, but also what is required by the Training Package itself ([LINK](#)). Furthermore, it is always worthwhile to remember that the AQF ([LINK](#)) sets some clear requirements for the level of outcome required for each of the levels of qualification that are issued in Australian schools, VET providers and Higher Education organisations.

MONITORING INCLUSIVITY

If we keep doing what we have always done, then we will always get what we always got.

Another gem that applies so well to so much of what we do as trainers and assessors.

But don't get me wrong. If what we have always got is in line with organisational and legislative requirements, then by all means we should keep doing what we have always done.

But, here's the problem. How do we know what we have always been doing, and how do we know what we have always been getting?

We have to ask.

The first person we have to ask is ourselves. Reflecting on all parts of our work is essential to ensure that we are on track, and to ensure that we are continually developing our base of skills.

We also need to ask others. To do this means that we should use some effective communication processes to work out the level inclusiveness and learning culture in the organisation. The sorts of communications that are useful for this include:

- interviews (face-to-face or telephone)
- email, memos and correspondence
- meetings
- questionnaires (such as the example below)
- video conferencing or e-based learning
- focus groups.

The types of questions that we can ask include:

- Are the learning strategies working?
- Are employees eager to learn?
- Is ample adjustment made to the learning environment when needed?
- Does everyone in the organisation feel included?
- Is adequate support given to learners?
- How could learning strategies be improved?

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

We read above that questionnaire is a way to gauge the level of inclusiveness. Personally, I find this method to be really good at getting a 'feel' for how inclusive an organisation is; people seem to be quite willing to tick some boxes anonymously. For me, this gives a good starting point for future investigations, such as focus groups to try to work out some of the reasons for people's answers.

The sort of questionnaire that we can use for staff is included here. Note that it is completely anonymous, which allows people to be honest without fear of any comeback. More often, these sorts of things are being completed online, using free tools such as [Survey Monkey](#) and [Zoomerang](#).

Please answer the following questions. You will not be identified in any way.

1. Did you attend any training courses in 2009?
2. If not, why not?
3. If yes, name the course/s.
4. Were you happy with the outcome of the course?
5. Have you used the knowledge you gained in the course?
6. Were you given adequate support during the course (such as flexibility with work hours, special needs and so on)?
7. Would you like to do any further courses? If yes, list.
8. Do you have any suggestions to make with regard to learning and development?

TAKE ACTION

It is one thing to reflect on and monitor our work. It is quite another to do something to improve it. Conscious actions to modify and improve our work practices may include:

- a regular review of work practices (at least annually)
- consultation and communication with all colleagues and clients
- gap analysis in work practices
- functional analysis of work practices
- focus groups and brainstorming groups to analyse current practices
- specialist teams established to reengineer work practices
- cultural awareness sessions or communications
- learning and development awareness sessions or communications
- change process awareness sessions or communications.

REVIEW INCLUSIVITY POLICIES AND STRATEGIES,

Strategies and policies are usually formulated by senior management following consultation and input from relevant personnel.

The best way to review policies and strategies already in place is to consult widely with all relevant people.

This process can take the form of:

- presentations to staff
- informal feedback
- informal and formal discussion with staff or clients
- questionnaires
- email surveys
- a section of performance review questions dedicated to inclusivity
- exit questionnaires including questions on inclusivity
- team meetings.

DOCUMENT AND REPORT PROPOSED CHANGES

The documentation and reporting process may involve the following steps:

- Collect feedback and input from staff, clients and any other interested party.
- Analyse feedback and evaluate appropriateness. Compile data from feedback.
- Prepare document covering both anecdotal and factual feedback.
- Use organisational standards for documentation.
- If necessary prepare a presentation to accompany the documentation.
- Submit documentation and present findings.

The following report shows us one way that we could report our recommendations for change to management. Note that it clearly states 3 things:

- Which policy is involved
- What the issue is with the current policy
- What the proposed change is and how it will address the issue

PROPOSED CHANGE TO ASSESSMENT TIMELINES

This report addresses a proposed change to assessment timelines for the company's participants in the Diploma of Information Technology course with the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) Tram Co.

Current Situation

Currently, participants have two months after completion of the course to present a portfolio of assessment evidence to the RTO. This was an agreement between the company and the RTO.

In consultation groups with the participants, it was revealed participants have found this timeline difficult to achieve when combined with their work commitments. 80% of participants are not reaching the deadline in time.

Much of the assessment portfolio is compiled while on the job, as evidence is required of application of knowledge and skill in the workplace. In addition, not all participants have the resources at home to complete the assessment portfolio.

Participants are finding the RTO is not flexible when it comes to extensions.

Proposed Policy Change

With consultation with the RTO, it is proposed the timeline be lengthened to three months. The RTO will also be more flexible with extensions, particularly those supported by a statement from the company.

OHS - WHAT IS IT?

The glossary of the TAA Training Package tells us that OHS:

refers to those activities concerned with the prevention and mitigation of work-related illness or injury including illness or injury that may be of long onset.

There are lots of laws and policies and procedures about managing workplace health and safety and a lot of companies spend a lot of time, effort and money in preventing incidents and accidents in their workplaces.

To prevent occupational health and safety issues, we focus on:

- the identification of hazards
- the assessment of risk
- the control of hazards and risks

By preventing incidents and accidents, we can save time, effort and money on accident reporting and investigation, compensation and rehabilitation.

The savings in workers compensation and rehabilitation costs is often a good incentive for companies to devote resources to prevention. These savings can be considerable in not only monetary terms, but also in human pain and suffering.

In Australia there are hundreds of deaths per year in the workplace – the actual figure seems to vary depending on which source of data we use; as a general guide, these workplace deaths represent about 15% of all deaths in Australia. Also, while these deaths are associated with all industries, it is perhaps not a surprise that some industries have more deaths than others:

- Agriculture
- Construction
- Mining
- Manufacturing
- Storage

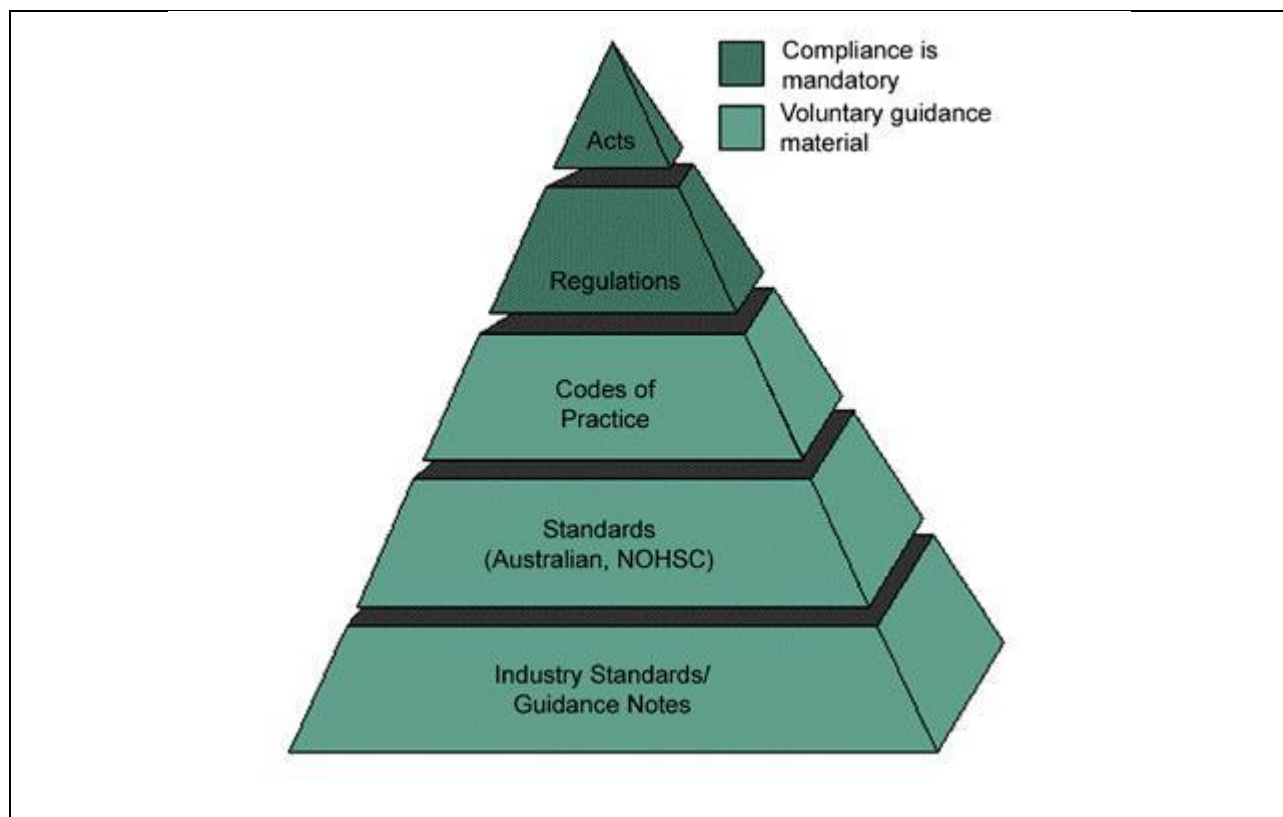
These five industries also have significant workplace injuries and illnesses. Australia on average has 250,000 compensatable workplace injuries and illnesses per year.

We need to be careful with this information. Just because there are more deaths and injuries in some industries than others does not lessen our need to think carefully about the hazards and risks in any particular job or workplace.

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In Australia, laws get made at a federal level, at a state level and at a local level. In terms of OHS, our work is affected by laws at both federal and state levels. There are also regulations that are created at federal and state level. Out of these laws and regulations come the instructions (for the want of a better word) that essentially tell us what we need to do to make sure that we follow the laws/regulations.

The following pyramid shows us that the laws and regulations **MUST** be followed, whereas the other things are provided as guidance only.



What this means is that if ever there is any doubt about a policy or procedure or some other 'instruction' then we must defer to the Laws and Regulations to find out what to do.

WHO IS INVOLVED?

There are a host of organisations involved in putting together and monitoring OHS related stuff.

NATIONAL BODIES:

SafeWork Australia

The National body is called the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (NOHSC), also known as [Safe Work Australia](#). It has a role to develop, facilitate and implement a national occupational health and safety strategy. This is called national uniformity, and each State and Territory is incorporating the national strategy into its legislation and codes of practice.

SafeWork Australia is a tripartite body made up of representatives from Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

SafeWork Australia has the following function, to:

- develop national model standards, codes of practices, strategies, guides, policy statements, guidance notes, and reports
- conduct research and training
- collect and disseminate information
- develop common approaches to occupational health and safety legislation

Standards Association of Australia (Standards Australia)

[Standards Australia](#) is an independent national body which develops national uniform standards on matters such as:

- specifications for equipment, products and materials
- codes on procedures, practices, design and installation
- methods of analysis and testing
- guides to recommended procedures, terms and names.

Australian Standards are constantly being reviewed and are often called up in legislation.

COMCARE (The Commission for the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation of Commonwealth Employees)

COMCARE is responsible for the safety, rehabilitation and compensation of Commonwealth employees in all States and Territories. Bodies such as Australia Post and Telecom are typical Commonwealth employers.

STATE AND TERRITORY BODIES:

Occupational Health and Safety Commissions

Some States and Territories have Occupational Health and Safety Commissions to provide a similar role to SafeWork Australia. These Commissions provide guidance in the development of legislation. They also encourage research, promote education, develop standards and codes of practice, provide advice to the Minister and approve training courses.

You can find links to most of these at the Workplace Australia site (you will need to scroll down a fair way to get to the Workplace Health & Safety links)

Government Departments

Each State and Territory has at least one government department responsible for the administration of occupational health and safety legislation. These departments have the inspectorate to enforce and encourage health and safety in workplaces. These departments may also adopt the role of the Occupational Health and Safety Commissions.

These departments or separate departments also administer the workers compensation and rehabilitation systems for their State or Territory. The area of claims management and return to work is also important for a company.

OTHER BODIES:

There are other important bodies that have a role in occupational health and safety.

Unions

Trade unions and employee associations have had a traditional role to play not only in workplace health and safety, but also in the development of legislation. The [Australian Council of Trade Union](#) and many of the State Trades Hall Councils have occupational health and safety units that provide advice and training to union members. Many individual unions also have similar units.

Employer Associations

Employer associations like the [Australian College of Midwives](#) assist in the development of occupational health and safety legislation. These national and state employer associations also have occupational health and safety units to assist their members.

OHS AND WORK

The law tells us that Occupational Health and Safety affects all workplaces and all jobs.

But, not all workplaces are the same, and not all the jobs are the same.

This means that the Occupational Health & Safety issues will not be exactly the same for all jobs.

To work out how OHS will affect us when we are working in a particular workplace or with a particular type of job, we need to think about a few things:

1. what is the work that is actually undertaken?
2. what are the exposure situations for that work?
3. what are the possible injuries or illnesses that could come from those situations?

DESCRIBING THE WORK TO REVEAL THE HAZARDS

If we want to work this through in a logical way, then it can be a good idea to use a chart such as the following one, and fill in each row progressively to match the steps above.

Step 1: Describe the work.

Job Type

Tree Surgeon

Identifies tree diseases and problems; performs tree care work that includes pruning, tree climbing, operation of travel towers, ladders, mulchers, chippers, trucks, and the use of pesticides and other Tree care chemicals.

Step 2. Describe the exposure situations for the work.

Job Type

Tree Surgeon

Identifies tree diseases and problems; performs tree care work that includes pruning, tree climbing, operation of travel towers, ladders, mulchers, chippers, trucks, and the use of pesticides and other Tree care chemicals.

Exposure Situations:

- Working at heights
- Pesticide exposure
- Falling objects
- Machinery & equipment entanglement

Step 3. List the injuries/illnesses that might come from the exposures.

Job Type

Tree Surgeon

Description: identifies tree diseases and problems; performs tree care work that includes pruning, tree climbing, operation of travel towers, ladders, mulchers, chippers, trucks, and the use of pesticides and other Tree care chemicals.

Exposure Situations:

- Working at heights
- Pesticide exposure
- Falling objects
- Machinery & equipment entanglement

Possible Injury or Illness:

- Serious injury death
- Damage to nervous and respiratory systems
- Serious injury or death
- Laceration, cuts, abrasions, possible death

COMMON INDUSTRIES, COMMON HAZARDS

If we were to do the above steps for a number of tree surgeons, then we would no doubt find a fair few similarities. Likewise, if we were look at any other industry that involved working at heights, then the hazards would be somewhat similar to the hazards of working at height in a tree.

What this means is that there are a number of hazards that are common to some industries. Knowing about these, and especially about the ones that affect the industries that we will be working in, will better equip us to act safely, and fulfil our duty of care.

We can access and use a variety of sources of information that will provide us with details about many different industries and the most common hazards in each. These sources of information may include:

- using our own knowledge of the industries we are familiar with
- asking other trainers, assessors or workers we know who are familiar with the relevant industry
- asking industry or technical specialists or OHS consultants
- checking hazard, accident, injury or illness reports of similar workplaces
- checking national, State or Territory injury statistics held by the workers' compensation organisation or OHS regulatory authority in our State or Territory (for example, WorkCover, National Occupational Health and Safety Commission)
- checking with any professional associations, trade unions or other bodies relevant to the industry
- checking specifications and accepted practices in Australian Standards and codes of practice relevant to the industry's activities

Let's look at some examples

Example 1. The Building Industry

The hazards present across all building worksites might include:

- lifting heavy objects
- trip hazards such as objects lying in walkways or unsecured electrical leads
- rain and moisture that may cause slips or electrocution
- working at heights
- noise
- soil or waterway contamination.

Example 2. The Banking Industry

In the banking industry, the hazards present across all banking worksites might include:

- seating that doesn't suit the user
- incorrect computer terminal position for the user
- poor lighting
- lifting heavy objects, for example trays of coin
- poor ventilation
- incorrect disposal of materials, for example paper, ink cartridges.

ACCESS AND PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT OHS

The [OHS Acts](#) set out clearly what is expected of employers, employees and contractors. These responsibilities are known as duty of care responsibilities. As a manager, coordinator, trainer, facilitator, assessor, contractor or other staff member we have a responsibility under the OHS Act.

The objectives of the OHS Act and regulations are to:

- ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees
- ensure the health and safety of others at workplaces
- promote improvements to the workplace environment
- to protect people's physical and mental health.

The OHS regulations for each state/territory generally identify the:

- requirements for all state/territory-based workplaces
- requirements for hazards and specific work processes found in most workplaces
- administrative requirements for OHS.

It is the responsibility of everyone working in the vocational education and training sector to be aware of such laws and the practices that support them.

For this reason, it is important that we know where to go to access information and resources about OHS.

LEGISLATION, STANDARDS AND CODES

The Acts of Parliament and associated Regulations and Codes of Practice will be available through your local Government Printer and Government Bookshop, or you could find them online at www.publications.gov.au. SafeWork Australia also has a number of model regulations, standards, codes of practice, guidance notes and guides available from its website. Local and technical libraries may have some of the legislation you require.

Standards are available from Australian Standards and SafeWork Australia. These organisations have lists available of their products and their cost. Again some libraries have collections of Australian Standards and SafeWork Australia products.

REFERENCES

There are a many professional associations in the field of occupational health and safety which publish journals and newsletters. Below is a list of some of these associations.

Safety Institute of Australia
National Safety Council of Australia
CCH Australia Limited

There are also many technical manuals and texts available from selected technical and educational bookshops and selected libraries. The following texts are examples:

Brooks, A., Occupational Health and Safety Law in Australia. 4th ed. Sydney: CCH Australia Limited, 1993.

CCH Australia, Guidebook to Workers Compensation in Australia. 6th ed. Sydney: CCH Australia Limited, 1988.

De Martinis C. et al., ACTRAC National Occupational Health and Safety Training Resource. 3rd Update. Melbourne: ACTRAC' Products, 1993.

Matthews, J., Health and Safety at Work, Revised 2nd edition. Sydney: Pluto Press. 1993.

Quinlan, M (ed.) Work and Health: The Origins, Management and Regulation of Occupational Illness. Melbourne: Macmillan' Education Australia Pty Ltd, 1993.

Shaw, J. and Toohey, J. et al., Occupational Health and Safety - Best Management Practice. Sydney: Harcourt-Brace, 1994.

Electronic sources:

US National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health

International Labour Organisation's Occupational Health and Safety Centre, Geneva.

Health and Safety Executive

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

Of course, these are but a few of the many resources available. Begin with these and see where they take you.

OHS AND DUTY OF CARE

It doesn't matter who we are or our particular role or where we work or how much we earn (or how much we don't earn!). We are all required to take reasonable care for the health and safety of others and to cooperate with any directions or procedures that exist.

If we work in a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), then we have a legal duty to work within:

- the legislation
- our RTO's codes of practice
- our RTO's OHS management standards

What's more, as a trainer/assessor, we must not only fulfil our duty of care on behalf of the RTO, we must also be able to prove that we did fulfil the duty.

DUTY OF CARE RESPONSIBILITIES

Most states and territories have their own laws and regulations related to OHS. While there are some differences, the essential emphasis on duty of care remains the same.

Let's look at an example.

In the state of NSW the OHS laws are contained in the NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2001. The scope of the OHS regulations cover:

- obligations for all workplaces in terms of risk management and consultation
- the control of common hazards in the work environment including plant and hazardous substances
- the control of specific activities such as hazardous processes, construction work and certification of plant operators
- the administration of licensing, permits and notification.

Duty of care responsibility requires any organisation to ensure work is done safely by providing:

- a safe work environment
- a safe learning and assessment environment
- safe systems of work
- safe plant and equipment
- communication about safety requirements
- information about hazards
- supervision, instruction and training.

Senior and middle managers must ensure everyone in their organisation understands the relevant provisions of the OHS legislation and codes of practice.

SHARING INFORMATION

Since we are all responsible for each other, it is very important that we share information that can make our jobs easier and safer and healthier.

There are three important aspects of the relevant OHS Acts at Commonwealth and State levels:

1. information, explanation, understanding and communication of OHS policies, procedures and programs
2. risk assessment in the form of thought and planning put into place before a task is undertaken
3. consultation to ensure that all involved in the activity are included in the planning process and have the opportunity to contribute.

These aspects allow all employees to be involved, voice an opinion, and have ownership in how OHS is put into practice as they complete their work tasks. The greater the understanding and the wider the range of opinions, the greater the range of ideas and options put forward.

Ensure Information about OHS is communicated effectively.

It is the responsibility of the organisation and its management to ensure that all employees understand their obligations in fulfilling their duty of care. Forums for the dissemination of information may include inductions, team briefs, formal meetings and contribution to the development of safe working systems. Safety responsibilities may also be identified in role descriptions, and/or standard operating procedures.

We have both an ethical and a legal obligation to address occupational health and safety (OHS) matters with participants at the beginning of the delivery. All Australian states and territories are subject to occupational health and safety laws under both Federal and State Acts and must be followed. Those who break the laws may be liable to prosecution.

It is part of our responsibility as a facilitator to inform our participants at the beginning of delivery of the information shown in the following table.

OHS Item	What You Must Do
Rest room/facilities	Give clear directions to allow participants to easily find or access their comfort needs. Confirm that adequate provision has been made for any participants with physical disabilities.
Tea/coffee-making facilities	Explain the location and caution participants against any dangers. Warn participants, for example, that an urn is hot and will burn if touched. If catering will be provided, advise participants when the session breaks are planned and what will be provided for them.
Fire exits	Explain the emergency evacuation procedures. Indicate the location of a chart showing the position of emergency exits. Demonstrate how to find and use these exits.
Complaints	These are also an OHS issue, as a perception of unfair treatment can constitute a risk to a participant's mental health. Information should be provided in preliminary course material, but trainers must ensure that participants know how to take further any issues about their treatment.

OBTAIN INPUT AND COMMITMENT FROM THE WORK GROUP

The consultation and communication requirements of the relevant Occupational Health and Safety Acts include:

- sharing relevant information about OHS and welfare with employees
- providing opportunities for employees to express their views
- allocating sufficient time for the resolution of OHS issues
- demonstrating that employees' views are valued and taken into account.

Training managers need to encourage and support the ideas of their section, work group or team. The organisation should also ensure appropriate training and skilling is available. The training manager has the responsibility to support the implementation of OHS and to build awareness of the potential negative consequences of safety breaches or incidents.

INSPECTING FOR HAZARDS

INSPECTING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT BEFORE WE BEGIN TRAINING OR ASSESSMENT

If we notice hazards that could affect the participants or your planned activities when you have already started training or assessment, we could be putting ourselves, our learners and others in danger. That's why it is important to physically inspect the learning environment **before** we begin. Ideally, we should conduct our inspection before the day of the training or assessment activity. That way, if we identify any hazards, something can be done about them.

There are three things that we should do as part of our inspection:

1. physically inspect the training/assessment environment
2. talk to key personnel
3. inspect documents

THINGS WE SHOULD LOOK FOR

The hazards present in the learning environment could include one or more Types of Hazard. Because there are so many possibilities, it helps if we have some sort of template that we use to guide our inspection. The following is an example of a template, which has been partly completed for an hypothetical inspection of a manufacturing plant.

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION REPORT	
Location:	
Purpose:	
Hazard	Method Used to Identify
Physical Cutting - machine - no guard in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visual inspection or observation - Talking with worker who uses equipment - Consultation with OHS manager - Review of past accidental reports shows several occurrences - Not covered in OHS policies and procedures - Information in safe work method statements
Ergonomic:	
Psychological:	
Hazardous:	

Biological:	
Radiation:	
Electrical:	
Report Compiled by:	Organisation:
Position:	Date:

This could be based on the following table that shows us the sorts of things to look out for. We must also be mindful of hazards that may damage property and equipment as well as those that might cause illness or injury.

Hazard	What to Look For
Physical	Hazards that could cause trips, slips, falls, cuts, bruising, strains and similar effects, for example wet floors, objects in walkways, sharp edges, unprotected knife blades, poor lighting, high noise levels, poor ventilation.
Ergonomic	Hazards that could cause strain injuries or illness. For example, lifting aids are non-existent or in poor condition, seats and desks are unsuitable for learners.
Psychological	Hazards that may affect mental health, for example over-bright lights, verbally abusive colleagues, working at heights.
Hazardous substances	Hazards that are caused by chemicals, materials or other substances, for example fumes from solvents, burns from acids, flammable materials, run-off that contaminates water supplies.
Biological	Hazards that may result in contamination or disease. For example, food handling without gloves, ineffective instrument sterilisation, unclean air conditioning systems.
Radiation	Hazards from a light, heat or energy source, for example eye damage from welding flashes, poor protective clothing when working in the sun, microwave emissions, friction burns from ropes.
Electrical	Hazards that could result in electrocution or electrical damage, for example exposed wires, power leads lying in water, too many leads plugged into a single outlet

Our inspection needs to only involve the location where training/assessing will occur.

CONSULT WITH KEY PERSONNEL IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

As trainers/assessors, we are not required to know all things. Instead, we are expected to ask for the advice or assistance of people who can help us in a particular situation. When it comes to our OHS duties, there are some key personnel who we can involve:

- senior managers
- managers for the area of placement
- the designated person for occupational health and safety
- training coordinators
- supervisors for the area of placement
- employee occupational health and safety representatives for the area of placement.

It is a good idea to approach the person before we intend to carry out the inspection, and let them know what it is that we will be looking for. They can either give us some advice before our inspection, or they can accompany us during our inspection to help us to identify hazards or explain workplace activities. If I am in a new training environment, I always like to be accompanied because I find that it is a quicker way, and it also gives me the opportunity to 'think aloud' with possible learning/assessment activities.

When we conduct the inspection and talk to key personnel, we should think in terms of hazards that have the potential to cause:

- **accidents**, where injury or illness may result or damage may occur to equipment, products, tools, property or the environment
- **incidents**, which include near misses, unacceptable behaviour, and non-conformance to workplace policies and practices.

DOCUMENTS AND SYSTEMS TO DISCUSS

Examples of the types of documents and systems we might ask about include:

THE EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

This comprises instructions that tell workers or learners what to do and where to go in the event of an emergency.

HAZARD, ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTING PROTOCOLS

These detail how hazards, accidents and incidents are reported, and what action is taken.

PAST HAZARD, ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTS

These provide an indication of the types of accidents or incidents that have occurred in the learning environment in the past, and what action is taken when hazards are identified.

FIRST AID OR INJURIES REGISTER

This details the type of first aid assistance provided to workers or learners in the past.

MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS (MSDS)

These sheets contain information provided by the manufacturer about chemicals, materials and other substances, including potential hazards and health effects, handling and first aid procedures.

OHS POLICY

This outlines the organisation's policy on providing a safe and healthy learning or working environment, what the responsibilities of the workers or learners themselves are.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

These detail of the outcomes of any formal assessment of risks that may be present in the learning or work environment.

SAFETY REPORTS

These provide details of the measures that are in place to contribute to a safe and healthy working environment, and how effective these measures have been.

JOB SAFETY ANALYSIS (JSA)

A JSA breaks down job tasks into steps, lists hazards for each step and identifies ways to minimise those hazards.

After we have completed the inspection, consulted with key personnel and reviewed existing documentation and OHS management systems, we will be in a good position to decide whether the systems in place are:

1. adequate
2. effective.

RATING RISK

Let's look at the following pictures.

Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Now, each of these is a workplace situation. Clearly, they are not equally as hazardous. But, how do we know? How do we really know?

This might seem a bit silly, but it is really quite important. You see, if we cannot work out what makes a particular situation more hazardous than another, then we won't know how to prioritise our resources to reduce the risks. This can lead to unnecessary risk for our learners, ourselves and others.

So, how do we work it out?

One way is to consider that hazard comes from two things:

1. probability - how likely the hazard is to result in damage, injury or illness
2. consequences - how serious the damage, injury or illness is likely to be.

The likelihood of injury is defined as the chance or probability that an injury will occur. This is influenced by factors such as the exposure of the person to the hazard and the effectiveness and reliability of any existing controls.

With this in mind, we can assess risks based on how likely they are to occur, and how serious things would be if they did.

Let's look at an example.

In Picture 1, the boy walking in the park has been hit in the face by a falling leaf. So, we can clearly see that walking in the park has its hazards. Let's ask ourselves: how likely is it that someone gets hit in the face by a falling leaf while walking through a park? Unless you are particularly unlucky (or live in a very windy place with lots of deciduous trees!), chances are that it is not very likely at all. Now let's ask ourselves: how serious is it when a leaf does hit someone in the face? Well, it might tickle a bit. It

might cause a small scratch, unless it stuck someone in the eye, in which case it could actually result in blindness.

So, how hazardous is this situation?

We still don't know, because we don't know how to combine the two bits of information. This is why we use a **risk assessment tool**.

RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

Risk assessment tools can help us give each hazard a rating. A rating indicates how much of a risk that hazard is to the learning environment and the people in it. Working out the risk rating for a hazard can help you determine what to do about it, and in what order.

We should assign a risk rating to each hazard that have identified in our Hazard Identification Report. The higher the risk rating, the more serious the hazard.

An example of a risk assessment tool is shown below. This tool considers the probability that a hazard will cause damage, injury or illness, and the consequences of that damage, injury or illness if it does occur.

Probability	Consequences			
	<i>Minor first aid injury or illness, minor damage to equipment or property</i>	<i>Medical treatment injury, some damage to equipment or property</i>	<i>Long Term Illness or serious injury, major damage to equipment or property</i>	<i>Death or Permanent Disability, destruction of equipment or property</i>
Very likely <i>Could happen at any time</i>	3	2	1	1
Likely <i>Could happen at times, or a common occurrence</i>	3	2	2	1
Unlikely <i>Could happen occasionally, but rarely does</i>	4	3	3	2
Very unlikely <i>Could happen, but probably won't</i>	4	4	3	3

1: very high risk 2: high risk 3: moderate risk 4: low risk

RATING THE RISKS IN THE PHOTOS

Picture 1: the probability of being blinded by a falling leaf is very unlikely. The consequences of it happening are serious injury. Looking at the risk rating table, we find where the Probability row meets the Consequences column:

		Consequences	
Probability		<i>Long Term Illness or serious injury, major damage to equipment or property</i>	
		Very unlikely Could happen, but probably won't	3

... and we come up with Risk Rating 3.

Picture 2:

Let's consider the risk of falling while cleaning windows without safety equipment. It probably won't happen every day, but it certainly could happen. If it did happen, the consequences would likely be death or serious injury.

This would be a Risk Rating 1.

Picture 3:

Let's consider the risk of tripping over the whiteboard while instructing a group of learners. If the teacher is anything as clumsy as me, then it is almost a certainty that he will trip over the whiteboard. But, the consequences are at worst minor first aid injury, with some damage to the whiteboard itself quite probably (based on my experience!).

This would be a Risk Rating 3.

CONTROLLING RISK

When it comes to making sure that our training/assessing environment is safe, we identify hazards, rate their level of risk, and then work out how they can be controlled.

But, we do not start to control risks from scratch.

Instead, we start with what already exists. If we are training in an existing workplace, chances are that there are already controls in place for many (if not all) of the hazards that we identified. But, we cannot just presume that this is the case. Nor can we just presume that any risk controls will be sufficient for the things that we plan to do in our own training and assessing.

To help us understand how to control risk, we first need to look at the various ways that we can do it.

RISK CONTROL HEIRARCHY

If we think back to the [window cleaning situation](#) from the following picture, then we can think of a number of ways that we can control the risk of falling.



Let's list some:

1. wear safety harnesses connected to the building
2. train staff in staying balances in high wind conditions
3. big trampoline at the bottom
4. use a crane with safety cage
5. build safety railings along the edge of the ledges that they are walking on.

There are no doubt others, but these 5 will be enough for this discussion. The hazard is falling from height, with the consequence being death. That's pretty serious.

In terms of effectiveness of control measures in preventing that consequence, we can look at our list to see what would be best.

Control Measure	Is it effective?
1. wear safety harnesses connected to the building	yes, but only limits fall distance
2. train staff to stay balanced in high wind conditions	it might reduce risk of falling, but not completely
3. big trampoline at the bottom	no, it does not prevent fall, but yes because it might reduce injury if a fall does occur
4. use a crane with safety cage	yes, prevents falls
5. build safety railings along the edge of the ledges that they are walking on.	yes, prevents falls

So, we can see that there are a number of control measures that would prevent the fall. But, which one do we choose? This is where the old saying, **prevention is better than cure**, comes into play. With prevention in mind, we can look at different control methods in terms of whether they prevent or cure a hazard.

HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS

The ideal order of action when controlling risk is shown in the hierarchy of controls.

Elimination	Removing the risk completely where possible by designing foolproof control measures, discontinuing use of hazardous materials or equipment, or discontinuing the work practice.
Substitution	Replacing the work practice, materials or equipment with a less hazardous alternative.
Isolation	Removing the employee from the source of the hazard, providing barriers between the hazard and the employee.
Engineering controls	Isolating equipment (for example, disconnecting the power so there is no chance of unplanned operation), turning equipment off when people are in the area.
Safe work practices	Introducing changes to the work practice, training, routine maintenance schedules, additional supervision.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

When workers involved in a hazardous task or in a hazardous area use individual equipment to help reduce the risk of injury; includes items such as respirators, protective clothing, steel capped boots, hard hats, cut resistant gloves, eye protection, hearing protection.

We can use this hierarchy to help work out the best approach to controlling a risk.

In the window cleaning example, we can see that using a safety crane would eliminate the risk of falling so would be the preferred control measure. Building a safety rail isolates the workers from the risk of falling. Training staff improves safe work practices. Wearing harnesses reduces the risk of injury. The trampoline would also technically be a form of PPE, although I personally would not want to test how effective it is in this situation.

So, we can use the hierarchy of risks to ask some questions:

- Can the hazard be completely removed?
- Can the activity be done without involving the hazard?
- Is it possible to outsource the entire activity?
- Is there an alternative way of doing the activity?
- Can the hazard be replaced with something safer?
- Can a barrier be placed between the workers and the hazard?
- Can the hazard be totally isolated or enclosed? Does the hazardous equipment need to operate continually?
- Can the operation of additional equipment minimise the hazard?
- Could additional training help?
- Could the entire work practice be revised and changed?
- Could supervision be increased?
- Could increased maintenance minimise the hazard?
- Is PPE the only way to minimise the hazard?

With this information, we can make some decisions about how to control the risk.

BEGIN WITH EXISTING CONTROLS

Remember that a risk control is something that is specifically designed to eliminate the risk that a hazard may cause damage, injury or illness, or reduce the risk to a level that is acceptable.

For many of the hazards we noted in your Inspecting for Hazards, risk controls will already be in place in the learning environment.

To work out whether those risk controls are adequate and effective, we need to find out about more about them.

And, the way we can do that is to consult with the key personnel that we spoke with when we were investigating which hazards existed. We can get a verbal report from the key personnel, who could tell us about risk controls and their effectiveness, such as:

Key personnel can tell you about risk controls and their effectiveness, such as:

- when workers are required to use PPE
- level of supervision in place
- workplace training programmes
- plans for any additional risk controls
- occurrence of maintenance.

We can also have a look at relevant workplace documentation that provides details about risk controls, such as:

- Job Safety Analysis
- OHS Policy
- Recent safety audits
- Safety reports
- Injuries register
- Accident/incident reports

In any case, it is likely that risk controls we could see in place will include those featured in the above hierarchy of controls.

MANAGING THE INFORMATION

There can be a lot of information involved, based on talking to people, personal inspection, document analysis. To help manage this information, it is a good idea to create a separate Risk Assessment Summary for any given situation.

RISK ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

Location:

Purpose:

Hazard	Risk Rating	Controls in Place	Adequate and Effective?
<i>Cutting Machine</i>	1	Guard comprehensive user training at induction and annually	YES
			YES
<i>Computer Use</i>	2	Copy holder in place Box to put feet on	YES
			NO
Summary Compiled By:			
Organisation:			
Position:			
Date:			

When we complete this template, we will have a clear understanding of the hazards present and the effectiveness of existing risk control measures. This information leads us into the next step which is to take action.

TAKING ACTION - FIRST THINGS FIRST

It will come as no surprise that if an existing control measure is inadequate, then we will need to do something about it before we begin our training. When we rated the risk, we learned that risks with rating 1 were higher priority than rating 2, etc.

The higher the rating, the greater the risk.

The greater the risk, the more urgent the need for action.

Again, we must be sure to note our own limitations. If we have little experience in the area, and we are not sure how to assess risks accurately or prioritise them, we **MUST** always consult someone who is more experienced or an expert in the field. If we incorrectly assess a risk, or act upon a less urgent hazard first, serious damage, injury or illness could occur which may have been preventable. Remember our duty of care!

If using the example of the risk rating table:

- Take action on hazards with a risk rating of 1 first
- Take action on hazards with a risk rating of 2 next
- Then take action on hazards with a risk rating of 3
- Finally, take action on hazards with a risk rating of 4.

If a hazard has a high rating but we have assessed the risk controls in place as adequate and effective, no action will be necessary. Where there are two or more hazards with the same rating that need action, decide which one to take action on first. Determine which hazard has the potential to cause the most serious consequences and the potential to affect the most people.

IMPLEMENTING RISK CONTROLS

Identifying risk controls is one thing. Implementing them is another.

To assist us with going about the control of risk, we develop a **risk control action plan**. Commonly, it will include:

- the risk rating of the hazard
- the nature of the hazard the suggested risk controls
- the time frame for implementation (a target completion date)
- who is responsible for implementation
- who needs to be consulted about implementation resources and budget needed to implement the risk controls
- risk control implementation progress
- the date completed
- the date set for the first evaluation of the risk controls
- the results of the evaluation
- how the risk controls were evaluated
- future recommendations for action as required.

Where more than one hazard is included in the plan, we would put first the one that has the highest risk rating.

During this process, we may refer to the key personnel and existing organisational documents. When it comes to implementation, we need to be careful that we only do what we are authorised to do. We need to ensure that we complete the action plan as well as we can and then refer it to an appropriate person. It is then up to that person to assist us with implementing the plan, revising the plan, or delegate it to someone else.

It is always a good idea to record the details of any communications that surround the review or implementation of an action plan.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

When it comes to OHS, we have already learned that everyone has a duty of care. But, what does this mean in actual practice? The following information helps us to better understand these roles and responsibilities:

In our role we must ensure that our work group and other stakeholders participate in the management of work area hazards and the safety of learners and others in the workplace.

Employees and work groups participate in the management of a safe work environment for learners through activities such as:

- attendance at meetings that address health and safety issues
- membership of health and safety consultations groups
- acting as health and safety work representatives.

Training managers, trainers, facilitators and assessors must:

- be aware of emergency procedures
- be aware of the location of first aid stations
- know the location and obvious danger and workplace hazards
- observe health and safety workplace responsibilities wear the necessary protective clothing or equipment participate and have input to OHS management report incidents or accidents as deemed necessary by management
- make recommendations on a report that comply with the organisation's goals for working safely and are written within the scope of organisational procedures.

Training managers should also encourage and assist their team to:

- participate in workplace inspections in their area of responsibility
- consult with work team members
- participate in general housekeeping activities in the work area
- check equipment before and during training sessions, assessment sessions and other work activities.

Issues are raised more readily when our team members are able to consult and contribute to the management of OHS in the learning environment rather than when the training manager works in isolation. Any issues raised should be dealt with promptly and resolved in accordance with the organisation's procedures. Issues outside our area of responsibility should be referred to the person with the delegated authority to deal with the issue.

It is the responsibility of managers, trainers and assessors to be aware of and comply with the organisation's safe work practices and procedures. All employees should report any hazard, accident, potential accident or incident immediately.

CONTROLLING LEARNER RISK

PEOPLE ALWAYS ADD RISK

People will always be one of the biggest hazards in the workplace or learning environment. This is because human behaviour can be a risk that is impossible to control all of the time.

Supervision of learners where appropriate can help to control their behaviour and prevent damage, accidents or incidents from occurring. If it is not appropriate for the trainer or assessor to provide supervision, alternative arrangements should be made.

SUPERVISING LEARNERS

Unless training or assessment is one on one, it can be difficult or impossible to supervise all learners all of the time. But where direct supervision is appropriate and can be carried out, it can help to:

- monitor learner behaviour and activity
- note behaviour that has the potential to threaten the health and safety of learners or others
- allow precautions to be taken against threatening or hazardous behaviour or activities
- guide learners in non-hazardous behaviour or activities
- make sure work practices are being carried out safely
- make sure the required PPE is worn
- allow fast and appropriate action to prevent or control any damage, accidents or incidents that do occur
- allow assistance to be provided in the event of an emergency situation.

The supervision provided should be tailored to the training or assessment activity and the learners involved.

For example, if a training or assessment activity involved:

- written work in a training room, the risk of damage, accidents or incidents is generally low, so little supervision would usually be necessary
- use of a band saw by inexperienced learners, the potential for major injury could be very high, so close and constant supervision would be necessary
- a group of learners with intellectual disabilities who have a history of erratic and unpredictable behaviour, constant supervision may be necessary to protect other learners or safeguard equipment.

BEFORE THE LEARNING

Think about the job of a learner.

One of the things that we need to always keep in mind is that learners are there to learn. They are there to learn how to function in a work environment, which means they are there to learn how to

fulfill their own duty of care when it comes to OHS.

Now, think about our own job as trainers.

Before we begin our training or assessment, learners should have received information related to OHS including, but not limited to:

- employer obligations
- learner rights and responsibilities
- appropriate behaviour in the workplace including do's and don'ts and the level of supervision for tasks
- hazards found in the workplace
- arrangements at the workplace for the management of OHS, including reporting procedures for hazards, incidents, injuries and faulty equipment
- OHS policies and procedures as relevant, including any staff handbooks
- consultative processes
- safe access and egress, including emergency exits and muster points
- work procedures
- requirements for PPE
- first aid provisions (including locations of kits)
- location of fire extinguishers
- names of fire wardens
- types of potential hazardous events or emergencies and the required response.

It is up to us to ensure that learners receive the information that they need to act safely, and to not endanger the health and safety of others and of property.

It may not be our responsibility to actually provide the information learners need to learn safely. If this is the case, we must be satisfied that the information has been provided by someone else. We should consult with key personnel in the learning environment about this.

In either case, it is a good idea to develop an OHS information checklist so we can document:

- the information provided
- who it was provided by
- when (ie, the date)
- the signature of the learner to confirm they have received the information.

Following are some ways that OHS information can be provided to learners.

INDUCTIONS

If the learning will occur in someone's own workplace, the induction could be a formal workplace induction.

If the learning environment is away from the learner's workplace, an induction involving safety and orientation information should still occur. This also applies to a learning environment that is, for

example, a training room in a registered training organisation. Such an induction may, however, be less detailed than a full workplace induction needs to be.

Appropriate induction takes account of the work, competence and age of the learner, and includes appropriate information and allocation of a work mentor or buddy.

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

If the learning will occur in the workplace, the learner may have already received a certain amount of training relevant to the workplace activities. For example, they may already know about exclusion zones (staying at least ten metres away from operating equipment such as forklifts), and already follow standard safety practices such as wearing PPE.

PRINTED INFORMATION

If we provide a summary of OHS information in print, it is essential that we are certain the learners can understand it. It is a good idea to run through the information verbally as well, not just hand the information out and expect them to read it. That way, we will be allowing for learners who have language or literacy problems.

Printed information could also include an existing JSA (Job Safety Analysis) for a job task we may be training learners in. All printed information should be written in plain English - using simple words and short sentences - to make it easier for all learners to understand.

SAFETY MEETINGS

These may be a regular occurrence in the workplace, and can provide an opportunity for discussion and updates about OHS, and bring previously unidentified hazards to the attention of key personnel.

WORK READINESS & PPE

It is important that we know whether a learner is ready to start training or assessment exercises. They must have the OHS knowledge they need to fulfill their duty of care, and be able to apply that knowledge in a practical sense.

CAN LEARNERS APPLY THE OHS INFORMATION?

In our training, we must be aware of how much of what we deliver is understood, and how well it has been understood. The same is true of OHS information - it is essential that we do not just "tell and forget". Instead, we must assess the learner's readiness to participate safely in the training or assessment activity - this is part of our duty of care.

Common ways to assess readiness include:

- checking with their workplace supervisor
- verbally questioning the learner
- questioning via a short written quiz such as a multiple choice quiz (make sure the learner has the literacy skills required to complete such a quiz)
- using your own knowledge of the information that has been provided
- issuing them with the appropriate PPE.

ISSUE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

The learner should be aware of any PPE they are expected to use during the course of the training or assessment. If they do not already have this PPE, it must be issued to them prior to the session. It is not enough to simply issue them with the equipment and tell them when to wear it. Each learner should also understand why it is important to wear it, and we should satisfy ourselves that they can use it properly.

Common types of PPE include:

Masks	Protective glasses
Helmets	Goggles
Reflective jackets	Safety harnesses
Ear plugs	Ear muffs
Safety boots	Respirators

There are plenty of sources of information about PPE, with my favourite being the Department of Employment & Industrial Relations,

IS THE LEARNER READY TO BEGIN?

If training or assessment is to occur in the workplace, you must check with the learner's supervisor that a workplace induction has been completed before training begins.

ASK THEIR SUPERVISOR:

- Does the learner work safely?
- Does the learner use the PPE required?
- Does the learner understand why it is necessary to follow
- OHS policy and procedures in the workplace?
- Does the learner ensure a safe working environment for others?

ASK THE LEARNER:

- What is meant by duty of care?
- What PPE do they require?
- What is the emergency procedure?
- Where is the emergency muster point?

USE OUR OWN KNOWLEDGE OF:

- the information provided to the learner (consult the OHS information checklist you have drafted)
- previous experience with the learner.

SATISFYING OURSELVES

If we are not satisfied that the learner knows enough about a safe working or learning environment, or has the ability to apply their knowledge, we must:

- ask the training organiser to arrange for the person to be trained at a later date
- organise for the person to receive further basic OHS training yourself if applicable.

Doing this may not be convenient for the learner, for their organisation or indeed for ourselves. But, that is just too bad.

MONITORING RISK CONTROL

By regularly checking on the risk control action plan, we will be able to determine how successful it has been. If no accidents, incidents or damage have occurred, we can learn from the success of the hazards controls in place. If accidents, incidents or damage have occurred, we may need to rethink the controls in place. By doing this risk controls can be continually improved.

CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

As with many aspects of our trainer role, [continuous improvement](#) also applies to OHS. After the initial review of the risk control measures has been completed, regular evaluations must continue to take occur.

This will help us work out:

- if the controls measures in place are working if people are following them
- what management think of the controls
- what the people who work with the controls think of them

- if the controls are still relevant
- if the nature of the hazards has changed

Again, we may not have the authority to monitor the effectiveness of the risk control action plan yourself. If this is the case, we should make regular progress checks with the person who is responsible for the monitoring.

HOW TO MONITOR RISK CONTROLS

Assessing whether or not the risk control action plan has achieved its goals of controlling risks can be done in several ways:

- Consult the workers or learners involved with the controls.
- Consult management who administer the controls.
- Check accident and incident reports to see how effective the controls have been.
- Check first aid reports to see what kind of treatment was undertaken for any accidents that may have occurred.
- Physically check the condition of the controls if applicable.

Any issues identified through the monitoring process should be addressed as soon as possible. This helps ensure that the risk control action plan remains effective. One person or a committee of people should have clear responsibility for addressing these issues.

The monitoring process should be documented on a **Monitoring of Risk Controls** sheet. This sheet should include detail about:

- the hazard
- the controls in place
- dates of monitoring
- how the monitoring was done
- who was consulted and when
- what documentation was consulted and the dates on the documentation
- outcome of the monitoring process
- how this outcome was determined
- recommendations
- who has responsibility for any future action
- name of the person conducting the monitoring process
- the date the Monitoring of Risk Controls sheet has been completed.

REPORTING & INVESTIGATING CAN AID PREVENTION

Anyone in the learning environment must report any damage, accidents or incidents that occur.

This includes:

- learners
- management

- ancillary staff
- trainers and assessors
- workers at all levels.

A reporting form must be developed and must be accessible to everyone.

It is important to:

- train people how to correctly fill out the form, or assist them in filling it out if training has not yet been completed
- provide as much detail as possible to help the process of investigation
- let people know that no damage, accident or incident is too small to report - reporting it now could help prevent the same event from occurring on a larger scale in the future
- make sure a report form is filled out as soon as possible after noticing the hazard or the accident or incident occurring
- let people know who to give the form to.

An investigation must:

- be conducted by a qualified person, or at least in consultation with a qualified person (such as a technical expert or a safety specialist)
- occur as soon as possible after receipt of the report form
- consult the person who reported it
- consult other people who may be affected
- involve physical inspection of the relevant location if applicable
- recommend action as appropriate
- be thoroughly documented.

FORMS TO USE

A quick Internet search will reveal many examples of Hazard/Incident Forms. I am yet to come across an organisation that does not have their own version. But, I have come across many organisations who have forms that seem to lack some of the important pieces of information.

Examples of forms include:

- [This good one that is focused on plant-specific hazards, but could easily be adapted for other situations](#)
- [This good one from the nice people at Easy HR](#)

AUDIO VISUAL RESOURCES

We have all experienced them. For many people, training cannot occur without them. For many people, learning cannot occur with them. Some people use them brilliantly. Others use them poorly.

WHAT ARE AUDIOVISUAL RESOURCES?

While people seem to automatically think of PowerPoint or watching a video (or DVD), the term really refers to anything that our learners can see and/or hear. It includes anything from a whiteboard and overhead projector to radio to SMART boards and computers.

Not surprisingly, each has its own benefits to training, and each has a few points to remember if we want to avoid Death by PowerPoint or the equivalent.

Audio/visual Reinforcement	Points to remember
Overhead projections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't read from them • Let them jog your memory for points to cover
PowerPoint presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't forget that PowerPoint is an aid and participants will get bored if the whole session is conducted this way
Whiteboard and flip-chart paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use coloured pens to add variety and emphasis • Ensure pens are full • Ensure your writing is large enough for participants to see from the back of the room
CDs and audio tapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use only if very relevant
Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The video should supplement your training not take its place • Decide how many videos are appropriate and how long each video should be
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will your participant access a computer? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - at training? - at home? - at work? • Provide practical exercises to encourage learning
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use workplace standard equipment
Activities Case Studies Role Plays Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose activities to suit training outcome, group characteristics and size

ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES

When it comes to AV resources - all equipment for that matter- there are advantages and disadvantages that will affect how well they assist learning. When these things are used as part of a well-planning, learner centred session, they can really make a difference. However, when they become too rigid and using them prevents us from responding to learner needs and learning cues,

then perhaps we need to ask ourselves if they can be used better, or if they are a worthwhile inclusion at all.

The following table shows some of the pros and cons for some commonly used AV resources and equipment.

Aids	Advantages	Disadvantages
Computers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential for software training. • Participants get to have hands-on application. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of familiarity with computers may slow the learning. • Poor keyboarding skills may hamper the process. • Poor equipment, such as outdated screens, may restrict participants' progress. • Poor ergonomics may restrict the learning environment. • Learning may regress if further opportunities for practice are not available in the workplace.
Communication Technology, e.g. phones, voicemail, microphones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands-on practice opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment may vary from that used in the workplace. • Valuable time may be lost in gaining familiarity with new equipment.
Audio/Visual technology, e.g. television, videos, CDs, audio tape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants can see or hear confirmation in another form. • Visual/auditory participants can relate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some participants may find these soporific and discount them as social or relaxation activities. • Participants may feel reluctant to ask questions while a film is playing.
Overhead projections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple and effective. • Can summarise blocks of information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be distracting. • In small rooms can be a physical barrier. • Static display. • No hands-on participation.
Aids	Advantages	Disadvantages
Workplace tools and equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants get to practise using the actual or simulated equipment of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be supported with theoretical principles, instructions and diagrams, as some participants may not be

the workplace.

able to contain all the information about the use of the equipment in their head.

CLARIFYING OUR INTENTIONS

The most appropriate time to discuss individual and group objectives and expectations is at the beginning of the session. It is also a good way to break the ice and explore individual communication and learning styles.

Our participants will want a clear explanation of how well our course will meet their objectives and we should provide them with an explanatory document. In my experience, people will ask all sorts of questions, and being well-prepared seems to be the best advice to cope with some of the curly questions that can be thrown at you. But, some questions are more common, with the following table listing some of the most frequently asked questions (FAQ) about course expectations and objectives.

The Big Picture

The Detail

<i>How will I be assessed?</i>	- Will I have to do an exam or assignments? - What will determine that I have fulfilled the course requirements?
<i>What qualification will I receive?</i>	- Will I receive a formal qualification or some other form of recognition? - How will that be issued? - Will this course have any implications for my work or career goals?
<i>How much work will be involved?</i>	- Will I have to do some of that work in my own time?
<i>Will I get breaks and clear indication of finishing times?</i>	- Some participants may have physical needs to consider, such as timing, medication or timing of food intake if they are diabetics, for example or family considerations like child minding or transport concerns.

Most participants will ask the necessary questions but we should identify any underlying concerns. Consider the following:

- Participants who feel inadequate because their education level is low may be concerned that they won't be able to keep up with the session.
- Participants who have been out of the learning environment for a long time may not know what to expect.

- Participants who have a hidden learning disability, such as dyslexia or difficulty reading or writing, may be nervous this might be exposed to the group.

Because of these sorts of things, we need to be sure that we also enable time before the session and near the beginning of the session to identify any of these individual issues. I usually aim to set some sort of small group task at the very beginning of a session to give me a chance to observe people and their cues.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 9 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

GROUP HARMONY

We learned previously that adult participants can learn from the group. For some participants this is a powerful learning exercise. The process of discussion and discovery allows individuals in the group to share their ideas, views, work and life experiences. This can help others to relate positively and discover ways to deal with work issues or problems.

However, individuals are less likely to share such information amongst the group if the group is not in harmony. For this reason, it is really an excellent investment to learn some strategies for developing rapport and harmony within a group. Some are shown here:

Skill	Strategy
Provide opportunities for interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage open group discussion. - Ensure all individuals have the opportunity to contribute without pressure to do so. - Develop activities which involve interactive participation such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. small group discussions 2. case studies or 3. team learning games.
Provide opportunities for individuals to communicate on a personal level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include a brief introductory session to allow individuals to either: introduce themselves to the group - or, if the group already know each other, express a view. This might be What I'd like to get out of this course or What I do when I'm not at work. - Include light subjects help participants relax into the group and the course. - Encourage the group to socialise over morning tea or lunch breaks.
Acknowledge and reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respond positively when individuals offer views, ideas and experiences during the session. For example, comments like: I like that idea, or thank you

contributions

for that information or good thinking, well done! go a long way towards making participants feel acknowledged and praised for good effort.

- Avoid heaping effusive praise because it may lose its value

- Beware of inequitable praise. If certain individuals are making all the contributions and getting all the praise, this could be a disincentive to others in the group who might feel inadequate.

Encourage everyone to participate in the group by asking directly for an opinion. For example, How do you feel about that idea, Peter?

ICE BREAKERS

Ice breakers are activities designed to make participants and facilitators comfortable with each other - in other words, to break the ice.

There are literally thousands of these, with literally hundreds of web sources to help us find them. For my own work, I use the following two sites, since they seem to give a nice combination of the ones that people know and a few newbies, as well as pretty good instructions for how to use them.

- [Icebreakers, Warmups, Energisers & Deinhbitizors](#)
- [Icebreakers for Corporate Training](#)

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 10 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS-BASED LEARNING

Remember the purpose of Vocational Education & Training?

It certainly isn't just about learning more stuff so that we can know more stuff. No, it is about becoming more knowledgeable so we can do more stuff. This means that we need to learn knowledge and skills. This is why Units of Competency include sections for both **Underpinning Knowledge** and **Underpinning Skills**.

Being aware of this is essential for planning learning, because learning knowledge is different from learning skills. And, what's more, learning how to apply that knowledge and those skills can be different again.

This means that in most of our training, we need to include time to:

- deliver the information that the learner needs to know, and in a way that assists them to learn it
- allow the learner to apply that information, and in ways that reflect how it could be applied in a real situation
- give feedback to the learner about what they are doing that is correct, and what is incorrect, and (perhaps most importantly!) what makes it correct or incorrect
- guide the learner through a reflection on their learning.

Lots of people tend to overlook the last one because it seems a bit airy-fairy. But, in reality, it is by doing this that the learner gets to link what they have just done with what they already knew.

Let's look at an example.

Think of it like making a new folder of information: you spend a lot of time collecting the information and making sense of the information and putting it in the right order in a correctly labelled folder. But then you leave it on the desk next to an open window before going to lunch. What is going to happen? Your new information gets blown around, and mixed up and disorganised.

The same happens in our brain. If we do not put things away in the "filing cabinet" of our mind, then we won't be able to find that information the next time we go looking (thinking) for it.

BALANCING THEORY & PRACTICAL

Our training plan may deliver either theoretical or practical information, or a mix of both. For some participants, too much information can be difficult to take in at one sitting. Left-brain thinkers, for example, may be quite comfortable with lots of logical, technical data, but right-brain thinkers may tend to switch off when presented with too much of that sort of information. They may need to hear it more than once, or in different ways, for it to sink in. This may take extra time.

We also need to observe how the participants take in our information. Feeding the information in sequential format aids understanding, but it may be necessary to adjust the pace and design supplementary material if some participants are slower and some are faster than others.

Adults relate well to bites of information interspersed with activities. A good bite is around 15 minutes (remember the attention span?).

Where the information is of a logical or technical nature and suits left-brain thinking, it will help the right-brain thinkers if we intersperse the information with [visual aids](#).

Another thing to do is to include a combination of theory and practical within each task. This allows the brain to be working in multiple areas, which increases how well a learner can learn stuff and how well they will be able to recall and repeat the same stuff at a later date. In short, it is a good way for people to develop competence.

A simple strategy that we can use to do this is the **Tell-Show-Do-Check**:

Tell - participants what they need to do

Show - them how to do it

Do - it themselves

Check - that it's done correctly

Let's look at an example.

"I want Helen and Sue to learn how to interpret a Unit of Competency. How do I do it?"

I tell them what we are going to do and why (adult learners need to understand relevance)

I show them how I do it on a whiteboard (adult learners need to see how things are done, and to have things to look back to a bit later if they get stuck)

They do it themselves, perhaps in pairs while I wander about and observe and ask questions and provide individual assistance as required (adult learners like to work things through together and be told what they need when they need it)

We all check to make sure that we understand it, by not just looking at the 'answers' that they came up with, but by asking questions to probe their understanding."

While Tell-Show-Do-Check can be used across a wide range of situations, there are some differences between the things that we emphasise when we teach knowledge and skills based material.

APPROACHES TO KNOWLEDGE-BASED LEARNING

When it comes to knowledge-based learning, I tend to focus on the following things:

Knowledge-Based

Design activities which enable the learner to do something with the knowledge, for example simulate a real - life situation

Show a link between the learning objectives and the knowledge and activity

Encourage the learner to participate in the activity by providing clear instructions and guidelines

Give feedback to confirm or correct the learner's understanding

Provide a key point summary.

APPROACHES TO SKILLS-BASED LEARNING

When it comes to skills-based learning, I tend to focus on the following things:

Skills-Based

For a new skill, follow the demonstration process:

Do It Fast - demonstrate the new skill at the speed at which it is normally performed while the learner is observing.

Do It Slow - then break the skill down into steps, completing each step slowly as you give a clear and detailed explanation of what you are doing and why it must be done that way.

Do It With Them - the learner and yourself then complete the skill together; provide assistance and further demonstration and explanation where necessary. Repeat as many times as necessary.

Let Them Go - observe the learner as they demonstrate the new skills independently, provide positive feedback first (compliment, then correct).

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

So, we know that there are different ways to deliver training about knowledge and skills. When it comes to designing training, what does this mean in practise?

Let's look at an example.

Let's say that we were going to conduct some training about gardening. One of the units of competency was about the equipment used for building and maintaining a garden.

We won't use a real Unit of Competency so we can keep this nice and simple. The important thing is that you see the steps involved in what I am doing here.

So, my unit includes some knowledge, for example:

Underpinning Knowledge:	*types of spades *types of garden forks *safe handling of spades and garden forks
Underpinning Skills:	*choosing the right spade for the job *choosing the right garden fork for the job *handling the equipment safely

Well, that's all well and good, but what do I do with that information?

I need to look for the action words, and if there aren't any, then I need to work out what they could be. For example, none of the underpinning knowledge includes an action word! But, it is knowledge. And knowledge is about knowing, remembering, recalling – and these are all action words. So, now I have some action words, and I can think about some ways that I would deliver these sections. I do the same for the underpinning skills.

Underpinning Knowledge:	*types of spades *types of garden forks *safe handling of spades and garden forks
How would I deliver this:	*memory activities where students match pictures of spades and forks with their names *watching a video of someone gardening and making notes about safe use and unsafe use of the garden tools
Underpinning Skills:	*choosing the right spade for the job *choosing the right garden fork for the job *handling the equipment safely
How would I deliver this:	*digging different types of soil with different types of spades and forks to see which is easiest *demonstrating safely collecting and storing spades and garden forks *in a simulated environment, the student chooses which tools to use, and uses them to complete a job safely

Now, what have I done?

I have taken a chunk from a Unit of Competency, and worked out how I can deliver it.

What can I do with this information?

I take it into my session planning.

REMEMBER THIS LEARNER

Who? Remember which learner? Remember this learner - the one that we have with us right here and right now. This is the only person we need to be thinking about when we develop the techniques to train them. So, we need to make sure that we cater for their particular needs when applying either of the above to their learning needs. How well we are doing this will be evident from the [learning cues](#) that we can observe.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 11 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

LEARNING CUES

Let's say that we are delivering some training. We have planned it well, and structured our learning activities to reflect the needs of our learners. Everything should be going well. Learners should be learning.

But, how do we know?

The simplest way to find out if learners are learning is to observe them.

In our training, we will be able to use a variety of observation techniques to help us find out what is going on. These include:

- using formative evaluation to monitor learner progress
- monitoring group and individual interactions
- monitoring conflict or behavioural difficulties
- monitoring learner cues about concerns or difficulties in learning
- monitoring learner readiness for assessment or new areas of learning.

Observation may be formal or informal, or a combination of both.

Formative evaluation may take the form of regular skill checks or questionnaires, and is used to identify any improvements that can be made to the learning program or its delivery.

The other methods are more qualitative: the behaviour of others is interpreted by the facilitator subjectively. While this not always a reliable thing, it is essential while we are delivering our training.

LEARNER BEHAVIOUR TELLS US ABOUT QUALITY OF LEARNING

Think about training that you have attended:

- When you are interested, what are you doing?
- When it is not interesting, what are you doing?

Chances are that the learners involved in your training will be doing the same things. So, if we can look out for these things, then we can amend what we are doing to better suit their individual needs. But, do not get fooled into thinking that we need to be entertainers; it is not up to us to spice up the learning, nor dilute the importance of it by making it fun for the sake of keeping people interested. Instead, we are better off adopting the point of view that the learners are mature professionals who will be engaged if we provide engaging experiences for them.

level of engagement or disengagement in the learning	level of communication and interaction
regular or irregular attendances or absences	stagnation in learning
evidence of frustration, distraction or stress	level of dependence or independence
level of ease or difficulty in undertaking learning activities	

Each of these cues could be evidence of a problem that we could discuss with the participant. Then develop a plan to overcome the problem and maximise the potential for learning.

Once you have discussed the problem with your participant, appropriate action may be to:

- discuss the problem with colleagues or specialist staff
- modify the individualised learning plan
- use a different approach or technique(s)
- encourage more or less independence for the learner
- refer participant to specialist staff
- consider alternative methods or assessment.

So, then we continue our observation and monitoring, consult again with the participant and repeat these actions if we observe further cues.

But, before we go changing our whole program in response to a few cues, we need to make sure that what we are observing is due to the way that we are delivering our training. We have all had bad days, and chances are we have all experienced things outside of our work/life that affect our emotional and physical health. Things like illness or personal issues, employment instability and strained interpersonal relations between participants can also lead to the same cues.

A tip that I would offer is as soon as anyone yawns or slumps in their chair or crosses their arms, I ask if the temperature is okay. This does two things:

1. it makes sure that the temperature is appropriate
2. it establishes from the beginning of the training that I care about them (which is something cannot be overstated).

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 12 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

SELECTING DELIVERY METHODS

It is very easy to just tell the participants what it is that we think they need to know.

But, there is one problem with that.

It doesn't really fit with how people learn.

Because there are many ways of learning, and because of the way that our brains are wired, it is a bit silly to think that just telling someone something will be enough for them to learn. For this reason, we need to know about some different ways of delivering knowledge and skills.

Commonly, these include things like:

- presentations and lectures
- instruction
- demonstration or modelling
- tutoring
- practice opportunities
- brainstorming activities
- initiating and facilitating group discussions
- guided facilitation of individual or group learning activities, group work or case studies
- project-based

But, how do we choose which method to use?

We look at our learning objectives. Remember, these objectives tell us what it is that are wanting to achieve. They also include [action words](#). These action words are the key to knowing which delivery methods to choose.

Let's look at an example.

Bill is doing the following unit as part of his horticulture traineeship.

Element	Performance criteria
1. Plan and prepare work	<p>1.1 Plans and specifications are interpreted and clarified with the supervisor.</p> <p>1.2 The quantity and quality of materials are checked to ensure they conform to design drawings and specifications.</p> <p>1.3 Tools and equipment are selected and checked for serviceability according to enterprise guidelines.</p> <p>1.4 OHS hazards are identified, risks assessed and controls implemented.</p> <p>1.5 Environmental implications of constructing concrete structures are identified and reported to the supervisor.</p>

From the Element, we can see that this section of his course involves Bill in **planning and preparing**. Now, without even reading the performance criteria, I am thinking that this will involve a bit of activity. This is because planning and preparing involves doing things. If we look at the criteria, we see the other action words are:

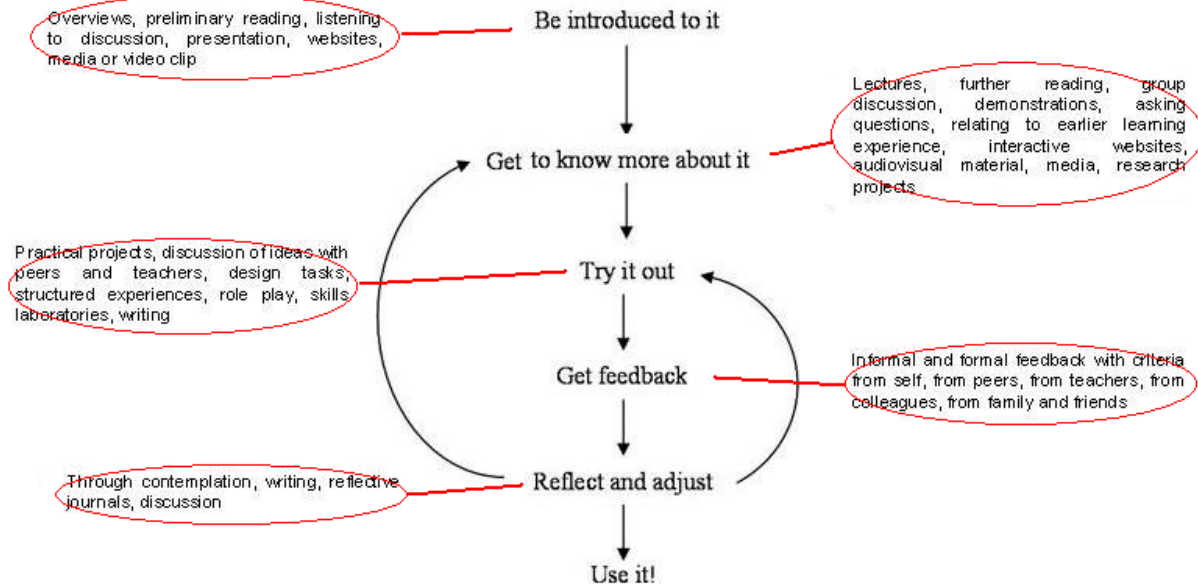
interpreted
clarified
checked
selected
identified
assessed
implemented
reported

Just as we suspected, all of the criteria involve doing things. This means that if we intend to train Bill in how to do these things, then we will need to include learning activities that involve these activities. Choosing our delivery methods to reflect the competency requirements is another way to ensure that we are delivering training in line with [AQTF](#) requirements.

MATCHING METHODS TO LEARNING STAGE

If we want to get a bit more complex, then we can also think about what happens during a session. At the beginning, we don't know much, but as we move through the session, we learn more stuff and we learn how to do more stuff. This creates opportunities to provide learning activities to support the different stages of learning that occur in a session. It is like the idea of [Tell-Show-Do-Check](#) is applied to the whole session.

Actually, that's exactly what they have done at the University of New South Wales. They have developed guidelines to ensure that all learning at their university will match the learning stages. The following diagram is based on some of their stuff, although I have modified it to fit our needs a bit better. In any event, it shows us the sorts of learning activities that we can include at each of the stages of a session.



(Hughes, C., Toohey, S., and Hatherley, S., 1992)

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 13 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

ENGAGING PRESENTATION SKILLS

I'm gonna get up at the front of the room and I've got to communicate this information. How do I make this interactive when I have to talk and they have to listen? How do I give them an experience while I'm talking and they're listening?

Those words are spoken at around four and a half minutes into the following presentation by Doug Stevenson. Now, I don't know Doug from a bar of soap, but I do very much enjoy and agree with his idea that combining adult learning principles with stories in our presentations can make them much more engaging. And, of course, with engagement in training comes better learning.

Anyway, have a look at what he has got to say. But, more importantly, have a look at how he says it.

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQ3BDkMN1LY>

If we think about what he just talked about, we could easily think of at least a dozen ways that we could make it much less interesting and much more boring. In fact, I think that we could all tell some pretty horrible stories about some interesting material that has been delivered in absurdly

boring ways. Well, we think it was boring; it was so boring we fell asleep so we cannot be too judgmental!

The point here is not that trainers have to be entertainers or comedians or accomplished speakers. Instead, the point here is that trainers do have to be able to engage learners in learning. If we are going to be doing that, then we need to not only come up with engaging worksheets and practical tasks and audio-visual resources, we need to come up with a way to use the most frequently used resource in a more engaging way.

What is that tool?

It is ourselves.

PRESENTING WELL CAN ENHANCE LEARNING

There is no doubt that in face-to-face training, the presentation skills of the trainer are integral to the success of the learning experience. If we present poorly, then learning is likely to also be poor.

But, what does present poorly mean? Well, it means two things:

1. we say stuff and do things in a way that is not engaging
2. we say stuff and do things in a way that is inappropriate.

The second thing will be addressed in [another part of the course](#), so we will have a look at the first thing here.

How the trainer presents will contribute significantly to the outcome of the session. Good facilitators:

- speak well
- question with direct, indirect, open, closed or targeted questions
- clarify difficult points
- discuss the main points of the training with learners
- listen actively
- use appropriate non-verbal communication
- provide learners with constructive feedback.

A successful training outcome is an enjoyable learning experience for individuals and the group.

Skill	Description
Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Think carefully about what you want to say before speaking. - Speak and articulate clearly. - Project your voice so that learners can easily hear what is being said. - Use words that are easy to heard and understand. - Use simple words with a clear meaning. - Use words that are neither too difficult or too easy for their audience
Questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focuses attention on a particular topic. - Encourages interest. - Promotes activity. - Checks on and extends the learners understanding. - Slows down or speeds up the pace of a training session - Challenges the learners to think more deeply. - Assesses the learners' progress. - Encourages the learners to think in other ways.

For me, there is almost nothing worse than delivering training to a group of people who are clearly uninterested. It is common among trainers to hear the complaint that a group of participants was bored and uninterested. This is sometimes the case, and sometimes it is beyond our control. But, surely **us** trainers need to accept some [responsibility](#) for the experience of learners in our classes?

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

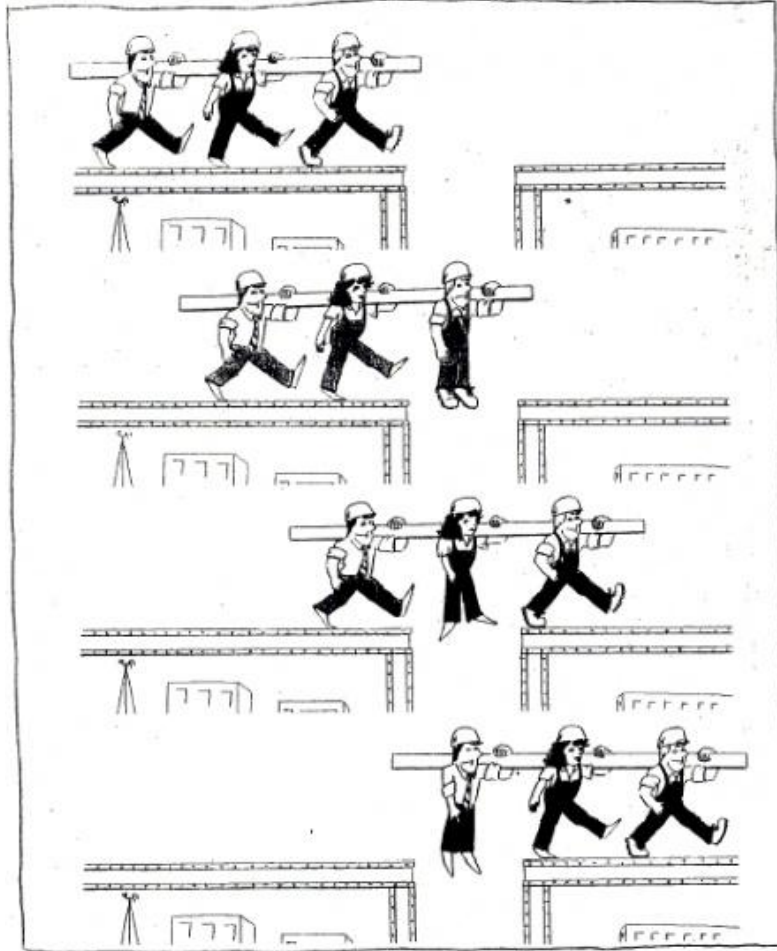
Information in this section relates to TASK 14 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

FACILITATING GROUP LEARNING

Group work.

The very thought of it sends shivers up my spine. From my own school experience of being thrust into the company of people I didn't know (or worse, the company of people I didn't like!), to my adult experience of being required to do a task with other people knowing that at the end of it all we would be required to "report back"...

In these sorts of situations, it does seem that it is all too much work. That is why I prefer to call it group learning. A local school has on the back of its Senior Leaders' t-shirts: Together Each Achieves More. Like the following picture, learning in groups can present some good opportunities that are not available when learning alone.



WHY LEARN IN GROUPS?

Group learning is suited to adult learning environments. It is a very useful way to:

- deepen understanding
- focus on a specific issue
- involve all learners
- identify differences and alternative options
- review process
- develop proportions
- involve all learners
- encourage team work
- problem solve

Of course, not only do these things enable participants to learn the skills and knowledge related to a particular competency, they enable participants to develop some of the generic skills for the workplace.

CREATING FUNCTIONAL GROUPS

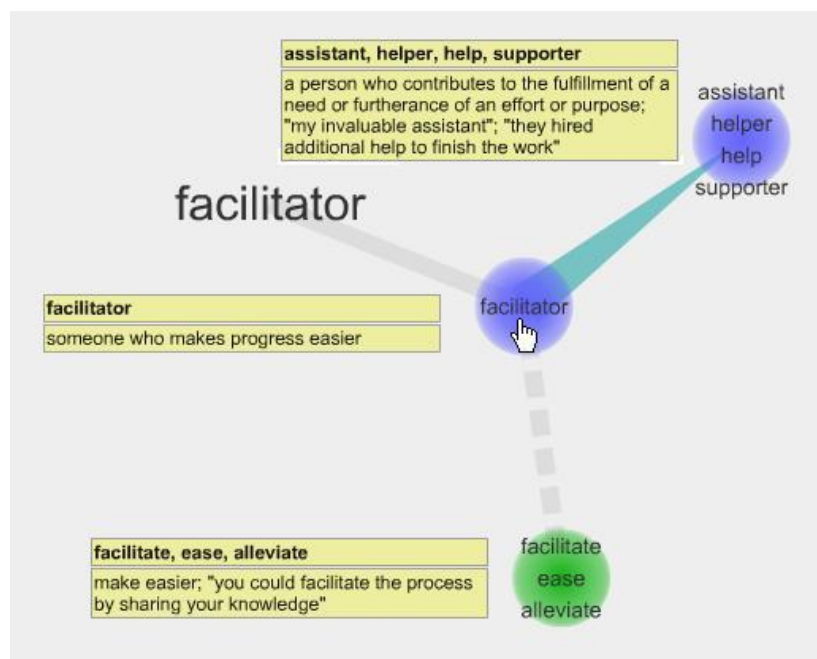
While it is true that learners are responsible, and that we should encourage them to accept responsibility for their learning, it is also true that we are responsible for providing enough guidance, support and direction to enable participants to do what we hope them to.

Nowhere is this more the case than group tasks. All too often, we take lots of time to prepare and plan and deliver whole-class tasks, and we check that they understand what is going on and how to do things, and we observe the class for learning cues, and we respond to the feedback that we get from our learners. But, for some reason when it comes to group tasks, trainers have a tendency to "set and forget". Just because group tasks move power from the trainer to the learners does not mean that we do not still have a role to play.

This is why it is important that we understand the role of trainer as **facilitator**.

WHAT'S A FACILITATOR?

I am a visual learner, which is probably why I like the new breed of online dictionary and thesaurus that displays word meanings in a graphical way. I used *Visuwords* for the following definition of Facilitator.



From this image it is clear that when it comes to group tasks, our role is to **contribute to the learning** that happens in the groups that we establish, to **make easier** the progress of those groups, and to do this by **sharing our knowledge**.

The participants have the greatest decision-making power and responsibility when the activities

are led by the group and supported by the facilitator. They have less power when there is sharing of the activities between the facilitator and the participants. Participants have the least power when the group is led by the facilitator.

FACILITATION SKILLS IN GROUP LEARNING

In group work the trainer gives the decision-making power and the responsibility for learning to the group but the facilitator still has the responsibility to:

- structure the group activity
- clarify the objectives and purpose of the group work
- maintain a balance between keeping on track and
- exploring new ideas
- respond to any disagreements, non-participation, confusion or unproductive behaviour before higher level conflict emerges
- provide any guidance, expertise or resources needed by the group.

In many ways, facilitating in learning is much like Leadership for Learning?

As a brief overview, the following table shows us some of the facilitation skills needed in the three stages of group work.

Beginning	During	Ending
Select a topic or issue.	Maintain an atmosphere of trust. Be aware of interpersonal communication. Monitor group dynamics.	
Let learners know objectives and purpose.	Encourage shy learners.	Acknowledge results. Allow groups to report back. Outline findings. Link back to learning outcomes. Summarise the finding.
Relate to learning outcomes.	Manage overbearing or demanding learners.	Decide on any further action.
Explain the structure and sequence.	Listen. Give feedback.	Congratulate the groups on achieving the objectives and purpose.
Agree on ground rules.	Clarify points/issue.	
Clarify roles.	Sort out misunderstanding.	
Give a start and finish date/time.	Refocus if required.	

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 15 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

USE LANGUAGE THAT SUITS THE PURPOSE

Check out the following (well, at least the first 20 or 30 seconds..)

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rLDgOg6bq7o>

What did he say?!

If he wanted me to understand what he was talking about, then I think he will be disappointed. Of course, if this is something that I am required to know, then I too will be disappointed.

What is the problem with what he said?

LANGUAGE SHOULD FIT THE PURPOSE

Let's look at an example.

I am really lucky to have the luxury of flexible working hours. This means that I can take my daughter to Prep, and stay a while if I want to. I like to play with kids and read books. The other day, my daughter took in a bull's skull, and there were all sorts of questions about it.



(Charlie - my daughter - gave the bull's head to another kid to take home, whose mother was no doubt very impressed! So, this is our Tom with the lower jaw of a wild boar instead).

The teacher is awesome. She gathered the kids around and they all asked questions and they each answered questions, and at the end of it I am convinced that these 4 and 5 year olds understand the structure and function of jaws, eye sockets, horns, nasal cavity and the different kinds of teeth.

On the way home, my three year old, Tom, was asking all about teeth and jaws and I think he had his fingers in his mouth for most of the day, muttering about molars and cutting tees (you try saying 'teeth' with your hand in your mouth!).

Mrs R nailed it. She engaged the kids with not just what she said but how she said it. She chose words and sentences that suited the learners.

And what happened? The learners learnt.

For the bloke in the video, what he is saying may well be suitable for a particular audience who **already haa some knowledge about the topic**. Likewise, there are many things that we do in our own work that is familiar to our colleagues, but which is less familiar to people who work somewhere else.

Because of this, we need to be aware of the techno babble - the jargon, terminology and style of language that we use. This is for two reasons:

1. the people we are training/assessing might use different words than we do, so we need to make sure that we have a common language
2. the people we are training/assessing might not understand what we are saying, which means that their learning will be affected.

INDUSTRY SPEAK OR PLAIN ENGLISH?

To make sure that we use language suited the audience and context, we need to do some research as part of our delivery planning phase. This research involves:

Finding out if all our participants know and understand the language? If we are in doubt, supplement the learning materials with a description of terms and jargon used in the delivery.

Familiarise yourself with the style of language likely to be used by participants. Remember, language can differ between

- age groups
- genders
- different levels and status of employees.

You must understand and include the language your participants use, but you do not have to lower your personal standard, or subject other participants in the group to language that they find offensive. This is especially important when we consider how we use language to develop the learning relationship - choosing to talk like participants usually opens us up to ridicule rather than leading to us being accepted by the learners.

In all cases, we should avoid using terminology or jargon that is specific to the training industry when we deliver our training. This language might be appropriate when we mix with peers and industry representatives, but it is inappropriate in the learning environment, unless the terminology has a direct relevance to participants.

HOW MUCH JARGON IS TOO MUCH

Sometimes it is impossible to avoid using jargon. Sometimes it is okay to do it. But how do we know when we have gone too far, and 'lost' our learners?

The easiest way is to observe the learners' response - look at the [learning cues](#) since it will soon become obvious if they are switching off.

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

Let's face it, people are unpredictable.

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpSv3HjpEw>

Now, while a training room is far from the conflict in Iraq, there are certainly some parallels between Rumsfeld's knowledge about Weapons of Mass Destruction and what happens when we get a group of people together for training!

This has to do with people's behaviour, as well as with their organisational skills! In any event, we need to be prepared when then faced with unexpected situations and circumstances to adjust some things. Adjusting the following things is usually the most effective:

- presentation
- communication style
- delivery.

As any high school teacher will tell you, one of the biggest causes of unpredictable behaviour is disengagement. If our learners are involved in what we want them to be doing, then the likelihood of some unexpected behaviour is lessened. But, if the learner has difficulties in doing what we want them to do, they may be less predictable.

Participants who may experience difficulties learning include:

- the highly introverted - they are often uncomfortable in a group learning situation
- those with language literacy or numeracy (LL&N) handicaps
- those from non-English-speaking backgrounds who may be experiencing difficulty speaking or understanding the language at the pace of the group
- those whose intelligence level is above or below that of the group
- those with external problems/concerns that are affecting their concentration or motivation to learn
- those who are insecure about their ability to learn and fit in. This is all well and good, but finding out if someone is experiencing any of this can be a challenge.

How many times have we been in a situation where a trainer (or teacher, or manager, or someone else...) has asked "is there anyone who doesn't understand what to do?" Now, honestly, how many times have we seen someone put their hand up and say "I don't understand"? It is quite rare. And it is rare for 2 reasons:

1. adult participants do not always want to express such weaknesses because of pride, fear of consequences or fear of embarrassment.
2. if people do not understand what they are meant to understand, then how can they possibly know if they understand it or not?

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

There are a whole host of ways that we can support individual participants, with the following table showing some of the more common ones.

Strategy	Support
Assist participants who need additional help with particular areas of learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide extra attention. - Re-phrase information. - Explain things in a different way. - Arrange for some private tuition or gap training. - Link the information to examples in the workplace or to past experiences.
Provide referrals to external services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Counselling services. - Literacy courses. - English classes (such as ESOL) - Private tutoring. - Further training courses in the subject matter.
Listen to problems and help, but set boundaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on the speaker with supportive eye contact and body language. - Use minimal and brief responses to invite the speaker to continue. - Paraphrase and clarify understanding to reflect the content and feelings. - Show empathy by listening actively.

PLANNING FOR THE UNEXPECTED

When it comes to planning our delivery:

1. We can plan well for the *known knowns*.
2. We can plan reasonably well for the *known unknowns*.
3. We can plan somewhat for the *unknown unknowns*.

This is called contingency planning - making plans for something might not happen the way we expect it to. In training, there are some fairly common things that do not go to plan, and it is a good idea to be prepared just in case.

Contingency Causes	Solution
Equipment failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equipment ordered has not been provided. - Equipment is available but is faulty or defective. - Equipment is available and working but it's the wrong sort. - Have a back-up measure in place such as additional overheads or flip charts if the video is not working. - Have some pre-planned, relevant activities ready.
Group dynamic variables	<p>Differences between individuals can lead to various interactions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning groups may vary between: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. highly motivated, responsive and interactive 2. quite unmotivated, not connecting effectively 3. unharmonious, unmotivated and difficult. - Adjust the time schedule to suit the needs of the group. - Delete some prepared activities in favour of the prevailing peer learning, for example questions and discussion conducive to learning. - Replace some group activities with some individual exercises instead. - Give praise and encouragement
Individual special needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some may require extra attention. - Some can be difficult and require special handling. - Activities may be ambiguous and unclear - Adjust the language or words in your delivery. - Rewrite the instructions or speak the instructions in plain English.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 5 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

MANAGING GROUP DYNAMICS

Take a moment to think back to a training situation where you sat bored, impatient and frustrated while the whole session seemed to be hijacked by one person. What was the problem?

It isn't **fair**.

When we talk about managing groups, we are really talking about acting and reacting to keep things fair for everyone.

Group dynamics can enhance the learning experience for participants, but can also create a negative experience. Where equity exists amongst the participants, participation of individuals is not limited by the dynamic. An inequitable balance can in turn affect the relationship between participants and between the group and the trainer.

RELATIONSHIPS ARE EVERYTHING

If there is shared respect among group members, then there is more chance of harmony and productivity.

But, if respect is unequal, or lacking (or absent), then we find situations where disruptive individuals can prevent others from expressing views, contributing to and extracting learning from the group. This in turn can create a sense of:

- frustration
- resentment
- annoyance.

The outcome from these emotions is a deteriorating relationship between the individual participants in the group and the group dynamic deteriorates into disharmony. Some examples of disruptive inequity are shown below.

Example

A participant displays aggressive attitude to other individuals or the trainer.

- Clarify purpose and objectives.
- Respond to any unproductive behaviour before it escalates.

A participant dominates group interactions.

- Identify differences and suggest alternative options.
- Respond to disagreement before it escalates.
- Speak to the person in private.
- Encourage teamwork

Example

A participant withdraws from the group.

- Seek advice and suggestions on behalf of the group.
- Draw into the group activity with questions and explanations.
- Allocate appropriate group tasks that will not discourage someone who is shy.
- Encourage interaction.

Some individuals are not serious about the learning.

- Remind participants of their reason for doing the course.
- Steer participants back to the learning activity.

Now, while we are not responsible for the actions of others, we are responsible for managing a situation to ensure that there is fairness.

WHAT TO DO WITH A BAD ATTITUDE?

People with a negative attitude to the training may eventually internalise their feelings and move on with the session. However, some will externalise their feelings and express their negativity with inappropriate behaviour. Unless this is addressed and resolved, other participants' learning experience may be significantly hampered. While individuals do have the right to their internal feelings, they don't have the right to subject those around them to behaviour that is detrimental to their well-being.

So, it is up to us as trainer to address and correct these sorts of inappropriate behaviour:

- violent or offensive language
- bullying
- insensitivity
- non-compliance with safety instructions.

CORRECTING BEHAVIOUR

Let's look at an example.

Angela is delivering the first session of some training to a group of employees in an aged care facility. It is a 3 day program. Among the participants are some new workers, some who have been there for a while, and a lady whose performance is being managed. Let's call her Carli. Carli has to attend the course as part of her supervisor's response to some issues about the quality of her work- she already completed the course 2 years before. Angela doesn't know this.

During the session, Carli becomes increasingly vocal. She answers all of the questions in a matter of fact way. She rolls her eyes when other people have difficulty with some ideas. She sniggers when other people make mistakes. She sits further back from others, arms crossed, during group activities. Angela notices that other participants begin to withdraw, respond less frequently, and more often than not, first look to Carli before answering.

What is going on? Clearly, Carli's choice of behaviour is affecting the group, and the learning of others. Angela has a responsibility to do something.

But what should she do?

For starters, there is not a single correct way of handling any particular situation. But, what is often useful for many situations is to use some of the 8 steps for conflict resolution.

Step	Action
Step 1	
Identify and confront critical points, issues, concerns, or problems.	Act as soon as possible because the longer such behaviour is tolerated, the worse it may get.
Step 2	
Bring the parties together.	Bullies will often relent when are faced with their behaviour and their victim.
Step 3	
Mediate discussion.	Ensure this happens in private and away from the immediate learning environment.
Step 4	
Move parties forward.	Encourage both parties to see that the behaviour is non-productive. Suggest perhaps that they can agree to disagree. Leave the issues behind and move on with the learning.
Step 5	
Present solutions.	Find an option or options that are agreeable to all parties.
Step 6	
	You have a win/win situation if both/all parties feel that although

Ensure equitable outcomes. they may have made some concession, they accept the verdict.

Step 7
Provide face-saving options. Sometimes people can't back down in a conflict because they feel their pride will be damaged. Find an alternative which allows them to step back gracefully and leaves their self-esteem intact.

Step 8
Obtain agreement. Adults will not respond to the approach that they will suffer the consequences if they don't stop their bad behaviour.

Adults need to agree to a reason WHY bad behaviour must cease and then agree to cease the behaviour.

Even if we don't plan to get to Step 8, the final point from the above table is critical when we think about managing the behaviour of other adults:

adults need to agree to a reason WHY bad behaviour must cease and then agree to cease the behaviour

There is no point threatening an adult with some sort of punishment. Usually, doing so will simply escalate a situation.

WHAT WOULD I DO?

If I were Angela, then I would no doubt be feeling a little cranky that my session is being hijacked. I would recognise that Carli is an "old hand" in the group, and so has a fair bit of social power. She doesn't seem to think too much about what other people think of her, and she does seem to know lots of the content already.

It's a tricky one.

Presuming that the training was into its first session, I would use some subtle techniques to reduce Carli's impact.

- During whole class discussions, I would position myself between her and other participants so that other people would see me when they look to her before speaking up.
- I would use phrases like "okay, we have heard from Carli, how about" and continue with that to draw out responses from all participants.
- I would use phrases like "yes, I think that is what Carli was talking about earlier when she shared the example of" to show Carli that her experience is a valuable asset, and to recognise her social status.
- During a group task, I would aim to visit groups, and without being obvious position myself near Carli. Following something that she says to her group, I will ask something like "how do you know all this stuff" and create openings for her to tell me what is going on. I would then respond empathetically, and show her that I appreciate the difficulty of her situation.
- If unfair behaviour continues, then I would probably speak with her in private at the break, and suggest the possibility of setting her a separate task that she can work on rather than revisiting this material that she already knows.

- At this stage, if she declined this offer, but continued to be disruptive, then I would have to make it clear that her completing the course successfully would depend on her engaging appropriately. This gives her a reason to change her behaviour, which I would follow with lots of positive reinforcement for her (and everyone else) when it improves.
- The critical thing is to allow Carli to "save face" and to avoid pushing her in any way. What happens when we push?



We get nowhere, and no one else gets anywhere either. If in doubt, ask a high school teacher (or a parent!).

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 5 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

DELIVERY RECORD KEEPING

Correct records should be maintained throughout the training delivery. These records form the basis for review and evaluation.

Records may be stored in electronic or paper-based forms. Whatever the form, the filing system should enable staff to access information quickly and efficiently. Record-keeping procedures must be developed and implemented to assist staff to maintain an efficient and effective system.

Procedures help people to:

- keep current active records separate from old records
- store old records properly and decide when and how to dispose of them
- keep confidential records safe, with controlled access
- keep records safe from theft, damage and computer hacking.

Whenever the documents kept in files are accessed, this should be recorded in a register. With paper-based systems a registry clerk often controls the whole system. With an electronic system such as an Access database, each time a record is opened it can be recorded automatically and a history created.

Files detailing the learning activities resulting from a project must also be kept for some time after

completion of the project. They are removed from the current system and archived. Archived documents may be more difficult to access and may be stored away from the normal office system. Archived files may also be culled to remove duplicates.

Some records will have relationships. For example, the human resource records for staff will often be viewed in conjunction with staff members' learning activities and work performance records. The integration of files needs to be considered when establishing an efficient system.

When storing or archiving it is important to ensure that the location of each item is properly recorded, stored and returned to its correct place after use.

In the case of accredited training, these records are a mandatory requirement and must meet a national standard. Where training is not accredited, the organisation should have a formal record-keeping procedure for the trainer to follow.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL RECORDS

EXTERNAL RECORDS

External records are those subject to external audits. They may be required as confirmation of an individual's competency in a particular subject, knowledge or skill. For an accredited training program, these records must be maintained for around 30 years. These may differ according to the organisation, but can include:

- Competency record books (work evidence books)
- Records of RPL or RCC
- Training Plan and Schedule
- Registration forms
- Government registration forms
- Certificates (issued or provided)
- Training and Assessment Log
- Purchase orders
- Invoices
- Correspondence records
- Contact details

INTERNAL RECORDS

Internal records may provide a record of an individual's competency for the human resources division. Qualitative data may provide a basis for rewards in remuneration or status as well. Internal records also provide a measurement for management in the identification of gaps in training needs. Records of staff performance may reveal inadequate training in required procedures and this may account for underperformance. As with external records, these may differ according to the organisation but can include:

- Records of participation in training
- Training Plan
- Assessment records
- Training Needs Analysis (Individual)
- Objectives
- Cost of training

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 16 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

COACHING & MENTORING

We have all heard of Life-Coaches and Mentors, but perhaps not so many of us have ever considered that coaching and mentoring are approaches that we can adopt ourselves to facilitate individual learning is coaching. Actually, it is quite possible that most of the informal training that people experience in the workplace and home is obtained through this technique, even if we do not realise it.

COACHING

When coaching an individual learner, the following 5 Step Process can be used as a guide.

Step	Description
1. Determine the need	A continuous process that can be done through performance appraisal or by observing performance in the workplace; discuss the coaching process with the learner and agree on what the learning outcomes should be.
2. Explain	Detail what is required clearly and logically.
3. Demonstrate	Show the learner the desired skill or behaviour in individual coaching sessions and as an active role model during the course of your normal work duties if appropriate.
4. Provide practise opportunities	Observe the learner to start with, then allow them individual practise time during work hours and encourage practise in their own time.
5. Provide feedback	Use constructive comments, practical guidance and technique correction; make sure you praise the learner for desirable performance as well as mentioning areas for improvement.

The most effective coaching occurs when the coach:

- demonstrates interpersonal sensitivity, such as empathy and active listening is committed to developing others
- relates coaching activities directly to the achievement of team, personal and learning goals
- displays high levels of self-confidence and self-control
- engages in analytical thinking to determine underlying causes of learner behaviour.

MENTORING

Mentoring is when a skilled and experienced employee acts as a guide and counsellor to a less skilled and experienced colleague. A mentor is an encouraging and supportive role model, who listens and advises on workplace problems, training needs and ways of working. Mentoring is usually a medium-to long-term relationship.

Step 1: Define the goals

- analyse the attributes, knowledge and skills needed
- ask the mentoree about their aspirations within the organisation emphasise the importance of the mentor and the mentoree being committed to the mentoring process set overarching goals
- set specific goals to fill:
 1. knowledge gaps
 2. skills gaps
- encourage familiarity with the organisation.

Step 2: Create an action plan

- consult with key stakeholders to gain support for defined goals
- design an appropriate structure for the mentoring relationship
- determine how much formal and informal contact you will have from day to day
- establish ongoing support programs within your organisation for those involved in mentoring relationships
- build trust in the mentoree through use of effective interpersonal communication
- encourage the mentoree to learn from their mistakes
- decide how best to share your organisational knowledge and expertise with the mentoree
- acknowledge the mentoree's work
- plan to facilitate the learning rather than teach them what they should know (guide, listen, advise)
- plan to commit the time and effort necessary.

Step 3: Determine the resources required

- arrange training in mentoring for yourself if required
- organise formal training sessions for the mentoree to fill knowledge or skills gaps as necessary

- allocate time for mentoring activities
- secure the use of a private room for discussions, as appropriate.

Step 4: Measure the results and benefits

- keep a mentoring log to record all contact with the mentoree
- review the log and monitor progress regularly
- compare goals with achievements after a set period of time
- observe that desired behaviour is consistently demonstrated
- monitor measurable improvements in performance.

SETTING THE GROUND RULES

It is very easy for things to go wrong. And usually things go wrong because of different expectations. To give the coaching/mentoring relationship the best chance of success, we need to make sure that we begin with some very clear guidelines. This involves working out roles, responsibilities and requirements. Above all, it basically means making sure that everyone involved is on the same page.

Let's look at an example.

I used to be a Deputy Principal. After a while, I decided that I wanted to return to classroom teaching for a while. I was teamed up with a first-year teacher, who asked me to mentor her. I had quite a bit of experience with beginning teachers and supporting them in classroom management and lesson planning, so I agreed.

Two weeks into the term, she became rather cool towards me. She did not do the things that she needed to hold up her end of our arrangement. So, one day, I decided that I should speak with her about my concerns.

Well, she really put me in my place! To her mind, not only was I not doing what a mentor should be doing, but I was interfering with the way that she wanted to teach.

This was a rather uncomfortable situation for us both. We eventually worked our way through things, and both were struck by how different were our expectations of what the purpose of this relationship was meant to be.

For her, she wanted a shoulder to lean on when she needed it.

For me, I thought she wanted guidance on how to avoid needing a shoulder to lean on.

We took a step backwards, and agreed to three things:

- what it was that we wanted to achieve?
- how we were going to achieve it?
- how we were going to work out if it was achieved?

It was amazing how easy and effective was the relationship once we had sorted out these three things. In our enthusiasm to get started, we forgot to work out exactly why we were starting.

It is clear from this experience that roles, responsibilities and requirements should be discussed with the learner at the start. Some people call these things **boundaries** - I call them **expectations**.

For now, we can call them both.

BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS

- The roles and responsibilities of the trainer or facilitator
- The roles and responsibilities of the learner
- The extent and limits of the relationship
- The techniques and processes to be used
- Confidentiality
- The range of expertise of the trainer or facilitator
- The involvement of others
- Organisational expectations

* Reporting requirements

By agreeing on these things, the trainer and the learner establish the foundation for a positive relationship. If it seems too hard or awkward or uncomfortable to have the conversation about these things, then just imagine how hard or awkward or uncomfortable it will be to have the conversation about these things when the wheels have fallen off your coaching/mentoring wagon?

Of course, the key to any learning is relationships. Sometimes it is easier for us to deliver training to a whole group, and this is often because the relationships with individuals are somewhat diluted. In a one-on-one situation, however, everything is laid bare. This makes [communication and interpersonal skills](#) critical to meeting our client's needs.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 17 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

TECHNIQUES TO FACILITATE INDIVIDUAL LEARNING

If you ever participated in a sports team or did musical lessons or had tutoring, then you will have experienced some of the techniques that are commonly used to facilitate learning. But, just like most things with learning, it is common that the same few techniques get used over and over, while other techniques get ignored.

LEARNER NEEDS INFORM THE TECHNIQUE

We must choose a learning or facilitation technique or process that meets the needs of the learner and the organisation. To do this means that we must weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of the techniques and processes available to us.

Some common techniques are:

- a formal or informal process
- an ongoing or one-off process
- specific circumstance or an integrated feature of the overall learning process
- coaching techniques
- mentoring techniques
- tutoring techniques
- peer relationships
- matching experienced workers with learners

Where we use each of these will depend on the particular needs of our client and/or learner. The following table gives us some more techniques, with suggestions for when they might be appropriate.

Technique	Description	Use or Need
Case studies	The learner is presented a problem to work through. Usually presented in, but not limited to, print format. Often based on a real-life situation. Designed to incorporate problems and issues associated with the relevant subject matter.	Identifying differences and alternative options, practise and application of learning, problem-solving, decision-making, developing analytical skills, team work, process review, self-discovery.
Critical incidents	A particular type of case study that looks at critical happenings in a real-life situation.	Developing analytical skills, problem-solving, decision-making.
Demonstration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do it fast - the trainer demonstrates the task at normal speed. - Do it slow - the trainer slowly demonstrates the task step by step, providing explanations along the way. - Do it with them - the trainer and the learner do the task together, with help and correction as needed. 	Development of psychomotor and interpersonal skills, processes, procedures, workflow, practise and application of learning.

	- Let them go - the learner performs the task independently.	
Discussion	Two-way dialogue between learner and trainer. Trainer should be mindful to keep the discussion relevant.	Deepening understanding, focusing on a specific issue, identifying differences and alternative options, process review, venting frustration or anger, developing arguments.
Question and answer session	The person asking the questions can be the trainer or the learner. Sometimes questions can be prepared in advance so answers can be researched.	Can be used in all learning situations.
Readings	A selection of readings that provide important background information or required specific information.	Background or specific information, range of arguments, developing arguments, developing analytical skills.
Simulations	Similar to a case study that tries to simulate real-life. Often the simulation is carefully designed to provide specific learning points on which participants can reflect later. They can involve machinery or equipment or simply written instructions on roles and data on which to base decisions.	Change preparation, practise and application of learning, self-analysis, skills development.

PLAN TO EVALUATE

Whatever we decide to do, we must make sure before we begin that we can evaluate its effectiveness. This is something that we can discuss with the learner, and together decide how best we can assess whether the learner's goals have been achieved. This might involve using: a formal evaluation tool

- quantifiable measures such as:
 - increased productivity or
 - achievement of new skills
- level of attendance
- critical feedback from the learner and others.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 18 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

INDIVIDUALISED LEARNING PLANS

Really, if our focus on learning, then our focus needs to be on learning at an individual level. To help us in this process, we can develop an **Individual Learning Plan**.

Individual Learning Plans (ILP) are commonly required for:

- traineeships
- workplace planning
- distance learning
- off-the-job training
- flexible learning

Really, it doesn't matter what the context is, the ILP will include the same essential information:

- the learning goals to be achieved
- the contingency plans (for when things go wrong - and they will!)
- the logistics of the learning relationship, eg:
 - duration
 - frequency of meetings and the length of meetings
 - locations of meetings
 - the nature of face-to-face contacts (ie, what are they for?)
- the structure of the learning relationship, eg:
 - the activities that we will do
 - how progress will be monitored
 - the equipment and/or resources that are needed
- OHS considerations.

As with mentoring/coaching, it is essential that everyone agrees to all aspects of the ILP. Since these can be linked to people's performance in the workplace, it is a good idea to get everyone involved to sign and date them, and to give everyone a copy. Some workplaces also require the manager to sign them, and for a copy to be retained on the learner's staff file; different organisations will have different requirements, so once again we need to ask.

There are plenty of examples on the Internet, with as many formats as there are individuals using them.

Let's look at an example:

Let's say that Kim Smith has until recently been employed at ABC Business Solutions part-time while she was at school - in the areas of customer service and frontline tasks. While at school, she completed a *Certificate II in Business*, which has a number of Units of Competency related to customer service, time management and front-office duties. She finished school and has commenced a full-time apprenticeship with ABC. Her employer wants Kim to become qualified to be able to help their marketing and accounts teams. Kim is paraplegic and is bound to a wheelchair.

So, we have a look at the skills she already has, and the skills that she needs, then we look at which Units of Competency can fill the gaps. We work out a timeframe for the completion of these units,

and a schedule of times to monitor and assess Kim's progress. We also identify any particular types of support that Kim needs. Once we agree to it, we all sign off on it.

Apprentice Name: Kim Smith			
Facilitator Name: Belinda Stevens			
Delivery Pattern: Flexible workbased			
Training Commencement Date: 15/04/2005			
Duration: 12 Months			
Due Completion Date: 14/04/2006			
National Qualification Code : BSB30201			
Units Code	Unit Name:	Start Date:	RCC/RPL/DC
Core Units:			
BSBCM311A	Maintain Workplace Safety	15/04/07	
Elective Units:			
BSBCM302A	Organise Personal Work Priorities and Professional Development	15/04/07	
BSBCM305A	Organise Workplace Information	15/04/07	
BSBCM306A	Produce Business Documents	18/06/07	
BSBCM308A	Maintain Financial Records	18/02/07	
BSBCM310A	Deliver and Monitor a Service to Customers	18/06/07	
BSBADM302A	Produce Texts from Notes	22/10/07	
BSBADM304A	Design and Develop text Documents	18/06/07	
BSBADM305A	Create and Use Databases	22/10/07	
BSBADM306A	Create Electronic Presentations	18/06/07	
BSBADM307A	Organise Schedules	22/10/07	
BSBADM309A	Process Accounts Payable and Receivable	18/02/07	

Schedule of Visits

Day	Date	Facilitator	Monitoring or Assessment Required
Fri	16/4/2007	SM	Monitoring Visit
Fri	18/6/2007	SM	Assessment Visit
Fri	20/8/2007	SM	Monitoring Visit
Fri	22/10/2007	SM	Assessment Visit
Fri	10/12/2007	SM	Monitoring Visit
Fri	18/2/2007	SM	Assessment Visit
Fri	18/3/2007	SM	Monitoring Visit
Mon	11/4/2008	SM	Assessment Visit

Is Additional Support Required?

- wheelchair access
- activities to be performed sitting down
- OHS and welfare requirements

Indirect Workplace Support

The minimum standard of indirect support (time supporting training but not necessarily spent in the workplace) is 12 hours per trainee and 12 hours per apprentice per year of the apprenticeship. Examples of indirect support include:

- managing administration and reporting
- providing support facilities such as a 'help desk' for apprentices and trainees, trainers and assessors in the workplace
- customising of selected modules to suit on-the-job delivery.

Signatures

RTO Signature

Date:

Employer Signature

Date:

Trainee Signature

Date:

SCHEDULES AND TIMES MUST FIT THE LEARNER

It is all well and good for us to say that Kim can do her *Certificate III* in 12 months, and this may be appropriate for her needs. But, if I was to see this ILP then the first thing I would do is ask two questions:

1. where did the 12 month completion time for the whole Certificate come from?
2. where did the timings for the individual units come from?

You see, all too often we make decisions about how we are going to use time based on a calendar instead of a learner.

In any case, once we have agreed to a timeline, there is still some flexibility to accommodate to the needs of the workplace or learner (or ourselves!). There is no point working hard to stick to a schedule that will not allow the learner to learn what the workplace needs them to learn. Instead of supporting learning, we will be causing stress and damaging our relationships with the learner and employing organisation.

So, whether it be due to illness, holidays, some workplace inconvenience (like an unplanned blackout or system crash), or our learner's need for additional time, we can be flexible. Indeed, this is one of the best things about focusing on individual learning - we can really cater for their needs, on a day to day basis.

What better way can there be to support learning?

LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

As soon as we accept that learners are responsible for learning, then we must also accept that we have a leadership role.

As leaders, we make decisions about how best to engage learners in learning and in a way that best gets them to accept that the outcomes of the learning (good or bad) are their own.

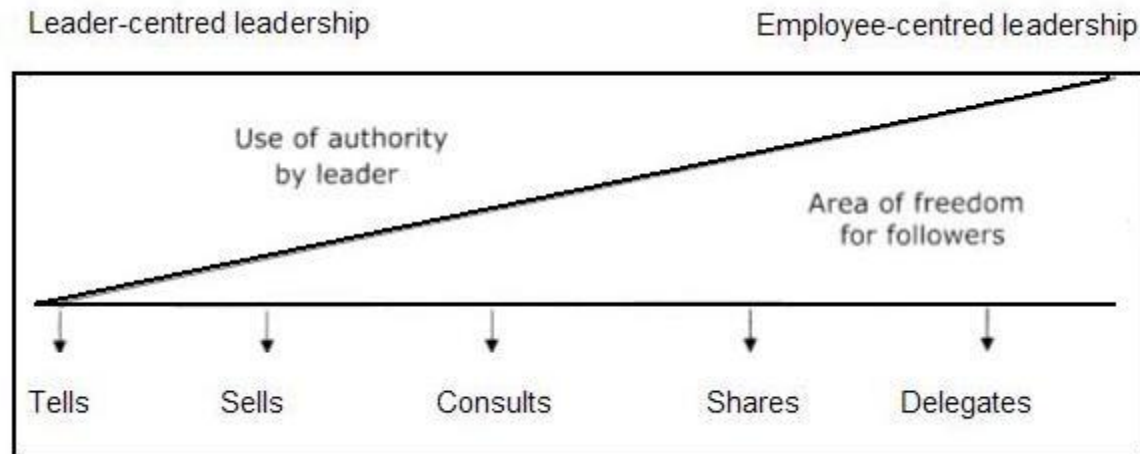
We are no doubt all aware that there are many different styles of teaching and training. Likewise, there are many different styles of leadership. As with training styles, the different leadership styles can be useful in different situations.

The following short clip introduces us to four stages of learner development, linking the best type of leadership for each. The presenter can be a bit hard to understand at times, but it is worth the effort to hear his very important message, which includes such gems as "without followers, there are no leaders".

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofP2d-0rrAE>

STYLES OF LEADERSHIP

There are a number of different ways of grouping styles of leadership. One that seems to have stood the test of time is the Leadership Continuum that was put forward almost 40 years ago. In this model, leadership is classified according to whether the leader allows the people to have a lot or a little say in what happens. You see, leaders have some sort of authority that the people they are leading do not. So, it is up to the leader to choose how much - if any - of that authority they are prepared to share; in this way, they can choose how much 'say' the learners can have in the learning.



Tells - Leader announces what is to be done

Sells - Leader explains what is to be done and why

Consults - Leader presents required end result, invites suggestions, makes final decisions

Shares - Leader outlines situation and decides jointly with group

Delegates - Leader permits employees to function within defined limits

Let's look at an example.

"Abacus Nursing employs about 2500 staff across two states. Each nursing home employs a manager, two team leaders and two teams of 8 nursing and other staff. Abacus has a new computer system that it needs all staff to be trained in. One of the homes is at Kickadogalong, where Jeff and Sue are the team leaders who have just been trained in the new system. They now need to train their staff.

Jeff has done all the right things in his 15 years with Abacus, and sees junior staff as a threat to his position. He makes sure that everyone knows that he is the boss, and makes sure that everyone knows how he wants things to be done. When it comes to training staff in the new system, he takes the handouts from the training that he just did and copies them for his own staff. He tells his staff exactly what he was told, and shows them exactly how he was shown, and his team is certain about what Jeff expects.

Sue started at the same time as Jeff, but has transferred across more Abacus sites. She sees junior

staff as an opportunity to grow professionally, and who have ideas that she has not herself thought about. When she returns from the training, she gets all of her staff together, and gives them login details for the new system and says that they have 3 weeks to work it out. In this example, Jeff basically does for the learners what Sue gets the learners to do for themselves. We could say that Jeff Tells, but Sue delegates."

So, which is better?

Well, neither. Or maybe both Perhaps we need to ask a better question.

Which is better for this group of learners given this particular context and purpose for learning?

LEADING FOR LEARNING

The title of this page really tells us which style we should adopt. If we are leading for learning, then we lead in whatever way is best for our learners. Now, that is not to say that we each need to be masters of all leadership styles - that is just not reasonable, just as it is not reasonable for a learner to be a master of all learning styles. What it does say is that we need to be aware of the different possibilities, and how we can use them to benefit our learners.

When we place the learner at the centre of our thinking, then we see that they are a valuable resource that is largely untapped in traditional training. This resource can be accessed by using the less authoritative styles of leadership, and can be managed by using the more authoritative styles. So, it is possible that the one learning context can involve us using a range of leadership styles.

Which style we choose to adopt commonly depends on a combination of:

- the style of the trainer or facilitator and their range of leadership skills
- how the trainer or facilitator and the learning situation are perceived by the learners
- how the learners perceive themselves
- the approach or philosophy the learner takes to the learning situation
- the context within which the learning or facilitation takes place.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 19 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

PROBLEM SOLVING FOR LEARNING

Because our work involves people, there will always be things that go wrong. How we deal with these will have an incredible effect on the outcome of the training, so we need to be familiar with some effective **problem solving** skills.

The first thing we need to do is to make sure that we act on cues that we observe, and investigate a perceived problem in an appropriate way.

APPROPRIATE WAYS OF RESPONDING

We have probably all heard the expression, *It's not what you say, it's how you say it*.

Similarly once we decide to respond to something, the way we respond can be just as significant as the issue that we are responding to.

This means that we need to make sure that things are discussed openly and honestly. We hear that a lot: open and honestly. But what does it mean for a trainer?

Well, for starters it means that we are not just open about our desire to make things right for the learner, it means that we are very clear about how we are going to do that. We tell the learner about the steps that we are going to follow. Of course, to do this means that we have to have a good idea of what steps to follow, which is why it is a good idea for us to be familiar with structured problem solving approaches.

There are many of these, but one that is particularly useful in training is Dwyer's RADAR approach:

- **R**esult the other person identifies the what and why of the problem or situation
- **A**sk for more details
- **D**evelop ideas
- **A**gree on the actions to be taken
- **R**eview the main points and decide how to follow up.

Once we have discussed the problem with the participant, and if it cannot be resolved then referral to appropriate personnel may be required. The organisation may have procedures in place for this.

The observation and monitoring still needs to be continued throughout the duration of the learning, and ongoing open discussion between us and the participant should be encouraged.

One way to keep on top of any issues as they arise is to have regular contact with your learners. This can be time consuming, but I find it is an excellent investment in the learning relationship which provides benefits that are certainly worth the time involved. Scheduling regular meetings with the individual learners we may be training or supporting is a useful way to:

- monitor the effectiveness of your learning or facilitation relationship
- identify potential problems before they escalate into serious issues.

In order to be open, at the beginning of our facilitation relationship with an individual learner, we should discuss and agree upon:

- how often the regular meetings should occur
- a meeting location
- a meeting time.

ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

In our role as a trainer or facilitator we must also at all times behave ethically, particularly when dealing with what could be sensitive issues or problems being experienced by a learner.

Some of the more common ethical behaviours are shown below:

- trust
- integrity
- privacy and confidentiality of the session
- following organisational policies
- knowing your own limitations
- honesty
- fairness to others
- having a range of intervention referrals ready when needed

Is there anything surprising about this list? Probably not. What it really means is that we should be nice and try to get along with everyone while doing our job as best we can.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 20 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

GETTING ORGANISED

If you fail to plan, you plan to fail.

I don't know who it was who first told me that, but it has rung true for the twenty odd years that I have been involved in education and training. It doesn't matter if it is a 3 year course for professionals, or a 20 minute crash course in how to use a photocopier; if we don't know what we are going to get the learner to do, then we do not know what is going to happen. We cannot even begin to hope that they will learn what we intend, nor that we will be able to adequately assess that learning.

There are many reasons why we should prepare, which are listed below. But, for me at least, it

comes down to respect: if I don't prepare then I have little respect for the people who are entrusting me to provide them with learning opportunities; if I don't prepare, then I have little respect for my own work and for myself.

Commonly, trainers will experience some or all of the following when they spend too little time and effort on preparations:

- non-achievement of learning goals
- wasting your own and the learner's time
- appearing unprofessional and not competent
- affecting negatively the learner's motivation to learn.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Plan for each session or meeting.
2. Be organised for each session or meeting.
3. Reflect on outcomes of previous sessions or meetings.
4. Be punctual.
5. Identify where we are at the start.
6. Appear relaxed and confident.
7. Enable learners to identify their perspective.
8. Provide a relaxing, non-threatening environment.

Issues To Consider	Yes	No	Unsure
1. Can you justify your selection of learning resources?			
2. Are the learning resources relevant to the content?			
3. Are your learning resources inclusive?			
4. Are the learning resources suited for delivery to the learner?			
5. Are the learning resources clear and accurate?			
6. Are the learning resources suited to the venue?			
7. Have you observed copyright laws?			
8. Have you allowed time for your delivery?			
9. Have you allowed time for the learning activities?			
10. Have you checked the equipment?			
11. Is the venue appropriate for the learner and you, the trainer?			

ORGANISING RESOURCES

No doubt most of us have arrived early for a training session or a meeting, only to sit while a small group of people busy themselves trying to get the laptop to project to the screen, or to find an extension cord, or to work out which room is available, or to

There are very few of these types of events that cannot be avoided. I would argue that it is our responsibility to ensure that learners are not waiting. To help us get organised, we can use a Resources & Facilities checklist, such as the following example.

Item	Checked	Comment
Room Booking (if required)		
Documents printed/available		
PowerPoint slides ready		
Desks/chairs/workstations ready		
Software installed		
Network names set up		
Setup of data projector and video checked		
Large texts screen setup		

For me, I find it worthwhile to have this next to my session plan so that I can add things as I go along. I find this helps me to not miss anything.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 21 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

BEGINNING THE END

When we should end a learning relationship, especially in a one-on-one situation, is something that we should have organised at the beginning of our planning. This makes sure that the trainer and learner both know what they are progressing towards, and will identify the signals that the learning is coming to a close.

This creates opportunities for the trainer and learner to begin reflecting on the learning, and equipping the learner for independent activity once the learning ends. This is very important to avoid undue dependence of the learner on the trainer. Rather than feeling like they have been dumped, the learner can be led to expect to move toward new positive activities.

CLOSURE STRATEGIES

A variety of tools and signals can be used to determine a learner's readiness for closure, depending on the type of training or learning program being undertaken.

These may include:

- self-assessment taken by the learner
- a measure of improvement in a particular area
- readiness for formal assessment
- level of independence in learning
- readiness to maintain learning through other
- means or modes
- severe or fixed blockages in the relationship
- agreed time period or course duration is over.

Carry out the closure smoothly by:

- using appropriate interpersonal and communication skills
- seeking feedback from the learner about the outcomes achieved
- seeking feedback from the learner and the value of the learning to them
- determining the learner's readiness for closure of the individual learning and facilitation relationship
- referring them to:
 - another agency
 - another learning program.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 22 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

EVALUATE WORK PRACTICES AND ROUTINES

If we remember that Vocational Education & Training is essentially about training for work, then we will always bear in mind that the work we do is affected by the things that happen at work and when they happen.

Let's look at an example.

I deliver training for an organisation. This happens fairly regularly. It has happened so often that I just presume that things are the same next time as they were last time. However, the last time I went, the trainees got lost. This is because the rooms had been reallocated since I was last there and the room where I had expected to be was no longer suitable for the purpose that I needed it for. The procedure for booking the room had also changed, with the person that I had originally booked the room with being retrenched; all bookings are undertaken by staff themselves using a central computer system (that I do not have access to). Not only that, but the way in which employee's working hours were calculated meant that the start, finish, morning tea and lunch times were also changed.

So, my training began at the wrong time and went for too long, requiring overtime payments, meaning that the cost was higher than they had budgeted for. My training took place in a room that was not suitable for all of the tasks that I required, since it did not have the resources that I had presumed would be available.

What did I learn from this situation?

I learned that routines and practices are very important, and that these things change. As a starting point, this means that it is a good idea to be aware of some of the common work practices and routines:

- work schedules
- work timelines
- work performance expectations
- work organisation/organisational change
- work models or multiskilling
- work structures and systems
- operational and organisational guidelines
- OHS guidelines, systems and safeguards
- work demarcations and industrial relations concerns
- English language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) requirements.

Chances are that any training/assessing that we do will affect or be affected by some of these things. Since we do not work in isolation, it is essential that we include others in our own planning. Where we identify a need for change to any of these things, then we must make sure that we have completed all the necessary investigations, collaborations and research before we implement a change. Usually, this will include the following 6 steps:

1. identifying the objective(s) of the learning pathway
2. collaborating with all affected personnel
3. defining and documenting clearly the tasks or roles that will be included in the learning pathway
4. analysing the identified tasks and roles to ensure they provide the most efficient means to achieve the required results
5. identifying any changes that are required to the tasks and roles
6. implementing the changes to the tasks and role.

Implementation will be successful only when we are confident that all these stages have been adequately completed.

WHO TO INVOLVE?

It is not enough to know what changes are required. We also have to know who to speak to about them, and who can ultimately give us approval to make the changes. Commonly, these people will be:

- ✓ workplace supervisor or frontline manager training, human resources or industrial relations managers
- ✓ union representatives or delegates
- ✓ workers whose own jobs may be affected by the proposed changes.

OHS ISSUES

If we have been invited by our own or another organisation to deliver some training or assessment, then we can expect that any changes or arrangements will be open to negotiation. This is a good thing, because it means that we get to work with the organisation to determine the most suitable approach for their needs. However, what it can also mean is that if we cannot reach agreement, then we may have to cancel or postpone our planned training.

Some of the common matter that negotiations stumble over include industrial relations and OHS issues. Both of these are highly sensitive areas. This means that when we are planning to implement a change that affects industrial relations and OHS issues, representatives from affected areas must be involved from the outset.

Their aims, agenda and preferred outcomes will be distinctly different. They can, however, be broadly grouped into one of three groups.

1. Those representing the company.
2. Those representing the workers.
3. Those directly implementing the change.

Each group will need to approve the type of change and method of implementation.

Some of the issues they may have a concern for include:

- remuneration for changes to work patterns
- changes to working hours
- changes to job descriptions
- changes to the complexity of tasks performed
- workplace safety.

OHS implications may include:

- OHS legal obligations
- workplace OHS policies and procedures
- ensuring work practices, routines and proposed changes do not pose a risk to the learner and others.

Industrial relations implications may include:

- work demarcations created through changes to work practices
- ensuring compliance with an award or enterprise bargaining agreement
- licensing requirements.

LOOKING AT OHS ISSUES

Some workplace learning pathways will affect a workplace's layout, contents and access. For example, if an organisation introduces new equipment, the organisation must monitor any changes to work practices and workplace safety and ensure OHS requirements are not breached.

For further details about the requirements for employers, refer to WorkCover or SafeWork Australia.

All managers have a responsibility to monitor OHS requirements with regard to:

- OHS legislation in their State
- OHS management systems
- managing OHS in the workplace
- implementing OHS risk management in the workplace
- reviewing OHS management systems
- workplace injury management and workers compensation.

We must remember that Section 26 of the Act says ALL levels of management, including supervisors, must take responsibility to ensure a safe working environment for their staff and have in place a system to report and record injury.

This includes US.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL TRAINING

Just because training might be about the workplace does not mean that it has to happen entirely at work. Likewise, just because it is training, doesn't mean that it has to happen entirely in a room with fluorescent lights, desks, chairs and a data projector that never seems to work properly.

External learning activities can include:

- external courses
- off-the-job components of apprenticeship/traineeship
- equipment supplier training
- online learning
- conferences, seminars or workshops.

One or more of these components can be offered as part of a sequence of training activities, or may be a mandatory requirement to complete a course of study.

In this sort of situation, as trainers we need to make sure that we really understand what is needed for each group of learners, even if it is essentially the same material being delivered to the groups.

Think about it.

How many times have you known of someone who headed off to a training session, only for them to not be able to tell you what it was about or what it was for when they return?

In a corporate environment it is most effective if the external component of the training is directly

relevant to the specific activities of the organisation. If possible, the training should contain examples and activities specific to that industry. This sort of [contextualisation](#) makes the training more immediately relevant to the learners and their organisation.

Participants should see the external component as a seamless transition between external and internal learning activities, and be reassured that the organisation has ownership or significant input to the course.

Consideration and analysis of the external component must be undertaken to ensure it offers the best possible course and covers the most appropriate topics. Participants will quickly become less motivated if they are asked to attend learning that does not contribute to the achievement of their goals.

INTEGRATION OF EXTERNAL AND WORK-BASED LEARNING

An example of this type of integration is the training offered by most apprenticeship and trainee schemes. An apprentice hairdresser must work part-time in a salon and attend TAFE part-time for up to three years in order to be fully qualified.

The training given on the job needs to be integrated with the studies at TAFE, so that the apprentices can practise at work the skills they are studying at the time at TAFE.

The course of study at TAFE also needs to be integrated with work-based practice, so that practical assessments can be conducted at the workplace rather than at TAFE.

However, just because it is most common in apprenticeship/traineeship situations does not make it any less relevant or worthwhile in other situations.

Let's look at an example.

I was recently asked to deliver this TAA qualification to a new employee of another RTO. Let's call him Jack. Jack needs to be able to deliver training on his own within 8 weeks. The RTO wanted to know their options. I gave it some thought and offered three options:

Option 1. *fully-independent online learning, accessing all resources through our web-based resources, including my assistance. Jack could start straight away. Least expensive.*

Option 2. *blended delivery, involving a combination of face-to-face work-based training, with some independent work-based tasks and some online components. The curriculum and assessment would be negotiated to reflect the organisational context and skills that they require Jack to learn. Jack could start in a week, giving me time to plan the course in detail. Mid-ranking expense.*

Option 3. *fully face to face, involving 14 days of training. Jack could do this in August. Most expensive.*

Which option did they choose?

Interestingly, they didn't choose any of these options. The response I got was "You recommend what is best for us and we will do that."

I recommended Option 2. Based on my knowledge of the organisation and its employees, I concluded that training would be most effective if it was highly tailored to their particular needs, and if it was delivered within the work environment.

STRATEGIES TO BETTER INTEGRATE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL LEARNING

When an organisation enters into an agreement to use an external training provider to fulfil part or all of a learning pathway, a communication process must be established.

This will ensure that the following issues are clearly delineated as either the responsibility of the external provider or the organisation:

- enrolment
- assignments
- deadlines
- feedback and help
- resources and materials

Representatives from both parties then need to analyse the learning pathway to determine the appropriate sequence of topics and delivery methods. For the above example, this meant that I had to map out a structure for the training based on the organisation's own [routines and practices](#); by doing this I was able to avoid clashes with work tasks, and was able to harness the potential for other work tasks to be included as part of the training context.

If the organisation undertakes the training, then a lot of these issues will already be addressed and an appropriate structure will be in place. However, communication is still important and larger organisations will usually appoint a liaison officer to deal with the relevant external provider on behalf of their trainees or apprentices.

ESTABLISH A COMMUNICATION PROCESS WITH THE EXTERNAL TRAINING PROVIDER

In the above examples, we were looking at us having a relationship with an organisation that we were not part of. In that situation, it was ourselves that were external. Let's look at what happens if we are managing the relationship with a provider of training outside of our own organisation.

If an organisation has an ongoing relationship with a training provider then a structure is necessary to ensure the relationship is efficient and effective.

Usually the organisation will select a representative to liaise with the representative from the RTO or provider, and together they will work closely to determine issues including:

- content of the learning pathway

- sequence of the units of study
- which units could be delivered internally
- which units have to be delivered externally, or by an external provider
- contractual arrangements RPL
- a communication process for participants - for example, use of email, fax or Internet assessment.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 23 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

USING CRITERIA TO EVALUATE WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMS

When we have an idea about the type of learning pathway that is required, then we need to take a step back and do some thinking. What we need to think about first is not the idea that we had for delivery. Instead, we need to think about what could be the sorts of things that our training needs to be in order for it to do what it is meant to do. These things are called criteria, and we can use them to work out if a pathway would be a good one.

Let's look at an example.

If the learning pathway is to train staff to use a new IT system, appropriate criteria to evaluate the pathway would include:

- *breadth and depth of information covered*
- *inclusion of a range of routine and non-routine activities*
- *appropriate sequencing of activities*
- *sufficient learning and practise time*
- *capacity to address learning of knowledge within the tasks or activities*
- *identified relationship or synthesis within learning provided by other sources.*

The way that we can use these criteria to evaluate our proposed pathway is to develop a checklist. The one below could be used for the above IT example.

Criteria	Yes	No
Does the pathway cover all the required tasks and processes?		
Does the pathway allow sufficient time for practise?		

Does the pathway provide sufficient learning time and background knowledge?

Are the learning modules in the correct sequence?

Are external providers fully briefed re requirements?

Have logistical constraints been addressed?

Is the timeframe realistic?

Is assessment required - if so, is the method appropriate?
--

OBTAIN AGREEMENT TO IMPLEMENT THE WORK-BASED LEARNING PATHWAY

An organisation will usually select representatives from a variety of areas within the business to create a team to review and agree our proposed implementation. The representatives may include:

- a manager who will be expected to encourage his or her staff to use the pathway
- a senior management representative who is looking towards the organisation's goals and direction
- a member of the project team who will be looking at the agreement to move the project to the next phase
- a training representative - who will begin the implementation
- users of the pathway.

If the learning pathway involves substantial input from an external provider, this provider might also be represented. If the learning pathway affects OHS or industrial relations issues, appropriate representatives from these areas would also be required. Each representative would have the opportunity to review the pathway, make any comments and suggestions, then sign-off the pathway.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 24 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE, PROCESSES INVOLVED IN WORKPLACE LEARNING

If we explain the purpose for the learning initiative, it is easier for participants to understand why changes are happening and what part they will play in the changes.

If we can communicate what processes the learning will involve, participants will be able to prepare for and anticipate learning tasks and understand how they fit into the learning framework.

Many different methods can deliver this information. Common ways to communicate the purpose and process of workplace learning are shown on the next page.

Method	Use
A company- wide briefing session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - can win general acceptance for and understanding of a training initiative - communicates the big picture - ensures most staff have some knowledge of the purpose and processes
A video for all staff to watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provides an opportunity for more detailed explanation of training and real examples of how it works - communicates message best to visual - participants can be accessed at any time
Updates for regular team meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - involves and informs key staff - provides opportunities to review and improve training
A newsletter specifically detailing events for the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - opportunity to sell the training initiative - can consolidate both the big picture and the detailed information - handy reference for details
Notices affixed to staff notice boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - remind staff of key details - advertise key details
Regular emails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - update staff - remind staff - involve staff - provide opportunity for feedback - reach large numbers

For larger implementations a combination of several of these methods may be required.

Staff communication must be regular and consistent. Too many implementations start off with a wealth of information and fanfare, but nothing is heard again until implementation or when damage control becomes necessary.

Let's look at an example

A business consultancy firm is responsible for the implementation of a major change process within a bank. Part of the team is dedicated to the communication process and devises the following communication schedule for the implementation of the first phase of the change program.

Topic	Method
Create and announce the name of the project	Feature in staff newsletter Email to all staff
Announce the names of the stakeholders and project team	Feature in staff newsletter Email to all staff
Formulate and announce project objectives and the phases of implementation	Briefings for all staff and announce the launch of the dedicated project newsletter
Announce project milestones and deadlines	Newsletter
Invite nominations for workplace representatives on project team	Newsletter and email
Detail the contents of Phase One and all the components of the pathway	Newsletter then briefings for affected business units. Training outline sent by email to all participants
First implementation	Newsletter, staff newsletter emails and bulletins

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 25 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

SYNCHRONISE PROCESSES AND SUPPORT AT WORK

SEQUENCE PROCESSES TO REFLECT THE AGREED WORKPLACE LEARNING PATHWAY

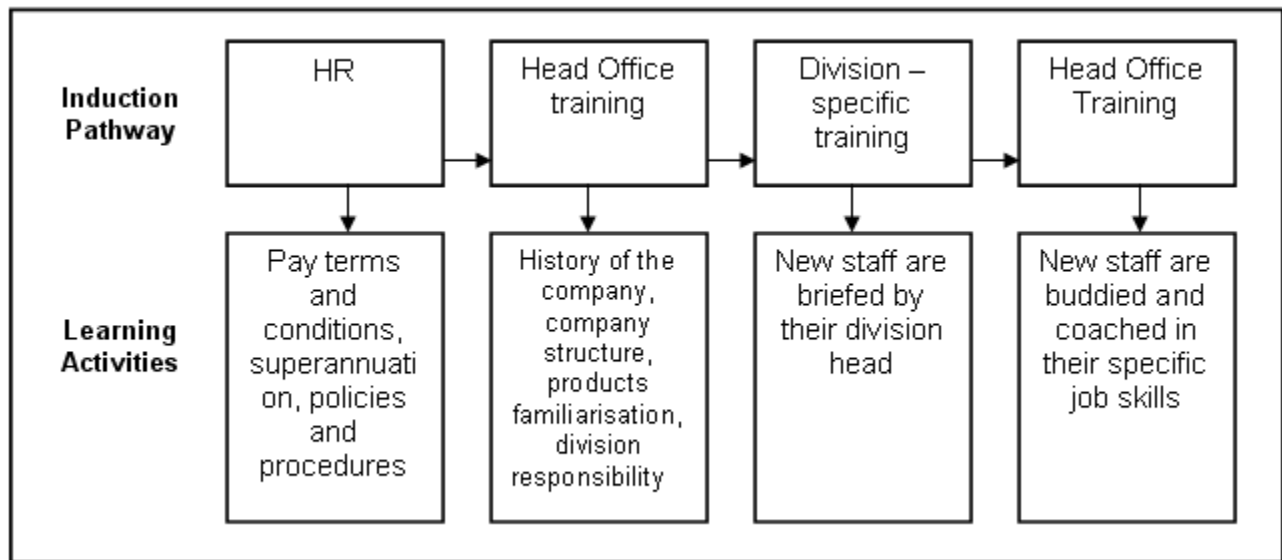
You should plan a logical progression of tasks and synchronise this to the overall learning pathway. It would not be logical, for example, to ask your participants to attend a course covering study skills at the end of the learning pathway.

Similarly, if your learning pathway details the progression of skills from knowledge to practice to competence, your participants should not attend skills training before the knowledge training.

SYNCHRONISATION AT WORK

A large tobacco company wants to ensure that their entire new staff receives induction training in an appropriate order and that no new staff miss out on any component of the training.

The model below identifies the pathway and the learning modules that relate to each stage of the pathway.



IMPLEMENT AGREED ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT THE LEARNING PATHWAY

The method of support will determine what processes you will use. If the support method involves the use of other staff members to support participants, for example, then briefing sessions and nominations may be required.

If the support strategy entails allowing participants sufficient time to practise new skills, then additional casual staff may need to be employed.

When a strategy is proposed, you must consider support methods.

MANAGE THE IMPACT OF THE LEARNING PATHWAY ON OTHER PERSONNEL

Workplace learning will affect many staff, by things such as:

- colleagues absent to attend learning sessions
- noise and distraction if it is conducted at the work site disruption to the work process changes to the work processes and tasks
- possible drops in productivity

- changes to morale
- stress
- increased work demands.

An effective organisation will create strategies to counter these impacts. Figure 21 addresses each of the impacts listed above and offers strategies to deal with them.

TIME OUT

When faced with the above issues, a large manufacturer decided that the most efficient option for implementing a learning pathway to introduce new technology to the production line was to shut down production for two weeks. The workplace learning pathway was then implemented and staff were allowed practice time before production resumed.

Impact	Strategies
Colleagues absent to attend learning sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide casual staff/second staff - closely monitor leave applications for this period
Noise and distraction if training is conducted at the work site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consider an alternative location - move personnel directly adjacent to the training site
Disruption to the work process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - allow staff extra time to complete routine tasks - minimise confusion by providing written and diagrammatic documentation
Changes to the work processes and tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - allow staff extra time to complete routine tasks - minimise confusion by providing written and diagrammatic documentation - provide training in new processes and tasks - involve staff from the outset of the project - provide regular communications to staff about upcoming changes
Possible drop in productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - advise management that this may occur adjust targets
Changes to morale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increase communications to staff - listen to staff concerns - be positive and adopt a selling attitude to the implementation
Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - allow staff time to absorb changes and consult with other staff
Increased work demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consider strategies to reduce workload - pay overtime

- second staff to assist
- recruit casual staff

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 6 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT WORKPLACE LEARNING

You will find many strategies to support effective workplace learning. These might include the use of buddies, or the introduction of a learning laboratory where participants can practice their new skills in a realistic environment. Your strategies will depend on your constraints, time and money.

However, most organisations who have implemented strategies to support learning have reaped significant benefits in terms of reducing the time spent in achieving the required level of competence, maintaining good staff morale and maintaining productivity.

You will need to consider the impact the learning activity will have on staff and the workplace. Identify strategies that will affect the impact of the learning. These strategies may include:

- appropriate time to observe and talk to others
- use of co-workers to model or demonstrate tasks and activities
- use of internal experts, mentors or coaches sufficient time to practise new tasks and skills
- job rotation
- improved communication.

The type of workplace learning will determine which of the above strategies you should use, and when it should be used.

One approach that is gaining popularity for workplace learning is the **Learning Broker**.

LEARNING BROKER

Chappel (2000, p73) states ...

this new emphasis on learning at work has seen a shift from conceptualising vocational programs as sets of predetermined and standardised contents suitable for everyone working in a particular occupation. To one which recognises the specific nature of the relationship between the worker-learner, the specific worksite and the particular needs and requirements of employers. This promotes, albeit uneasily a new coalition of interest that include those of learners, VET providers and employers. This in turn suggests a third role for the VET professional - the learning broker.

In our role as a workplace trainer or assessor we will not only work with the learner we will also work with stakeholders inside and outside the organisation.

Let's look at an example.

A large call centre was having problems with new staff that had completed their induction and product training but were unable to handle the rate of calls and the variety of questions.

It was decided that new staff needed to experience real calls in a safe environment with access to trainers and coaches to help them if they got stuck.

A training environment was established that could take live calls. Training staff delivered on-going coaching in the use of the system and call handling until individuals were ready to go solo. An outside consultant was engaged to deliver the team leadership units of competence.

The strategy of supporting learning following completion of induction and product training led to more confident staff, less distraction for experienced staff, and less customer complaints due to inaccurate answers and administrative problems. It also led to satisfied managers within the organisation.

As the skills required by workers continue to change, we find that we are more frequently being called on as trainer-broker for the purpose of delivering **mandatory** aspects of workplace training.

PROVIDING MANDATORY TRAINING

Mandatory and contractual training requirements are usually industry-specific and may include specific skills such as:

- insurance knowledge
- legal skills development and maintenance
- practical skills training such as production machinery
- safety training skills for manufacturing
- safety skills training for airline staff.

In each of the above industries, an ongoing requirement for skills and knowledge training is governed by an external body, such as WorkCover, the Insurance Institute or the Law Society.

It is the responsibility of the organisation to have its staff trained to appropriate levels and on a continuing basis.

An example of the ongoing nature of mandatory training is the requirement for all staff to receive and participate in regular fire drills. How this can happen in such a way that staff actually learn what is required can be something that we - as qualified trainers - can be asked to help with.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 26 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

DETERMINE READINESS & MONITOR PROGRESS

DETERMINE PARTICIPANTS' READINESS

The readiness of participants to participate in learning and take on new tasks and responsibilities, and the extent of their participation, all impact on the success of a workplace learning implementation.

The better informed an organisation is about its participants' progress, the better equipped they will be to tailor their learning activities to the needs and readiness of the participants. Some learning pathways need extensive monitoring to ensure participants are coping with the materials and will be ready to progress to the next stage, while some will need only minimal monitoring to identify possible problems and non-achievers.

You can use many different strategies to monitor participants before, during and after their learning, as illustrated here:

When?	How?
Before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - observation by managers, colleagues or coaches - discussion during regular team meetings - one-to-one discussions with trainer, coach or manager - during performance reviews - company-wide morale or climate survey.
During	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - discussions within the group - one-to-one discussions with the trainer or coach - observation by the trainer or coach - review exercises and activities.
After	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - observation by managers, colleagues or coaches - assessment following training - discussion during regular team meetings - one-to-one discussions with trainer, coach or manager - during performance reviews - opportunities given to the participant to demonstrate new skills and responsibilities.

Use a variety of these methods to effectively monitor your participants' progress and readiness.

JUDGING WHEN PARTICIPANTS ARE READY

A financial institution used the following methods to monitor whether its staff was ready to take on new tasks and responsibilities during a leadership development program. Managers of each division were asked to nominate up to three staff members who showed management potential.

DURING

During the learning pathway, which took 12 months to complete, participants were monitored using the following methods. The trainer observed participants to determine:

- problem-solving skills
- team skills
- lateral thinking
- time-management skills
- presentation skills
- confidence
- motivation
- commitment.

Other methods used to monitor participants included:

- assessment of tasks and learning at each stage of completion
- assessment by senior management to determine quality of work and professional standards
- discussions with the group's appointed mentor discussions with the trainer or coach.

AFTER

Once participants had successfully graduated, they continued to perform their current role, adding tasks of a higher level or complexity only when they were ready to do so. Their success in performing these tasks was monitored by their manager through:

- observation
- discussion.

Eventually, they should have experienced most of the tasks performed by a manager, and were considered ready to apply for a managerial role. This readiness is usually determined by:

- discussions during formal review
- recommendations from their manager or mentor or trainer.

OBSERVE WORK PERFORMANCES AND SUGGEST ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES WHERE NEEDED

Often the success or failure of a workplace learning initiative cannot be fully assessed until it is implemented in the workplace and staff is left to utilise the new skills, knowledge or attitudes. It is at this point that the organisation can assess what went well, what needs improvement and what needs to be added or taken away.

The learning pathway will have a set of objectives or a purpose statement that requires the learner to attain:

- new skills
- new knowledge
- new attitudes
- a combination of all three.

Once the participant has completed the learning pathway, the participant may be assessed as competent to perform the new skills or to apply the new knowledge or attitudes.

It is common, however, for participants to be assessed in the training room environment as competent, but still need significant time and assistance to transfer the learning to the workplace. If assessment is carried out after allowing sufficient time for practice and skill development, they may then be judged as competent.

If managers and training staff observe the performance of the participants in the workplace, they will soon discover if there is a pattern or similarity to the problems they encounter.

This is why it is important to structure and organise ongoing monitoring. Feedback needs to be compiled so that the learning pathway can be amended to address any problems that are common to a significant number of participants, or address an area of learning that may have been omitted from the learning pathway.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 27 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

DEVELOP TECHNIQUES TO DRAW OUT LEVELS OF UNDERSTANDING AND TRANSFERABILITY

Part of the development of an effective learning pathway includes the development of techniques to ensure that the learning in the training environment will be retained and applied to a broad set of scenarios in the workplace.

This is very important if the learning is to be used continually and not just left in the classroom.

It is also important to build strategies into the learning methods to check that the knowledge gained can be applied to the individual participant's particular role.

Techniques to draw out levels of understanding and transferability include:

- the use of real-life case studies and examples specific to the organisation, division and specific job roles
- the use of questioning and discussion to draw out how participants can use a particular skill or knowledge in their individual roles
- the use of experienced coaches in the workplace to assist with the transfer of learning to the individual's role
- the use of a learning laboratory, or a supported real environment that allows participants to apply their new skills with the support of trainers or coaches
- a follow-up assessment some time after the learning has been completed to ensure knowledge and skills have been retained and transferred.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 28 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

REVIEWING WORK BASED LEARNING

There are many ways to collect feedback. For work-based learning, using a structured process to work out the benefits of the training can be very useful.

This sort of evaluation can be a structured process, similar to that used with the participant, and follow a set of predetermined questions conducted in a brainstorming setting.

Or, it could be a written questionnaire sent to stakeholders requesting their feedback on the success of the implementation and how well it addressed the identified objectives.

Most commonly, this evaluation will occur at a meeting of the stakeholders and will be conducted as an informal discussion centred on the wrap-up of the implementation. This meeting is usually documented, with the key points and recommendations used to create a feedback report distributed throughout the organisation. This report will facilitate the process for further refining the program.

Let's look at some examples

Example 1.

A mid-sized construction company has identified that training is needed to ensure that all workers and contractors comply with safety standards, and that work is completed in an efficient way.

They work out the pre-training levels for various indicators, and then revisit these when the training is complete. Now, the true effect of our training on some of these sorts of indicators will not be seen for some time after our training has concluded. For this reason, it is important that we have input into these sorts of measures, just like we do to develop criteria that we use to evaluate training proposals.

Goal (Indicators)	Pre-Training Evaluation Level	Post-Training Evaluation Level
1. Reduction in the number of work authorities prepared and issued.	Currently 100% of all contractor jobs	
2. Decreased incidence of contractor job enquiries being referred to the maintenance manager to resolve.	Currently > 4 enquiries per contractor per day.	
3. Decreased incidence of non-conformances results (NCR) from contractors not fulfilling own responsibilities.	Currently 12% of all NCR's	
4. Decreased incident of visitors/contractors not complying with access requirements on site.	Currently > 2 incidents per contractor per job.	
5. Decreased Lost Time Injury frequency rates (LTIFR) for contractors.	Currently > 4 major incidents per day	
	Currently LTIFR > 25	

Example 2.

A learning pathway is implemented at a preschool to provide compatibility and practical experiences for staff studying Certificate IV in Child Care. The pathway is broad and covers learning activities for staff from the first day at work through to the end of the first year.

At the end of the first year, staff members meet to discuss the success of the pathway and provide feedback to improve and refine it.

The meeting is structured around the original objectives, which are written on a whiteboard. Each staff member is encouraged to provide comments and suggestions on ways the pathway helped them complete the study and learn the necessary practical skills. Topics for TAFE studies are then displayed on the whiteboard next to the pathway and staff members discuss how their practical experiences at work melded with their TAFE studies, noting whether the TAFE study was conducted at appropriate times.

The staff members' comments and suggestions are recorded and used to update and refine the pathway for the coming year.

INTEGRATE WORK BASED LEARNING AND EXTERNAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

You can assess how effectively you have integrated internal and external learning activities by [seeking feedback](#) from your participants, the organisation and stakeholders. Ask:

- Did the integration of the two activities appear seamless to the participants?
- Did the participants consider the external component appropriate?
- Did the external learning contribute to the achievement of the agreed objectives of the pathway?
- Were the external components synchronised to the pathway?

Statistics will also provide evidence of effective integration. For example, if 99% of participants successfully completed the learning pathway in the agreed timeframe and were considered competent, then the learning was effective. Or, if all participants failed a particular external component, then this would indicate a problem with the component.

The use of feedback from participants and the organisation has been covered in the Elements: Why are participants encouraged to provide critical feedback on their learning experiences? and Evaluate the effectiveness of the work-based pathway against the objectives, processes and models used.

SYNCHRONISED TRAINING

Staff in a sales team have just returned from an external two day sales training course. All the participants are happy with the training and obviously gained some new skills.

As agreed between the external provider and the organisation, a series of on-the-job coaching sessions is to be conducted by the organisation using internal coaches.

However, when the coaches start to recap the key skills to be implemented, they discover that the training course used a different philosophy with which they are not familiar.

The two components of the pathway were not synchronised and adjustments would need to be made either to the external component or the coaching sessions.

CONSIDER IMPROVEMENTS AND CHANGES TO WORK BASED PRACTICE IN LIGHT OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

In this Element, Review the effectiveness of the work-based learning pathway, we have examined how the review process entails input from:

- the participants
- the stakeholders
- the organisation
- the project team (if relevant)
- external providers (if relevant).

We have also examined how this input is obtained via:

- meetings
- discussions
- written evaluations
- observation
- surveys.

EXAMINE THE INFORMATION

The information gathered from these forums must be examined and its effect on work practices considered. To properly assess the impact of any changes, the issue must be allocated to a person or team with appropriate skills and experience.

A common process would be to establish a review team that is able to identify issues to be passed to others for investigation. The review team then takes responsibility to set deadlines for an answer and to manage the issue further up the management structure if required.

The review team at all times manages the issue and controls its progress until an outcome or course of action is agreed.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 23 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 2.

ASSESSMENT RECORD KEEPING

As with many aspects of our work in the VET Sector, we need to keep records related to the assessment that we undertake. In fact, the [AQTF](#) stipulates it.

There are a number of things that need to be recorded, including:

- candidate selection
- purpose of assessment
- assessment records, data and information management
- arrangements for credit, recognition of current competence, recognition of prior learning
- assessor needs and qualifications
- procedures for reporting, appeals, grievances and complaints
- validation, evaluation and internal auditing
- resourcing, access and equity, partnership arrangements
- links with human resource, industrial relations or quality management systems.

One of the [AQTF](#) requirements is that assessments need to be conducted in a timely manner, and the results communicated and recorded promptly. Some organisations have time limits in place for these activities; others simply state that these tasks will be performed in a reasonable amount of time.

Even if the organisation you work for is not an RTO, it is good practice for all training organisations to meet the [AQTF](#) requirements for industry quality and consistency.

RECORDING RESULTS

Record keeping and documentation requirements for all RTOs include:

- secure storage, including backup of electronic records, retention, archiving and retrieval of student results for a period of thirty years and transfer consistent with State or Territory registering body requirements
- retention, archiving, retrieval and transfer of all other records consistent with contractual and legal requirements and the requirements of the State or Territory registering body that has registered the organisation
- compliance with external reporting requirements, for example the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS)
- safeguarding any confidential information obtained by the RTO and committees, individuals or organisations acting on its behalf ensuring that, except as required under the Standards
- for Registered Training Organisations or by law, information about a client is not disclosed to a third party without the written consent of the client access by clients to their personal records.

As mentioned above, the RTO can be subject to a variety of legislative requirements depending on where it is registered and what courses it conducts and assesses.

There are many ways to record Assessment Results. The following screen shot shows an example of

how records for an earlier TAA course were kept using a simple Excel Spreadsheet.

Completed	ENV401B	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	
Comp. <i>Morgan</i>	Evidence 1	LA	LA	LA	LA	LA	LA	LA	LA	LA	LA	
1/02/2009	Evidence 2	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	
Completed	DES401B	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	2.1	2.2	2.3	3.1	3.2	
Comp. <i>Morgan</i>	Evidence 1	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	
1/02/2009	Evidence 2	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	
Completed	DES402B	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4
Comp. <i>Morgan</i>	Evidence 1	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ
1/02/2009	Evidence 2	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT
Completed	ASS401C	1.1	1.2	1.3	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8
Comp. <i>Morgan</i>	Evidence 1	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ
1/02/2009	Evidence 2	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT
Completed	ASS402B	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	3.1	3.2
Comp. <i>Morgan</i>	Evidence 1	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ
1/02/2009	Evidence 2	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT
Completed	ASS403B	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7
Comp. <i>Morgan</i>	Evidence 1	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ	LA/SQ
1/02/2009	Evidence 2	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT

Records the evidence that was used for judgement of each Performance Criterion

Records date that entire Unit was completed

Shows that more than one type of evidence was used to make the decision

Shows each of the Units of Competency

Once the student has completed the course, then this information is summarised in a different form that makes it easier for the Certificate to be issued.

5	March 20 2009										
6	Unit Code	RPL	Competent	LA	AT	Cuim Tasks	Prac Demo	Supp Questions	3rd Pa		
7	ENV401B		X	x		x		x			
8	ENV402B	X						x			
9	ENV403B	X						x			
0	DES401B		X	x		x		x			
1	DES402B	x					x	x		x	
2	ASS401C		X			x		x			
3	ASS402B		X		x	x		x			
4	ASS403B		X		x	x		x			
5	ASS404C		X		x	x		x			
6	DEL401B	x					x	x			
7	DEL402B	x					x	x			
8	DEL403B	x					x	x			
9	DEL404B	x						x		x	
0	DEL405B		N/A								
1	DEL301C	X						x			
2											
3			LA: Learnin								
4			AT: Assess								
5											

Shows the date the qualification was completed

Records the evidence that was used for judgement of each Unit of Competency

Shows that more than one type of evidence was used to make the decision

Shows each of the Units of Competency

As part of our continuous improvement obligations, we need to also document the update and review outcomes following assessment.

REVIEWING OUR PLAN

To review your assessment plan, ask yourself and others as appropriate the following questions. Does your plan accurately reflect:

- who will be involved?
- the logical order of the assessment process?
- contextualisation that has occurred or will occur?
- resource requirements?
- organisational requirements?
- reasonable adjustments made or support needed?
- how the assessment will actually be conducted, or how it should be conducted next time?

When you have conducted each assessment using the plan as a guide, reflect on how useful the plan was, its strengths and its weaknesses.

Make changes to the assessment plan accordingly, to improve its structure and usefulness as a guide for future assessments. Of course, as with all aspects of our work, it is important to use good [version control](#) procedures to make sure that we can track the changes that we make, and to ensure that we are always using the most up to date plan.

REFLECTING CHANGES

Our review may require:

- consultation with individuals who are expert in assessment and the relevant Training Package
- consultation with administrative staff
- consultation with management
- consultation with regulatory authorities
- field or pilot testing with groups of assessors and candidates
- review of OHS considerations
- peer review by assessors in the relevant industry
- workshopping with assessors and other key stakeholders in the relevant industry sector.

DOCUMENTING OUR REVIEW

Details about our review which should be documented include:

- exactly which features of the assessment process we reviewed
- a step by step explanation of how we went about the review when it took place
- names and positions of the people involved in the review, and their connection with the assessment process if applicable
- outcomes of the review
- how the process will be improved as a result of the outcomes.

If continual review takes place during the assessment process, we need to plan to make amendments and improvements as we move through the process, and use [version control](#) procedures throughout the whole review process.

If review takes place at the end of assessment, we need to be sure to amend and improve the process before it begins again for the next assessment.

USING TEMPLATES

If we are serious about continual improvement, then we will find it much easier to review and improve our work if we use templates. Templates are great because they give us a set structure that organises information in a clear and easy to understand way. I use templates for all sorts of things, including Participant Feedback forms, Validation Meetings, and for [Assessment Tools](#) themselves.

Using templates lets us be confident that we are going to be meeting the required standard for documentation. When used for assessment tools with candidates, it also makes it easier for our candidates to understand what is going on since the way that information about any assessment event will be presented in the same way as the information for any other assessment event. When used as part of [validation processes](#), it makes it easier to meet the requirements of the many external bodies who might want to look at what we do. We should never underestimate the value of predictability!

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 1 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3.

LEARNING STYLES

What? You might be thinking that we have changed direction – one moment we are talking about assessment, and now we are looking at learning – how can that make any sense?

Well, it does. And it makes a whole lot of sense. You see, in addition to the specific [characteristics of adult learners](#), it is worth knowing that there are some common learning preferences among all people. One way to classify these is shown in the next table. If we are aware of these, then we are more able to deliver and assess training in such a way that ensures the success of our learners.

Learner	Characteristics	Effective Delivery/Assessment
Auditory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - prefer to hear information - tell-tale body language, such as eye movements side to side, head tilted as if listening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explain verbally - use language such as: <i>I hear what you're saying, that doesn't sound quite right</i>
Visual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - prefer to see information -becomes bored with long, verbal information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use graphs, pictures, and diagrams -use visual language such as: <i>I see what you mean, I get the picture.</i>
Kinaesthetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - relate to sensory information -learns by doing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use touching, feeling, or practical demonstrations -use feeling language such as: <i>let's see if we can get a grip on this concept.</i>
Tactile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enjoys being physically involved in learning - may make reams of notes as a way of doing the learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use role-plays to act out information - vary activities to sustain interest
Left/right brain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tend to favour one side of the brain to other (although some individuals are more whole-brained and quite adept at each mode of thinking). - left brain thinkers are logical, analytical, and objective -right brain thinkers are intuitive, creative, and visionary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - modify methods and activities to engage both left and right brain thinkers.
Global	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - big picture people - value storytelling or anecdotal experience - prefer informality, spontaneity, variety and distraction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use group work

Learner	Characteristics	Delivery/Assessment
Analytical	- focus on the detail - like organised, structured, and sequential learning - like to be able identify completed tasks	- allocate tasks with definite endings
Theorist	- want to understand underlying concepts, theories, and relationships.	- use models and theories
Activist	- need to do something active with the information received	- use demonstration and practical opportunities
Pragmatist	- like to have a go and try things out to see if they work	- set practical tasks
Reflector	- like to consider new information by themselves -prefer to think about information before putting it into practice	- group activity distracts learning

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 2 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3.

RECOGNISING COMPETENCY

It is no surprise that before we can assess someone as being competent or otherwise, we need to know what it means to be competent.

If you are competent at something, then it generally means that when you do that thing, you are integrating knowledge, skills and application. As trainers, we aim to teach people the knowledge and skills to integrate into their work activities. As assessors, we aim to recognise that knowledge and those skills. This is called **recognising competency**.

To help us recognise competency, there are 4 questions that we can ask:

1. can this person transfer these skills to new situations?
2. how does this person respond when things go wrong?
3. how does this person cope with changes to the conditions under which the task is being performed?
4. how does this person manage the task as part of the other demands of the job?

What these 4 questions give us in an understanding of the dimensions of competency. They remind us that being competent is not just knowing stuff, or being able to do stuff. Rather, it is about knowing and doing, and being able to know and do within a real work environment.

To help us better understand this, we can look at the actual **dimensions of competency**. These are shown below:

Dimensions of Competency

Dimension of Competency	Analysis
Task skills	<p>Those skills actually needed to perform the task at an acceptable level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include knowledge and physical skills - Usually described in the performance criteria of competency standards
Task management skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organising and coordinating skills needed to manage a number of tasks or activities within the job
Contingency skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skills needed to respond and react appropriately to unexpected problems, changes in routine and breakdown
Job role/environment skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Particular skills needed to perform as expected in a particular job position and location - May be described in the range of variables and underpinning skills and knowledge sections of a competency standard

In addition to these, there are employment-related competencies that underpin all work in all industries. These are called **key competencies**, and are shown below.

Key Competency	Description
<i>Collecting, analysing and organising information</i>	The capacity to locate information, sift and sort information in order to select what is required, present information in a useful way, and evaluate both the information itself and the sources and methods to obtain it.
<i>Communicating ideas and information</i>	The capacity to communicate effectively with others using a range of spoken, written, graphic and other non-verbal means of expression.
<i>Planning and organising activities</i>	The capacity to plan and organise one's own work activities, including making good use of time and resources, sorting out priorities and monitoring one's own performance.

Key Competency	Description
<i>Working with others in teams</i>	The capacity to interact effectively with other people both on a one-to-one basis and in groups, including understanding and responding to the needs of a client and working effectively as a member of a team to achieve a shared goal.
<i>Using mathematical ideas and techniques</i>	The capacity to use, for practical purposes, concepts such as number, space and measurement, and techniques such as estimation.

<i>Solving problems</i>	The capacity to apply problem-solving strategies in purposeful ways, both in situations where the problem and the desired solution are clearly evident and in situations requiring critical thinking and a creative approach to achieve an outcome.
<i>Using technology</i>	The capacity to apply technology, combining the physical and sensory skills needed to operate equipment with the understanding of scientific and technological principles needed to explore and adapt systems (Mayer, 1992)

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 3 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3.

QUESTIONING

Whether it is finding out what [a client's training needs](#) are, finding out what [resources are available](#) for assessment, or looking at a person's claim for [Recognition of Prior Learning/Recognition of Current Competency](#), we need to be able to ask good questions.

Actually, if we cannot ask good questions, then we won't get good information. If we don't get good information, then we cannot make good decisions. Using the above three examples, this could mean not meeting the client's training needs, it could mean using inappropriate resources for assessment, or it could mean an incorrect judgement of a candidate's level of current competency.

So, what makes a good question?

A good question is one that gets the information that we need.

Good questioning involves a number of rules:

- ask open questions to draw out more complex explanations or opinions eg, why would someone choose to support an aged person with a walking frame instead of crutches?
- ask closed questions to obtain a specific, factual answer eg, how many times should you look right before crossing a road?
- avoid leading questions that may influence the response eg, you wouldn't start the engine before doing a safety check, would you?
- ask hypothetical questions to outline a set of circumstances when you want to obtain an understanding of practical procedures eg, if you were caring for a foster child and they displayed signs of abuse, what would you do?
- ask clarifying questions to confirm your interpretation of something that they have said or done eg, So, what you are saying is that you would fill the kettle with water before turning it on?

- avoid ambiguous, unclear or multiple questions that may confuse the person eg where would you put the drip line under a tree and why is it best to use mulch when planting in hot conditions?

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 4 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3.

PROVIDING FEEDBACK FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT

I remember the situation very clearly. Kevin had been trying really hard. We had developed a really good learning relationship and he was taking on board my suggestions and was clearly learning the underpinning knowledge. But, try as he might, he just never seemed to master the skills side of the Unit of Competency. Anyway, assessment time came along, and he studied really hard, and was so confident because he knew that he had tried.

He blitzed the theory component, and his answers to questions showed very clearly that he knew the stuff that he had to know in order to be competent. But, while he could do some of the stuff that he had to do, he could not do it all well enough to be judged as competent. He didn't seem to mind, because he thought that his knowledge would make up for it.

Of course, it didn't. He was not competent in all areas, therefore he was not competent in the Unit.

I remember him saying to me "but, can't you see that I tried really hard?"

It is always hard to provide feedback at the end of an assessment. But, if we remember that assessment is not an event but a process, we can better enable our candidates to use the experience as an opportunity to develop their skills/knowledge further. Even if they are competent, it is still important to let them know why. And, whether they are competent or not, the reason needs to be stated in terms of the evidence.

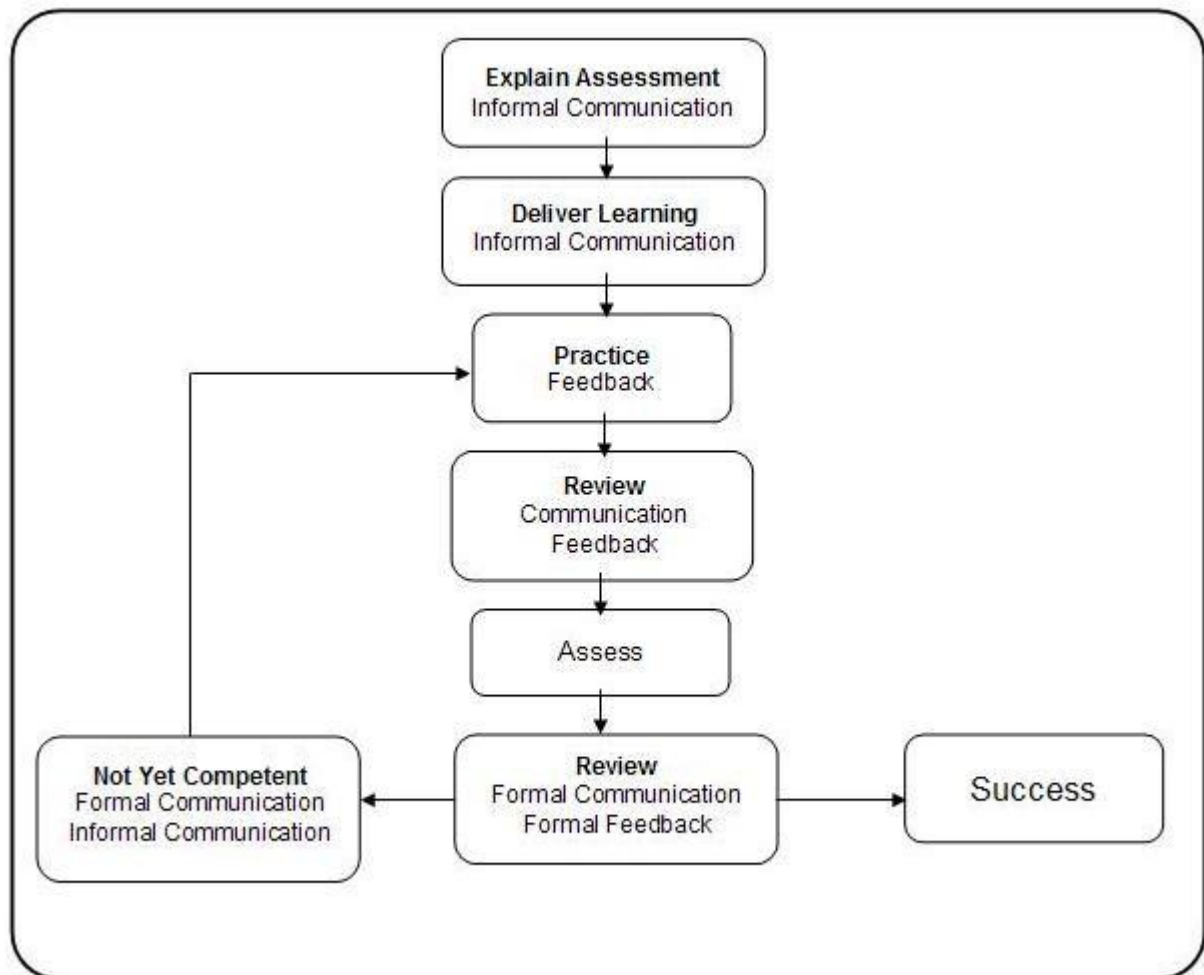
I find that the best way to provide feedback following an assessment is to make sure that I have had conversations with the candidate before the assessment. This lets them know what the possible outcomes could be, and better prepares them for whatever the outcome is.

You see, I think one of the reasons that people find it so hard to be told that they are not yet competent is because they do not fully understand what it means - often, they fear that they have failed, and because of that, they fear that they cannot continue.

This is not true.

Remember, our instructions to candidates included information about appeals and reassessment. If our candidates know this, then they will be better prepared should they not perform as well as they hope.

The ideal flow of information can perhaps best be understood in visual terms, as shown in the following diagram:



In the above diagram, we see that feedback is not something that just happens at the end of the training/assessment process. It is something that happens repeatedly throughout the training/assessment journey. By communicating in this way with our learners, we are better placing them to learn and demonstrate competency, and better placing ourselves to maintain good relationships with both our learners and our clients.

To not provide feedback through the whole training/assessment process is to leave ourselves open to the very common response "why didn't you tell me?". Such a response tells us that we were trusted to do a job, but did not do it the way that we were expected to.

THE ASSESSMENT TOOL AS A SOURCE OF FEEDBACK

A really good idea is to use the assessment tool itself as an *anchor* for feedback. If we have designed the tool well, then it will have the information that the candidate needs to understand exactly where they have been deemed competent or otherwise. This creates a starting point for conversations about what to do next.

In the following excerpt from an assessment tool for this TAE10 course, we can see how the candidate needs to focus on skills related to only one section of the entire task.

Assessment Schema

This is an Holistic Assessment Task. It intends to collect evidence of your competency across three Elements, as follows:

Step	Element One	Element Two	Element Three
1	Not Yet Competent	Not Yet Competent	Not Yet Competent
2		Competent	Competent
3			Competent

Assessment Date:

18/03/2009

Assessor Name:

B. West

Assessor Signature:

Overall:

Not Yet Competent

If not yet Competent, areas requiring attention:

Roger, you have done a great job of Steps 2 and 3, where you competently delivered the training sessions and evaluated their effectiveness. What we need to see now is the Learning & Assessment Plan developed in more detail to show that you can plan the training sessions. It needs to include the components that are found in the example on page 4 of Learning Guide 3 and that are included in the instructions for Step 1 of this assessment task sheet.

Re-Assessment Date/s:

23/04/09

Assessor Name:

Assessor Signature:

Overall:

Proposed reassessment date

Comments:

Shows us what is competent and not yet competent

Statement saying what was done competently

Statement saying what was not done competently with guidance for how it could be

Clearly, giving this to the candidate is not all that we need to do. But, what it does do is give us both something to focus our conversations on. And that focus is the fundamental basis of what it is that we are doing: the candidate's performance against the standard required by the Unit of Competency being assessed.

With this sort of information, we can employ a range of strategies to provide feedback in such a way that the candidate is most likely to have a successful outcome.

FEEDBACK STRATEGIES

Some common strategies for providing feedback are shown below:

Consider the likely impact of your decision on the participant.

Give feedback throughout the assessment so there are no surprises at the end.

Involve the participant in the feedback session because in most cases the person will have a good idea of how well they performed.

Begin with what was good and acceptable about the performance.

Be as precise as possible about gaps in the participant's performance.

Identify whether only part of the assessment needs to be repeated.

Suggest strategies for further practice or learning to address gaps.

Encourage the person to make their own suggestions to enable two-way feedback.

Which of these that we choose will depend on the context and purpose of the training/assessment. The following table gives some guidance about the sorts of things that we can do in specific situations. I tend to find it really useful for the learner to use at least one method from each category when they have completed a learning pathway.

Category	Methods Used to Convey this Information	Effective Strategies
<i>Feedback</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - group discussion - individual discussion - written evaluations - test results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focus on what they did well - make suggestions for improvement - criticise only the work, not the participant
<i>Success</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - written evaluation of performance - promotion - financial reward - presentation of certificate - communication to colleagues of participant's success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use plain English and avoid negative language - tie rewards to documented performance improvements - acknowledge in a timely, appropriate manner
<i>Self-Assessment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ask other participants for feedback - ask colleagues about specific aspects of performance - discuss workplace progress with a supervisor - keep notes about what worked well and what needs further improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - gather feedback at an appropriate time - gather feedback after an action - choose a place appropriate to the method, for example morning tea with a colleague

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

Using these strategies, we can put together an action plan to show how the candidate can develop the skills/knowledge needed to be deemed competent at a reassessment. Such a plan will ideally include:

- the Elements/Performance Criteria in which performance was not yet competent
- arrangements for reassessment
- a reminder of the appeals and reassessment policy
- ways to further develop, which could include such things as:
 - *additional areas of study*
 - *additional evidence requirements*
 - *additional practical experience*
 - *additional reading or research*
 - *a plan to acquire the required evidence and skills*
 - *discussions regarding whether an RPL application is appropriate, given the candidate's skills, experience and evidence.*

Remember, sometimes the candidate is not the only person that we have responsibilities to. Within the limits of privacy and confidentiality, we might also need to inform some other people of the assessment decision and any plans for further development of the candidate's skills. These people commonly include:

- Centrelink
- employers
- Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
- other trainers/assessors involved with the candidate

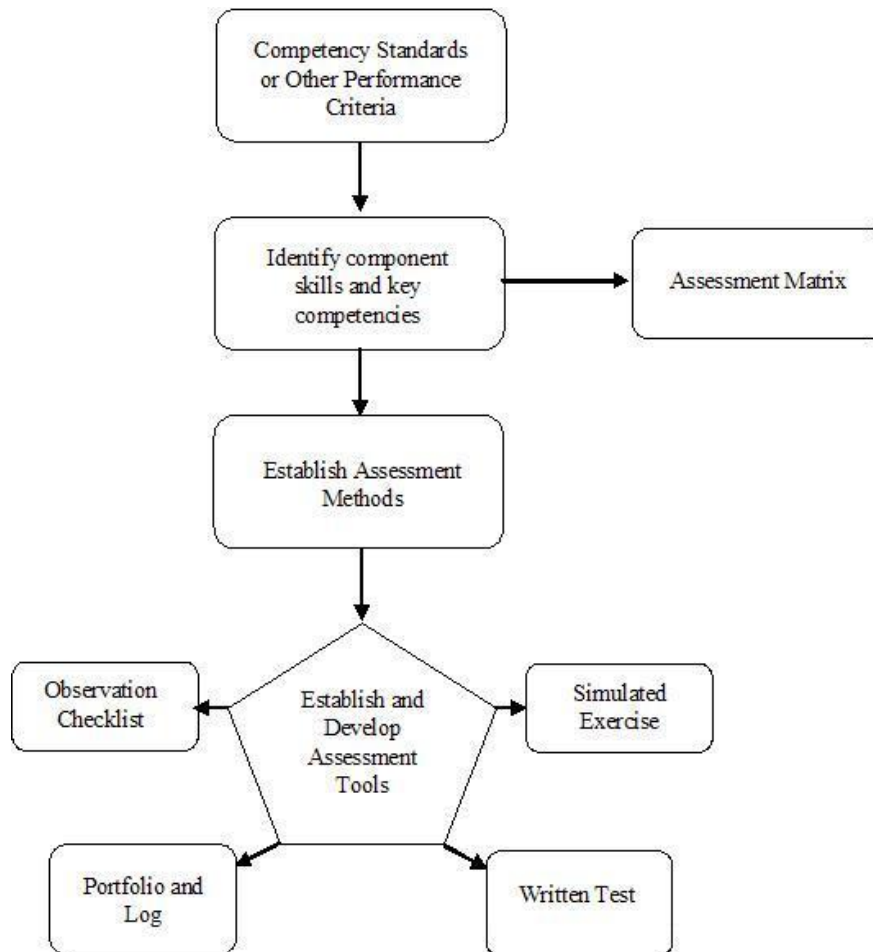
THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 5 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3.

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

The tools we end up using to assess someone's performance are decided only after following a process. It is not enough to simply say that "oh, a test will be good enough here" or "it will be easiest to just observe them doing it".

As professionals, we are required to follow a process, such as the one shown below:



Obvious in this diagram is that we begin the process by thinking about the [purpose and context](#) of the assessment event. We consider what it actually is that we want to assess, and become very clear in our own heads what it is that we need to see in order to make a good judgment about the standard of performance.

Once we have made our way through this design process, we will be able to make good decisions about the best way to collect evidence of someone's performance; evidence that meets the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence.

LET'S LOOK AT AN EXAMPLE

Within the Asset Maintenance Training Package are a number of Units of Competency. One of these is *PRMCL11A - Spot clean external surfaces to remove all visible marks*, from which the following excerpt comes. As with all assessment planning, we will begin by having a good look at the Elements and Performance Criteria.

Unit PRMCL11A - Spot clean external surfaces to remove all visible marks.

This unit covers the cleaning of external surfaces, including the removal of graffiti.

Element	Performance Criteria
1. Select and set up equipment	<p><i>1.1 Client is notified of work prior to commencement and accessibility confirmed</i></p> <p><i>1.2 Type of wall surface and nature of soiling is identified to determine the kind of removal method and equipment required.</i></p> <p><i>1.3 All equipment is checked to be clean and in good working order.</i></p> <p><i>1.4 Chemical agents suitable to soil type that will not damage wall surface are decanted and diluted safely in accordance with manufacturers' specifications.</i></p> <p><i>1.5 Work area is signed and barricaded to reduce risk of accident in accordance with relevant safety requirements.</i></p> <p><i>1.6 Protective clothing is selected and worn in accordance with manufacturers' specifications and relevant safety requirements.</i></p> <p><i>1.7 Where a ladder is required work is organised in teams of two.</i></p> <p><i>1.8 Any pre-existing damage to work site is reported.</i></p>
2. Apply cleaning agent	<p><i>2.1 Selecting cleaning agent is applied direct to spot without over spray and sufficient time to act.</i></p> <p><i>2.2 Area is rinsed with neutral detergent solution before cleaning agent is dry to remove all traces of soil, markings and cleaning solution.</i></p> <p><i>2.3 Spots or markings that cannot be removed completely are reported as appropriate for further attention.</i></p>

Element	Performance Criteria
3. Clean and store equipment	<p><i>3.1 Equipment is cleaned as per manufacturers' specifications.</i></p> <p><i>3.2 Cleaning agents, polishes and used/dirty clothes are stored in accordance with manufacturers' specifications and relevant health and safety requirements.</i></p> <p><i>3.3. Cleaned equipment is stored in a manner that will maintain its function and is readily accessible for re-use.</i></p>

From our analysis of the unit, we find that there are a number of ways that we could assess someone's competence. For example, we could use direct observation for all three Elements. We could use some Verbal Questioning, but this might not be appropriate for all Elements for our particular client. What we are doing here is identifying the possible assessment methods that we could use to collect the evidence that we need to make good decisions. If we continued with this process, we might end up with a table such as the following that shows which methods could be used to collect evidence for each of the three Elements. This sort of table is called an **Assessment Matrix**.

Assessment Method	Element		
	1	2	3
Direct observation	0	0	0
Verbal questions	0		0
Simulation	0		0
Log			0
Portfolio		0	0
Exercise	0		
Third party		0	
Written test		0	

SAMPLE ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Let's look at some of these tools, to see what they might actually look like when developed in line with the principles of assessment and rules of evidence.

- [Observation Assessment Tool](#)
- [Portfolio Assessment Tool](#)
- [Log or Diary Assessment Tool](#)
- [Self-Assessment Tool](#)

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASKS 6 and 7 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3.

OBSERVATION ASSESSMENT TOOL

Observation is a very useful way to assess. But, as with all [assessment tools](#), it needs to be well planned and designed. Because it is observation, some people can tend to be a bit slack about the planning and record keeping. This is not good enough.

The following is an example of an observation assessment tool.

Note the following features:

- it gives clear instructions to both the assessor and candidate about how to "do" the assessment
- it gives a clear indication of the observable things to look for and how to record those observations
- it guides the assessor on how to make the final assessment decision

Instructions to the Assessee:

For this assessment you are required to be directly observed while you:

- check and set up equipment for a given cleaning job, and
- carry out cleaning of the soiled surface.

This assessment will commence with all material and equipment assembled on the job site.

During the assessment I will observe you completing the task and will make notes on a checklist. I will stop the assessment on occasion to ask questions or to get you to repeat an action, or ask you to explain what and why you are doing something. I will tell you when to continue with the assessment task.

There are three critical actions in this assessment. If I am not satisfied the actions have been carried out satisfactorily, then I will have to stop the assessment and decide if we can continue. The actions are:

- meeting the site barricade requirements
- wearing the correct PPE
- applying the cleaning agent correctly.

Action	Observation	Yes No Comment:
Checking equipment	Equipment was checked before attempting to start the job. Equipment was checked correctly. Questions: What are you looking for when you check equipment? - hoses	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - compressor - containers <p>What common problems can occur with hoses? Why is it important to check equipment? What would you do if you found faulty equipment?</p>
Erecting barricade	<p>Barricade was erected correctly. Job environment constraints were dealt with satisfactorily:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Terrain - Traffic /Weather <p>Questions: What would you do if the barricade interfered with pedestrian traffic? What would you do if there weren't sufficient solid barricades to cover the site?</p>
Wearing PPE	<p>Correct PPE was worn at all times.</p> <p>Questions: What is the effect of chemicals making contact with skin? How often must respirator filters be changed?</p>
Cleaning and rinsing	<p>No overspray on any spot. Correctly judged the area of wall to spray to allow time for rinsing. Correctly judged marks requiring alternative cleaning methods.</p> <p>Questions: Describe the procedure to report marks that cannot be removed using this method. How do you dispose of waste chemicals? What can happen if equipment is stored wet? What are the health and safety implications of not cleaning equipment?</p>
Applying agent, neutralise and remove	<p>Rinsed before cleaning agent dried. Surface was cleaned free of any marks or cleaning agent. Completed task in an acceptable time.</p> <p>Questions: Why do you add the chemical to the water and not water to the chemical? What is the ratio of chemical to water? What is the first aid procedure if chemical is swallowed? Describe the procedure for a chemical spill.</p>

PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT TOOL

A portfolio approach can be a flexible way to collect a range of evidence.

The following is an example of an observation [assessment tool](#).

Note the following features:

- it gives clear instructions to both the assessor and candidate about how to "do" the assessment
- it gives a clear indication of how the candidate might put the evidence together
- it guides the assessor on how to make the final assessment decision

Instructions to the Assessee:	For this assessment you are required to collect and present documentation relating to external surface cleaning jobs you have been involved with. The type and quantity of documentation is listed below. Your workplace assessor will review the documentation with you and may ask questions to:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clarify action recorded on the documents - establish authenticity of the documents - establish currency of the documents. 				
Type of Documentation	Qty	Criteria	Yes	No	Comment
1. Record of conversation with clients arranging access to commence a job	3	Client information is complete. Job details are complete. Access details are complete.			
2. End of job reports showing quality/safety/administrative incidents	Open	Reports indicate client and site information was obtained before commencing the job. Cleaning methods selected for each job were appropriate and effective. Equipment failure was dealt with in an acceptable manner. Any difficult soiling marks were reported. All sections of the report were completed. Report includes recommendations to improve procedures.			
3. Pre-job inspection survey form	3	Pre-inspection shows soiling type was accurately identified. Correct cleaning methods were recommended for type of surface and soiling. Pre-existing damage was clearly noted and described.			

LOG OR DIARY ASSESSMENT TOOL

A less common assessment tool is the log or diary. Just like all tools, as long as it is planned well, then it can offer a great opportunity to capture a range of evidence to help you make your final decisions about competency.

The following is an example of an **log or diary assessment tool**.

Note the following features:

- it gives clear instructions to both the assessor and candidate about how to "do" the assessment
- it gives a clear indication of how the candidate might format their log/diary

Instructions to the Assessee:	<p>For this assessment you are required to maintain a personal Log or Diary for a period of four weeks. Your Log or Diary is a record of specific incidents you have encountered during each of your external surface cleaning jobs. You may record what you like in your Log, but your entries must include at least one of each of the following incidents:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Where you had to re-schedule a job because of changed circumstances due to either you or a client</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Where you discovered a fault or unacceptable equipment/material during pre-job checks and took steps to rectify it</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Where you had difficulty in erecting barricades because of awkward or difficult job conditions</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Where you encountered soiling/marks that were difficult to remove using the cleaning method recommended.</p>	
The layout for your Log/Diary is given below. Your workplace assessor will review your Log with you.		
What I Observed	What I Did	What Resulted/What I Learned

REVIEWING AND TRIALLING ASSESSMENT TOOLS

By now you would have worked out that we do a lot of reflection in our work as trainers and assessors. We not only do this because it enables us to meet the needs of our clients, and to gain a sense of satisfaction in a job well done. We do it to make sure that the work we do helps to maintain the standards that industry requires. In fact, there are a number of policies and frameworks that require us to continually be reviewing the work that we do.

When it comes to [assessment tools](#), we need to check that they meet the rules of evidence (remember: valid, reliable, fair, flexible).

LET'S LOOK AT AN EXAMPLE.

Let's say Steve designs a tool to assess some people who want to become qualified to work in the area of Aged Care. He goes through the design process, and is confident that the tool is going to give him quality evidence. Now, Steve designed the tool for the group of participants in his own training group. Meanwhile, a colleague of Steve's, Edwina, is delivering the same training to another group. She knows that Steve has made an assessment tool, and uses it for her group as well. After all, why create extra work for herself?

What happened?

Well, the appeals process got a whole lot of use.

Why?

Because the participants from Edwina's group all did miserably, but Steve's group all did wonderfully. When the participants from Edwina's group found out all the things that Steve told his group, they felt unfairly treated. When they found out that Steve's group had more time, they felt unfairly treated.

It is clear from this example that there was something not quite right about the assessment. We do not know if it was the tool that was being used, or the problem was caused by the way that the tool was being used. This is why we need to review the tool and its use.

REVIEWING ASSESSMENT TOOLS

One way to review an [Assessment Tool](#) is to trial it in a particular situation. It doesn't have to mean undertaking the whole assessment, but rather can involve doing a 'dummy run' of some parts of it to see if what we expect to happen is what will really happen.

The sorts of things that we can do when we trial our assessment tools include:

- review them (which we will get to soon)
- do some pilot testing with other trainers, assessors or candidates
- review the OHS considerations to make sure that everything is as it needs to be

- review the reasonable adjustment procedures
- trial the clarity of instructions to candidates and assessors in a simulated setting

Another way to review an assessment tool is to use a checklist, such as the example provided below. Using this sort of template allows us to focus our reviewer's attention on certain parts of the assessment tool and the way that it was used.

Once again, being able to effectively review our work means that we need to involve other people. It is a good idea to include people who have more experience or qualifications than ourselves, especially if we are not an expert in the subject area that is being assessed.

Commonly, this will include the same people who we involved in the planning stages of our assessment.

ASSESSMENT TOOL REVIEW FORM			
Date of Assessment:			
Purpose of Assessment:			
Assessor:			
Assessment Location:			
Read the following questions and place a tick or cross in the appropriate column.			
TIME TAKEN FOR ASSESSMENT		Yes	No
1. Was a time set?			
2. Did the assessor stick to the time?			
3. Were there interruptions or outside circumstances that prevented the assessment being completed in the time frame?			
4. Was the time frame set realistic?			
Comment:			
VALIDITY OF THE ASSESSMENT TOOLS		Yes	No
1. Does the assessment tool require the participant to demonstrate behaviour that is not described in the standards?			
2. Are all questions relevant to the standards?			
Comment:			

VARIATION IN RESULTS

There are many reasons why some people perform well and others do not. We cannot expect that everyone will perform the same. However, we can expect that there will be some similarities between similar groups. Where there is not, we can start to look for reasons for the variations.

Common reasons for variation in results include:

- different characteristics of participants
- different characteristics of assessors
- different uses of the assessment tool in different situations

Being able to work out the cause of variation is essential if we are going to be able to ensure that our assessment process meets the principles of assessment and rules of evidence.

ACCESS, EQUITY & OHS

Reviewing assessment means that we need to make sure that our assessment tool adequately meets the needs of three laws:

- Disability Discrimination Act
- Sex Discrimination Act
- Racial Discrimination Act

While these laws are discussed [elsewhere](#), we can use an understanding of them to put together a set of criteria that we can use to evaluate our assessment tools and processes. Specifically, we can ask the following questions about our assessment tool:

- is it effective and relevant to the competency standards?
- does it meet the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence?
- is it appropriate given the target group and the context of the assessment?
- does it provide enough guidance for reasonable adjustment?
- does it address organisational, legal and ethical requirements, including OHS?
- does it allow for candidate engagement and direct participation?
- does it use language and literacy levels that match the candidate's abilities?
- is it clear and easy to understand, and does it avoid bias?
- is it cost effective (for assessor, client and candidate)?

DOCUMENTING OUR WORK

As always, it is essential that we keep good records of not just the assessment tool, but of the review process and who was involved. This gives us the evidence we need to show all stakeholders that we have complied with access, equity and OHS issues, and any other requirements that may influence our assessment.

In summary, our documentation must involve three things:

1. *provide a guide for the person carrying out the review - documented instructions ensure all aspects are covered and nothing is missed*
2. *provide proof that tools subject to review are actually reviewed - this may be important where training and assessment are subject to statutory control or where work performance could result in serious safety incidents or loss*
3. *provide a system for recording review results - this ensures others see the results and can plan action-based on recommendations.*

VERSION CONTROL

One of the things that drives many trainers and assessors crazy is the paperwork. One of the biggest complaints is that people cannot find what they need.

This is where version control comes in.

Version control simply means to have a system in place to allow you (or someone else) to find the most recent version of a document. It is an essential part of any record keeping system.

WHEN IS IT NEEDED?

An update of a version can be needed following all sorts of things. Since continuous improvement and review are integral parts of our work, we tend to find that version updates occur after the following events:

1. Validation of assessment items that lead to changes
2. Revision or updating of learning resources
3. Refinement of assessment and other record keeping systems


LET'S LOOK AT AN EXAMPLE.

Last December I created an assessment tool for this TAE course. It was the first of its kind, so it gets called *version 1*. Since other people are involved with my training organisation, and might also want to be able to access the document, I included some information in the footer of the document itself.

The following screen capture shows the footer of that document:

TAEASS301A – TAEASS401A – TAEASS402A


SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3

File name and where it is	Date it was created	Who created it	When it will be reviewed
Uncontrolled when printed. Original document available at www.tae.fortresslearning.com.au			
Created on 1 January 2011		Created By: Chris Gribble	
Filename: 2011_MONTH_DATE_YOURNAME_SHORTANSWERQUESTIONS_3_Ver1		Review Date: Dec 2011	

Now, following our usual continuous improvement processes, this tool was amended in April. So, to make sure that everyone is using the most up to date version, I saved the amended document, with an amended footer. You can see this in the next screen capture.

TAEASS301A – TAEASS401A – TAEASS402A

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3

File name is changed	Date is changed	Review date is changed
Uncontrolled when printed. Original document available at www.tae.fortresslearning.com.au		
Created on 1 August 2011		Created By: Chris Gribble
Filename: 2011_MONTH_DATE_YOURNAME_SHORTANSWERQUESTIONS_3_Ver1.1		Review Date: Feb 2012
		

But, I did not leave it there, because I know that just because I change something does not mean that everyone knows that it has been changed. So, I contacted everyone who is involved with this particular assessment item, and advised them that a newer version is available, and where they may access it from. We also include "Version Control" as a standing agenda in monthly meetings to ensure that everyone is aware of what documents have been updated.

TAKING IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

If you haven't already worked it out, there are A LOT of documents that need to be retained as part of an RTO's operations, and many of these are under a state of continuous review. This means that we need to be able to keep track of all of our documents to know which is the latest version and when each document is due for revision.

One way of doing this is to use a Version Control Register. The following is a screen shot of the register used by the RTO, [Vocational Pathways](#):

No	Document Title	Current Version
(a)	QA Manual – Introduction & Contents – ver 20060829	20060829
1	Cover Letter from Managing Director – ver 20060428	20060428
1a	Cover Letter from Managing Director – ver 20060829	20060829
2	QA Procedure 1 – QA Procedures & Policies – ver 20060428	20060428
3	RTO Manager Letter of Appointment – ver 20060428	20060428
4	RTO Manager Duty Statement – ver 20060428	20060428
4a	RTO Staff Duty Statement – ver 20060428	20060428
5	Organisational Chart – ver 20060428	20060428
6	RTO Staff Duty Statements – ver 20060428	20060428
7	QA Procedure 3 – Internal Audits – ver 20060428	20060428
7a	Internal AQTF Audit Report – ver 20060428	20060428
7b	Internal AQTF Audit Report - ver 20040201	20040201
7c	Internal AQTF Audit Report – ver 20060829	20060829
7d	OTTE External Audit Report – ver 20040404	20040404
8	Cover Letter from MD – Annual AQTF Audit Review – ver 20060428	20060428

VALIDATION

When it comes to validation, probably the best thing to start with is reminding ourselves about the purpose of Vocational Education and Training.

In short, we train people so they possess certain standard of knowledge and skills that are needed to a certain job. If the standard is consistent across people and qualifications, then employers can be confident that that know what to expect from someone with a certain type and level of qualification.

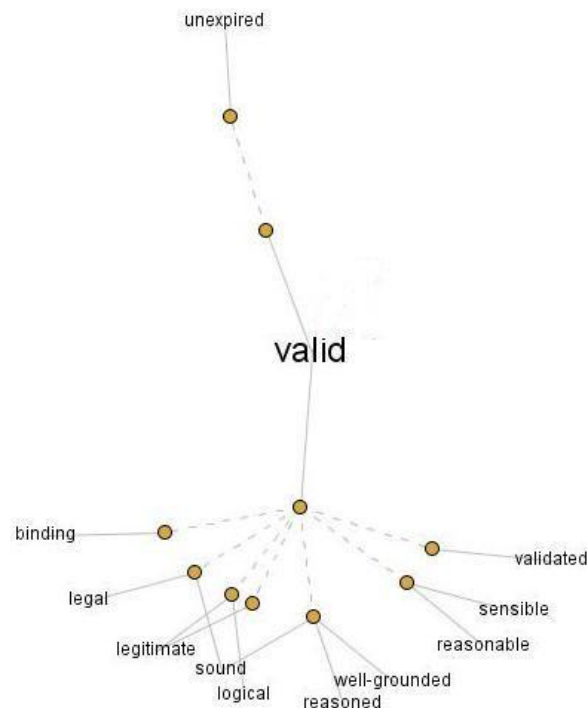
This is really important, because if there were no such standards across the nation, then when I go to WA and say that I have the TAA04 qualification, it might mean something completely different from what I expect it to mean. Now, that would not be such an issue if my standard was higher than what my employer expected, but it would surely be a problem if my standard was lower.

So, by being able to keep standards consistent, we are able to provide industry and people with

confidence that people with particular qualifications are able to do a particular job and do that job to a particular standard.

WHAT'S THIS GOT TO DO WITH VALIDATION?

Something is valid if it is true. My favourite online thesaurus gives a nice picture of what it means for our work in the VET sector:



Take a moment to think about each of the words in that diagram. What sorts of questions can we ask to help to know if our work is valid. For me, looking at those words makes me wonder:

- is my assessment tool sensible?
- are my assessment methods legitimate for this group of learners?
- is the review process logical?
- is my understanding of the client's needs well-grounded?

Asking ourselves these sorts of questions helps us to start thinking about what it means for our work to be valid.

If we think back to the whole purpose of VET, then things are going to be valid if they do what the AQTF and other policies/frameworks tells us they should be doing. They are going to be valid if what we deliver and how we assess is consistent with the standards that are meant to apply to all trainers/assessors and their candidates no matter whom they are or where they are in Australia.

When it comes to assessment, our work is valid if the decisions we make are well-grounded, reasoned, sensible and all of the other words in the above diagram. In short, our assessment is valid if the assessment result that we give to someone matches what they know and can do.

WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?

Validation involves a number of steps that we need to be familiar with.

1. Preparing the Validation Process (ie, work out what we want to do and how we are going to do it)
2. Contributing to the Validation Process (ie, do it)
3. Contributing to Validation Outcomes (ie, act on the findings)

We will look at these in turn.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 7 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3.

PREPARING THE VALIDATION PROCESS

When it comes to planning some training, we always begin by working out what the purpose and context of the learning is. When it comes to planning some assessment, we always begin by working out what the purpose and context of the assessment is. It will come as no surprise then that when it comes to validating the assessment, we always begin by working out what the purpose and context of the validation is.

In general terms, we know that [validation](#) is about making sure that what we are doing matches with what is happening elsewhere - we are making sure that what we do is consistent with the national standards.

What this means specifically for our work is that validation:

- is when assessors get together to review, compare and evaluate their assessment process and their assessment outcomes, in relation to the same Unit/s of Competency.
- includes reviewing the actual assessment methods and tools, the evidence that is collected with these, and the interpretation of that evidence to make a judgement of competence

WHAT DOES THAT ALL MEAN IN PLAIN ENGLISH?

It means that we get together with some other people to make sure that what we did when we assessed someone was in line with the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence. We can make it very complicated, but really that's what it comes down to.

Whenever we do any assessment that might lead to the issue of a nationally recognised qualification (such as one from a Training Package), we need to validate our work. Even if we are not, it is a good idea to do it since it is an excellent way to make sure that we stay on track as trainers.

UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF VALIDATION

There are all sorts of reasons why people validate. Mostly it comes down to [AQTF2010](#) requiring RTOs to do it as a condition of registration. In any case, it is worth knowing some of these reasons, because they also let us know just how important validation is for a whole range of things to do with our work.

Common reasons include:

1. it is part of an organisation's own [quality assurance](#) procedures
2. to see if required improvements have been made to fix an area of practice or quality
3. to demonstrate compliance with [AQTF2010 Standards for Registered Training Organisations](#)
4. to make sure that assessment tools give us the evidence that the competency standard requires
5. to provide evidence that we can use at internal or external audit
6. to improve our own assessment practices, including the quality of our assessment tools
7. as a form of professional development
8. to build relationships and networks with other people in the VET sector and industry
9. increasing assessor confidence
10. to work out the strengths and weaknesses of assessors, and whether different assessors using the same tools collect the same type and levels of evidence
11. to work out if different assessors make the same judgment of evidence

Not surprisingly, the people we involve in this process are the same people who we involve in the planning & review processes.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT OF VALIDATION

Knowing why we validate is not enough. We also need to understand the context in which we are going to validating. This is important because how we go about the process will be different depending on the context.

Some common contexts include:

- internally - within our own organisation, on the same site, or across different training sites

- externally - between our organisation and another, eg, our RTO and an Industry Skills Council, or an assessors network
- through a licensing or similar body
- peer-based - with colleagues from other training/assessment organisations

Let's look at a couple of examples.

Example 1:

I do some work with an RTO who delivers Certificates II, III and IV in Agriculture. There are not many RTOs who do what they do, and there are a lot of schools who want to use their resources. I don't know much about agriculture, but I do know about learning and assessment. My work with them is mostly about finding ways to link what they do with what schools need, so that schools can access their resources. While I am doing this, I am also looking at the assessment processes and tools to make sure that they will collect the required evidence in a school setting. What this means is that I am reviewing the assessment process and tools to work out if they meet the principles of assessment (especially: is it fair?) and the rules of evidence (especially: is it valid and reliable?).

Example 2:

Unlike the first example, there are lots of people who deliver the TAE10. I work with a number of RTOs, and we exchange assessment items so that they get to have a look at mine, and I get to have a look at theirs. We talk about these assessments and how they might collect evidence that will help us to make good decisions, and especially whether they will "work" for the range of different people we have who do our courses. This is great professionally because I get to learn about ideas of other people, while at the same time fulfilling my AQTF2010 duties.

DECIDE HOW WE ARE GOING TO DO IT

Think about Example 2 above. In it, I got together with some other assessors and we had a look at the assessment tools. This is a common way of conducting a validation. In fancy-talk, it is called an Assessment Panel. Assessment Panels are just one of a number of ways that we can undertake our validation. Of course, how we go about it will depend on what our purpose is.

The following list gives us an idea of some validation processes. An example is included for each so we can better understand when this type might be used.

Assessment Panel

Assessors get together to review each other's assessment processes and tools before they are used.

Assessors from three RTOs who are assessing the same course meet every 3 months to see if their planned assessment will meet the rules of evidence

Moderation Meetings

Assessors (and possibly some others, such as workplace managers) get together to check that decisions about assessment are consistent.

A large company has a training session delivered to 4 groups at the same time. The assessors and company manager get together to make sure that each assessor is marking the participants in the same way.

Field Testing, Trialling and Piloting

Assessor comes up with a new tool, and wants to see if it is going to work before using it.

An assessor within the Aged Care sector gets a Registered Nurse to check that the information included in the tool is accurate.

Team Assessment

Multiple assessors are involved in the one assessment event.

Practical demonstration of delivery skills is assessed by 4 TAE10 assessors, who then compare their judgements and decide together what the outcome will be.

Other ways of conducting validation include:

- benchmarking
- peer review
- client feedback mechanisms
- internal audit processes
- collectively developing or reviewing a bank of assessment tools
- mentoring of less experienced assessors
- using an independent assessment validator to review the whole validation process

VALIDATING LEGAL AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Remember the legal and ethical requirements that affect what we do? Our validation procedures must also ensure that we are meeting these requirements.

The validation process should demonstrate that during assessment and recognition activities:

- client privacy and confidentiality is always maintained
- information provided to all people involved in the process (candidates, assessors, AQTF2010, other bodies) is always accurate and not misleading or deceptive in any way
- environmental standards are always met during assessment activities
- OHS, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), anti-discrimination and other relevant legislation is always followed.

External Validators

In some instances it is even appropriate for technical and subject experts to conduct the validation activities, rather than relying solely on training organisation staff members. The areas of OHS, EEO and environmental legislation are examples of where subject experts could be of assistance as validators.

Resource Parameters

It is also important to consider costs when establishing validation processes. This includes costs in terms of the hours staff are involved in validation activities, as well as other resources that may be required, for example securing the services of subject experts for advice and validation.

Gaining Commitment

Part of the process of establishing validation procedures should also be to aim for a collaborative effort from all relevant parties. The people involved in validation activities must commit to the processes agreed upon, and be given the opportunity to make recommendations to improve those processes.

Gaining a commitment from external training organisations is also desirable. Making set meeting times for assessment panels or teams to get together for validation is one way to help ensure such activities (also known as moderating) occur on a regular basis.

Training organisations need to be able to prove that they follow the Occupational Health And Safety Act during all assessments.

VALIDATING SAFETY

One way of validating the assessment process in terms of safety is to consider and document the following:

- Were hazards identified in the assessment area prior to assessment?
- Were people informed of hazards?
- Did the assessment place people at risk?
- Does the assessment require the setting up of unsafe conditions?
- Was all safety equipment available for assessment?
- Were contingency plans considered for the assessment?
- Was the assessment stopped if the participant failed to demonstrate a critical safety point?

The process of validating assessment safety could also include:

- consulting with other assessors to compare practices
- reviewing the effectiveness of each practice
- checking the requirements of the OHS Act
- consulting with OHS technical experts for feedback.

Note that it is important to document all validation activities, not just those dealing with OHS.

Once we have worked what we want to do, who is involved, and how we are going to do it, we then turn our attention to getting together the [resources](#) that we need.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 7 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3.

CONTRIBUTING TO THE VALIDATION PROCESS

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

It's about two questions:

1. does our assessment meet the principles of assessment?
2. does our evidence meet the [rules of evidence](#)?

If we can honestly answer yes to both of those questions, then our work is valid.

Let's think about this.

We assess to collect evidence. We use that evidence to make judgements. Our judgements are about performance. If performance is judged at a certain standard, then we decide that a person is competent. A competent person gets a qualification. The qualification helps employers to work out who can do what.

That means that if our way of collecting evidence is dodgy, the judgement may be wrong, the qualification may be wrong, and the employer is being deceived.

It also means that if our evidence is flawed, then the judgement may be flawed, the qualification may be flawed, and the employer is being deceived.

APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

We know that there are many different methods and types of assessment. When it comes to validation, it doesn't matter which method is being validated, because they are all reviewed in terms of the same 4 things:

1. Is the assessment method **valid**? ie, does it actually assess what it claims to assess?

2. Is the assessment method **reliable**? ie, does it actually do what it is designed to do, and do it consistently?
3. Is the assessment method **flexible**? ie, does it actually allow itself to be used in different situations or adapted for candidates with special needs?
4. Is the assessment method **fair**? ie, does it actually assess all candidates equally, or does it in some way advantage or disadvantage some people?

In addition to these 4 principles of assessment, there are a couple of other things that we also need to be looking for:

- have the candidates been informed of the context and purpose of the assessment and the process that is going to be used to assess them?
- has the assessment focused on the application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance that is required in the workplace (remember the purpose of vocational education & training?)
- is the assessment method and tool equitable for all candidates, taking into account needs of culture and language, literacy and numeracy (LLN)?

When these two lists are combined, we get a list of seven criteria, known as the National Criteria for Assessment Materials.

It is possible that you have made the connection between these three things and the 4 principles of assessment. It is true that they do come under the principles of assessment. But, perhaps unfortunately, it is also true that these three things seem to be what lots of assessors are not getting right. That's why we remind people of them as well.

APPLYING THE RULES OF EVIDENCE

We also know that there are many different types of evidence. When it comes to validation, it doesn't matter which type of evidence is being validated, because they are all reviewed in terms of the same 4 things:

1. Is the evidence **valid**? ie, does the evidence actually help us make the judgement that we need to?
2. Is the evidence **current**? ie, does the evidence actually reflect the candidate's current abilities?
3. Is the evidence **sufficient**? ie, is there enough evidence to make a considered judgement?
4. Is the evidence **authentic**? ie, does the evidence actually reflect the candidate's own abilities?

VALIDATING ASSESSOR DECISIONS

I guess when it comes to the crunch, what we are really doing when we validate assessment is to think about decisions that the assessor/s made. You see, the way an assessment tool is designed or used comes down to the assessor's decisions about those things. Specifically, the assessor decides:

- what information to include in the assessment tool
- what information to not include in the assessment tool
- the type of language that is used in the assessment tool
- the type of things that candidates will need to do to be assessed
- the type of evidence that is needed to make a decision of competency
- the types of things that candidates can do to provide that evidence
- the level of performance that the evidence indicates (ie, is the candidate competent?)

This means that if we are validating assessment, we are looking at each of these things to see if the decisions that the assessor made are good decisions. What makes a good decision? A good decision is one that meets the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence. If any decision is not a good one, then the whole assessment process - and the decision to award competency or otherwise - cannot be trusted.

Here is another reason to remember the purpose of VET: if we cannot trust the assessment process, then we cannot trust the qualification. Suddenly, we do not have a nationally consistent framework for work-based skills and abilities.

COMMON ERRORS OF JUDGEMENT

There are a few things that just seem to happen a lot, and we need to look at how to identify them when they have occurred.

Let's look at an example.

Example 1:

Steve and I have been mates since school. He is really clever, and has an amazing commitment to community work. He is involved in all sorts of committees and community work, and seems to always be busy doing great things. He comes to me and enrolls in one of my TAA courses - I jump at the chance, because he has contact with lots of other potential students. Because he is so busy, the quality of his assessment is perhaps not as good as it could be. But, he assures me that he is really busy, and reminds me of all the things he has been doing in our community lately. I recognise the hard work that he does, and decide that if he wasn't so distracted by other things, then his assessment would reflect his true ability. I mark him as competent.

Example 2:

Roger and I both train together. We have worked together for years, and I have never had any disagreement with him about any decisions that we have made. We get together to validate our assessment, and just tick the boxes like we always do, while making arrangements for our annual fishing trip

Example 3:

I get a new client organisation, who wants me to deliver the TAA to their job-seekers. My client tells me that they can either pay me the full course fee upfront, or they can pay me the whole amount plus a 25% bonus when the qualification is issued. It turns out that the learners have poor literacy skills, and are long term unemployed people. I have worked with a group of these sorts of people before, and know that they are unmotivated and lazy. I know from other trainers who have worked with this client organisation that they never check the assessment documents, so I just use the same ones from the last training I did. All candidates are deemed competent, and I collect a nice bonus, as well as a great reference because the client organisation has never had more than 40% completion before.

What's the problem?

At the end of the day, the problem with each of these examples is the same thing: decisions were not good. Instead, decisions were made that reflect common errors of judgement:

1. **The Halo effect** - where judgement is influenced by other aspects of a person's performance. Steve might hold the next cure for cancer, but if he cannot produce evidence of competency in my course, then I cannot award him competency. The Halo effect is very common where people are assessing people that they know, especially friends and work colleagues.
2. **Pre-judging** - where judgement is influenced by earlier judgements of a person's performance. Roger and I might have always agreed on assessment decisions, but that does not mean that we always will. Every decision needs to be looked at with new eyes, and not through a filter of past performance, whether good or bad.
3. **Cultural or gender stereotyping** - where judgement is influenced by some bias about the potential level of a person's performance. The unemployed people with low levels of literacy may well have been able to complete the course in a legitimate way if I had designed assessment methods that reflected their needs.

You may have picked up some other problems with the three examples. These include:

- In Example 1, my admiration for the work that Steve does, and my seeing that him completing a course with me could be good advertising means that my decision could be based on business rather than Steve's performance.
- In Example 2, Roger and I being involved in validation together for so long without anyone else having any input means that we can get a bit narrow and self-serving in our validations.
- In Example 3, I was paid a bonus for qualifications issued, meaning that my decisions may have been based on money rather than candidate performance.
- In Example 3, 100% of candidates were judged as being competent, when usually not more than 40% of candidates are judged as being competent.

To avoid these sorts of errors of judgement, as assessors we need to be aware of the [Code of Practice for Assessors](#). Not only that, we need to be sure that we follow this code of practice, and

look to see that it has been followed by others when we are involved in validation activities.

We also need to look for [verifiable data](#) to help us to accurately undertake our validation tasks.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 8 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3.

AQTF STANDARDS FOR RTOS

AQTF2010 provides us with a whole lot of guidance about how to do our job as trainers/assessors. Since many of us will work with an RTO at some point in time, it is particularly important to understand how the AQTF applies to RTOs. The following three standards relate to RTOs.

Standard 1: The RTO provides quality training and assessment across all of its operations

- 1.1 The RTO collects, analyses and acts on relevant data for continuous improvement of training and assessment.
- 1.2 Strategies for training and assessment meet the requirements of the relevant Training Package or accredited course and are developed in consultation with industry.
- 1.3 Staff, facilities, equipment and training and assessment materials used by the RTO are consistent with the requirements of the Training Package or accredited course and the RTO's own training and assessment strategies.
- 1.4 Training and assessment is delivered by trainers and assessors who:
 - (a) have the necessary training and assessment competencies as determined by the National Quality Council or its successors, and
 - (b) have the relevant vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered or assessed, and
 - (c) can demonstrate current industry skills directly relevant to the training/assessment being undertaken, and
 - (d) continue to develop their Vocational Education and Training (VET) knowledge and skills as well as their industry currency and trainer/assessor competence.
- 1.5 Assessment including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):
 - (a) meets the requirements of the relevant Training Package or accredited course
 - (b) is conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence
 - (c) meets workplace and, where relevant, regulatory requirements
 - (d) is systematically validated.

Standard 2: The RTO adheres to principles of access and equity and maximises outcomes for its clients.

- 2.1 The RTO establishes the needs of clients, and delivers services to meet these needs.
- 2.2 The RTO continuously improves client services by collecting, analysing and acting on relevant data.
- 2.3 Before clients enrol or enter into an agreement, the RTO informs them about the training, assessment and support services to be provided, and about their rights and obligations.
- 2.4 Employers and other parties who contribute to each learner's training and assessment are engaged in the development, delivery and monitoring of training and assessment.
- 2.5 Learners receive training, assessment and support services that meet their individual needs.
- 2.6 Learners have timely access to current and accurate records of their participation and progress.

2.7 The RTO provides appropriate mechanisms and services for learners to have complaints and appeals addressed efficiently and effectively. **AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration | 7**

Standard 3: Management systems are responsive to the needs of clients, staff and stakeholders, and the environment in which the RTO operates.

- 3.1 The RTO's management of its operations ensures clients receive the services detailed in their agreement with the RTO.
- 3.2 The RTO uses a systematic and continuous improvement approach to the management of operations.
- 3.3 The RTO monitors training and/or assessment services provided on its behalf to ensure that it complies with all aspects of the AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration.
- 3.4 The RTO manages records to ensure their accuracy and integrity.

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR ASSESSORS

As assessors, our work is very important. After all, the decisions that we make will influence the quality of work that a person will be expected to be able to do. To help us understand the importance of this work, and to guide us in the way that we do undertake and [validate assessment](#), we can refer to a **Code of Practice**.

The US-based National Council for Measurement in Education developed a Code of Practice for Assessors.

That code has been modified to meet the needs of the [Training & Assessment Training Package](#), where we find the following Code of Practice.

- The Code of Practice detailed below is included in these Assessment Guidelines to support professionally responsible and ethical assessment practice and to guide TAA assessors in the responsibilities of their work. (10) The code reinforces the performance outcomes of the TAA04 Training and Assessment Package assessment units.

- The differing needs and requirements of the candidates, the local enterprise/s and/or industry are identified and handled with sensitivity

- Potential forms of conflict of interest in the assessment process and/or outcomes are identified, and appropriate referrals are made, if necessary

- All forms of harassment are avoided throughout the assessment process and in the review and reporting of assessment outcomes

- The rights of candidates are protected during and after the assessment process

- Candidates are made aware of their rights and processes of appeal

- Personal or interpersonal factors that are irrelevant to the assessment of competence must not influence the assessment outcomes

- Evidence is verified against the rules of evidence

- *Assessment decisions are based on available evidence that can be produced and verified by another assessor*
- *Assessments are conducted within the boundaries of the assessment system policies and procedures*
- *Formal agreement is obtained from candidates and the assessor that the assessment was carried out in accordance with agreed procedures*
- *Assessment systems and tools are consistent with equal opportunity rights*
- *Candidates are informed of all assessment reporting processes prior to the assessment*
- *Candidates are informed of all known potential consequences of assessment decisions, prior to the assessment*
- *Confidentiality is maintained regarding assessment decisions/outcomes and records of individual assessment outcomes which identify personal details are only released with the written permission of the candidate/s*
- *Assessment outcomes are used consistently with the purposes explained to candidates*
- *Self assessments are periodically conducted to ensure current competence against the TAE Training and Education Training Package competency standards*
- *Professional development opportunities are identified and sought*
- *Opportunities for networking amongst assessors are created and maintained*
- *Opportunities are created for technical assistance in planning, conducting and reviewing assessment practice and participating in validation.*

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 9 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3.

COLLECTING RESOURCES FOR VALIDATION

Okay, now that we have been reminded of the 'bigger picture' that we are part of, let's focus back on our actual work.

The resources that we need for our validation will depend on the [purpose and context](#), and who will be involved. If it is a review of assessment tools before they are used, then we won't need any student work. However, if we are moderating the assessment outcomes, then we will need a range of student work to compare.

It is very common for people to go into validation processes unprepared. This seems to be because they seem to overlook some resources that they can use to make the job easier for everyone involved. It is not at all fun to attend a validation meeting, only to spend the first half of the meeting working out what resources we need and trying to find them.

No, it is much better to be prepared. Not only will it make the process quicker, it will make it better.

WHAT SORTS OF RESOURCES CAN WE USE?

Depending on what our purpose and context are, we might find any of the following to be helpful:

- documentation outlining the basis of assessment decisions
- reports and records of assessment decisions
- validation templates
- validation checklists
- competency standards
- sampling techniques
- banks of assessment tools
- survey proformas

Regardless of which resources we choose to use, it is important that we have them organised in an efficient manner. Being able to access the things that we need is just as important as knowing that we need them.

As part of our ongoing work, it is worthwhile to create some procedures to centralise assessment records, and to keep samples of assessment tools, evidence and outcomes. If we do this in an ongoing manner, then it becomes much easier to complete meet our validation requirements (and keep our RTO registration!).

Of course, nothing in the VET sector is ever simple. After all, we are working to maintain national standards in a country of states and territories which have their own requirements, and for industries which also have their own requirements. This means that it is worthwhile for us to be aware of the external bodies who might be interested in seeing evidence of your validation processes.

Once you get the hang of your role as trainer/assessor, it is recommended that you familiarise yourself with the requirements of the following:

- The AQTF2010 - for more information about the AQTF2010 visit www.training.com.au
- State or Territory registering body requirements - for example, Department of Education and Training of Victoria. For a full list of registering bodies and links to their websites visit www.training.com.au
- Award and enterprise agreements and relevant industrial arrangements
- Confidentiality and privacy requirements - for more information visit the Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner's website at <http://www.privacy.gov.au/>
- Scope of registration - this refers to the products or services that an RTO is registered to provide. More information is available from State or Territory registering bodies - for a full list and links visit <http://training.gov.au/>
- Relevant legislation from all levels of government that affects business operation
- Specific OHS legislation - for the OHS Act, national standards and codes of practice, and links to State and Territory OHS bodies, visit the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission website at <http://www.nohsc.gov.au>
- Environmental legislation - for information on specific areas of interest and links to State and Territory legislation, visit the federal government's Environment Portal website at <http://www.environment.gov.au>
- Industrial relations, anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation - visit the following websites for details: Australian Industrial Relations Commission at <http://www.airc.gov.au>; for Commonwealth, State and Territory anti-discrimination and equal opportunity information and links visit <http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au>
- Compliance with quality management requirements such as those for AS/NZS ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management Systems - information can be found at the Standards Australia website <http://www.standards.com.au>

TEMPLATES KEEP US ORGANISED

The benefits of using templates has been covered elsewhere.

For validation processes, it makes our life a whole lot easier if we have templates and checklists for each type of evidence that we are likely to need. If we develop our templates/checklists to match the requirements of AQTF2010 and/or our other requirements then we will find it quite easy to do three things:

- to undertake the validation process
- to identify areas requiring some amendment or improvement
- to communicate these findings to others

Some people use paper versions that they can just write on during a validation meeting. Others use word-processed documents. Some even use databases. Whichever way you decide to do it, be sure that the effort in managing the templates does make your job easier and not harder. This means including version control processes and ensuring that everything is stored in an accessible way.

Let's look at an example.

Let's say that we are conducting validation to determine that our training staff possess the required

qualifications to assess the TAE10 course. The Training Package tells us that an assessor of the course must possess the TAE10 qualification.

So, we can develop a template that we can use for this and other qualifications. Building templates is quite easy if we think about what information we need to use. For this example, we need to know:

- the names of the assessors
- the course/s that they are assessing
- the minimum qualifications required
- the qualifications that each assessor has
- if the qualifications they have meet the minimum required
- who did the validation meeting and when
- what action is required

With this information, we can put together a template such as the one below. It can be used in many situations, including for the example above.

Assessor Validation Template			
<i>Assessor Name</i>	B West	C Gribble	S Stevens
<i>Program Being Assessed</i>	TAA04 Cert IV Training & Assessment		
<i>Min Qualifications Needed</i>	Cert IV Training & Assessment		
<i>Qualifications Held</i>	Bachelor of Science Grad Dip in Education Doctor of Philosophy Cert IV Training & Assessment (2008)	Bachelor of Further Education & Training Master of Education Diploma in Business Cert IV Training & Assessment (2008)	Bachelor of Education Certificate IV in Assessment & Workplace Training (2001)
<i>Assessor Meets Requirements?</i>	<u>Yes/No</u>	<u>Yes/No</u>	<u>Yes/No</u>
<i>Action Required:</i>	S Stevens needs upgrade to Cert IV Training & Assessment ASAP. All assessments in Cert IV Training And Assessment already signed off by S Stevens must be viewed and signed off by another qualified assessor as well, so past records are in order. Responsibility: Manager Action Date: 30 April 2009		
<i>Validated By:</i>	E Jones		<i>Date:</i> 13 March 2009
<i>Version Control</i>	Created on 13/03/2009 4:18:00 PM		Created by E Jones
<i>Filename:</i>	TAA Validation Staff Qualifications 13 April 2009		<i>Review Date:</i> June 2009
What needs to be done?	Who is going to do it and by when?	Who meets the minimum requirements?	Version Control procedures in place

GOOD VALIDATION NEEDS GOOD DATA

When it comes to validation, we need to make sure that the data we use is reliable. More than that, we need to make sure that it can be verified. This means that if necessary, we can prove that it is true and accurate. The sorts of verifiable data that help us include:

- candidate feedback

- customer satisfaction surveys/interviews
- comments from colleagues
- management decisions
- other qualitative or quantitative data

For all of these types of data, what makes them verifiable is that if we asked for the information again, we would probably get very similar results. But, since much of this data is from people, we need to be careful that we do not take on too much of their own biases. To help us, we can use set questions when we organise to collect feedback.

Commonly, this includes a feedback form that candidates complete at the end of the assessment event. The sorts of questions that we can include are:

- did you find the information about the assessment useful? sufficient?
- how much advance notice of the assessment did you receive? was this enough?
- were all OHS issues considered during the assessment?
- were you adequately prepared for the assessment?
- did you agree to the assessment taking place when it did? the way it did?
- were the assessment activities relevant to the learning that took place?
- were the assessors professional in their conduct? comments?
- do you know how the assessor made their decision?
- do you think the assessment results are fair?

Once we have a clear idea of the process that we will use, and the information that we need, we can put together a [validation plan](#) to guide our activities.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 10 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3.

VALIDATION PLAN

Once we have worked out what it is that we are going to focus on in our validation, we can put together a validation plan. This will need to be kept on record with the many other documents that we need to keep for the AQTF. But, not only that, it essential that we make clear to everyone what we intend to do. After all, if people don't understand what we are trying to do, then they probably won't be too helpful.

On this page, you will see three examples. The first is an actual validation plan that tells us what the validation process was going to involve. It involved three steps, which are called Phases in this plan:

1. assessing candidates
2. collecting [verifiable data](#) from assessors
3. collecting [verifiable date](#) from candidates and employers

VALIDATION PLAN

Assessment Tool Validation Plan TR00054

Introduction

The assessment tools for the Unit of Competency CR428 have been implemented. The acceptance of these tools depends on all employees have trust in the results the assessments tools produce. To this end, the assessment tools will undergo validation before they are established fully in the training and assessment system. Validation will occur in accordance with this plan.

Validation Process

There will be three phases to the validation process:

PHASE 1:

Identification and elimination or minimisation of variables in the assessment tools and assessment process. This phase will concentrate on two areas:

Area1:

Assessor training in use of the assessment tools. By training assessors in proper use of the assessment tools, variation caused by incorrect application of the tools will be avoided. This will lead towards desired validation results.

Area2:

Interpretation of assessment requirements and results by assessors and assessees. A more consistent result will be achieved by removed any ambiguity and conflicting decision points from the assessment tools. Ambiguity and conflict will be picked up by this phase by encouraging use of the appeals system and monitoring the assessment tools as factors in initiating a need to appeal.

PHASE 2:

A validation exercise involving a randomly selected group of assessees being assessed by a second assessor. This will not be an attempt to discredit any assessor. Any discrepancies will be viewed as factors affecting validity and will be addresses before moving to the next phase.

PHASE 3:

Final validation survey where job performers who have been assessed as competent and their supervisors/team leaders will be asked to provide feedback on final performance of tasks.

ASSESSOR FEEDBACK FORM

**Supervisor/Team Leader Survey Sheet
for
Assessment Tool
Validation Plan TR00054**

Name:

Date:

This survey is being conducted as part of the validation plan TR00054 for validation of assessment tools used to assess competency of operators in your work area. Your involvement in completing the survey is appreciated. The information you provide will be kept confidential.

Use a separate sheet for each operator in your team.

Please read each element of competency statement for the operator's job. Mark how often tasks are performed in the job and your degree of satisfaction with the operator's competency.

Element	How frequently are tasks performed?			How satisfied am I with the level of competency?	
	Never	Sometimes	Often	Extremely dissatisfied	Very satisfied
Element 1.1					
Element 1.2					
Element 1.3					
Element 1.4					
Element 1.5					

 CANDIDATE/EMPLOYER FEEDBACK FORM

Job Performer Survey Sheet For Assessment Tool Validation Plan TR00054										
Name:								Date:		
Department:										
<p>This survey is being conducted to identify ways in which our training and assessment can be improved. Though the questions are about how you perform your job, the information will not be used in any way to affect your performance appraisal, promotion or training plan.</p> <p>Please read each element of competency statement relating to your job and then mark the rating scale at the point you feel best describes your level of confidence in performing tasks related to that element.</p>										
Element	How confident am I in performing the tasks?									
	Extremely Confident								Not at all confident	
Element 1.1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Element 1.2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Element 1.3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Element 1.4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Element 1.5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Of course, all documents would be correctly filed and subject to [version control](#) processes.

 THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 11 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3.

CONTRIBUTING TO VALIDATION OUTCOMES

Okay. So we have undertaken our validation process, and have collected a whole lot of data about the assessment process. What do we do now?

ANALYSE FINDINGS

Using our data, we need to make some **conclusions** about what the data tell us. We can do this ourselves, but collaborating with others often leads to a better understanding.

Analysing the data does not have to be a complicated thing. If we keep our mind focused on the purpose of validation, then we can quite easily work out where the assessment process did and did not meet the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence.

Once we have agreed with our colleagues on what did and did not meet these requirements, we can begin to work out how to get things back on track.

REPORT FINDINGS

If assessment is not meeting the required standards in any way - large or small - it is essential that we document this. Our **validation report** should include:

- the assessment process being validated
- who was involved in the validation
- the findings of the validation
- the action plan to ensure all areas meet requirements

The following is a standard template that many RTOs use to report their validation findings. It has been partly completed to demonstrate the sorts of information that it can include.

Validation Approach	Outcome of Review Activities	Follow-Up Action for Continuous Improvement
1. external peer review of assessment evidence and decisions	all evidence collected was similar in nature, decisions were consistent with other assessors	Diarised repeat validation activity for 3 months' time with different RTO
2. internal peer review of assessment methods	all assessment methods checked by another assessor against the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence. All found to comply	Diarised repeat validation activity for six-weekly team meeting

Validation Approach	Outcome of Review Activities	Follow-Up Action for Continuous Improvement
3. random sampling of student assessment papers	30% of cover sheets do not include a place for the candidate to sign a declaration of authenticity	include declaration of authenticity on all assessment sheets prior to use; all assessors to be advised of this at next staff meeting
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		

Our findings can be shared with a range of people, and their feedback can help us to better understand ways of improving our work. Commonly, we share our validation findings with:

- colleagues from within our own training organisation, such as managers, supervisors, other assessors and other staff.
- other training organisations
- client organisations
- consultants or other external review people
- the AQTF2010 or State/Territory registering body

Of course, sharing findings and getting feedback is one thing. Being able to translate that into actions is another.

USING FEEDBACK ON VALIDATION FINDINGS

Because trainers/assessors are people, they have feelings. This means that whenever we are dealing with issues discovered during validation, we need to be aware that how we do our job can greatly affect how other people do their job. We need to use good communication skills. Because of this, it is also a good idea to use a structured process of steps to review the issues that we found, and to come up with solutions to them.

One useful tool is Dwyer's Six-Step Approach.

The Six Step Approach to Problem Solving By Negotiation

- Step 1** *Select a time that is convenient for all involved and that is not overshadowed by negative feeling.*
- Step 2** *Define specific needs by discussing and listening.*
- Step 3** *Brainstorm solutions without evaluating or judging any of them at this point.*
- Step 4** *Evaluate solutions by discussing and listening to all ideas and feelings about each solution*
- Step 5** *Choose solutions that everyone can agree on, and plan for them.*
- Step 6** *Measure your results.*

There are other variations of the above steps. The actual steps are not so important. What is critically important is that the steps are understood by everyone involved, and the steps are followed by everyone involved. This helps to get rid of any personal bias or feelings, and lets people focus on the task at hand.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

In Dwyer's approach, Steps 5 and 6 relate to making recommendations to improve the assessment processes. It will help the new assessor if they know from the beginning what some of the more common recommendations involve:

- ongoing professional development for assessors
- changes to policy and procedures (from organisational to national levels)
- amendments to how records are managed (eg, how results are recorded)
- changes to resources to reduce time or cost
- changes to assessment system procedures
- partnership arrangements (such as when our organisation may not have the expertise needed to assess in a certain area)
- improvements in the way that we collect evidence
- developing alternative assessment tools
- more extensive use of benchmarks
- working more closely with technical experts

Arising from these can be some specific changes to our assessment strategies. Commonly, these include:

- the way competency standards or other criteria for assessment and validation are identified and interpreted
- how the assessment guidelines in Training Packages are applied

- the type of arrangements made for RPL and RCC, including providing guidance and assistance to candidates in gathering and evaluating evidence
- how assessment methods for competency standards or other criteria are determined
- the way assessment tools to suit chosen competency standards or other criteria are selected
- the type of organisational arrangements made for assessment, including physical and human resources, roles and responsibilities and partnership arrangements, where relevant
- the details of relevant quality assurance procedures
- how risks are identified and controlled.

Once we have reached this stage, it is again time to involve other people. This is because some of our recommendations might require action by people who have more authority than us, or because our recommendations need other people to implement them.

A simple example here might be the example from Validation Approach 3 from the table above, where the following recommendation was made: *include declaration of authenticity on all assessment sheets prior to use; all assessors to be advised of this at next staff meeting*

Now, this is not something that an individual trainer will be able to do. Instead, the RTO Training Manager might be involved. They can review the templates to ensure that they enable the declaration to be include, review the version control processes to ensure that everyone is using the latest versions, and also do what needs to be done to make sure that all assessors are collecting the information that is needed - in this case, the signed declarations from candidates.

As always, all of these things will be documented in an appropriate way.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Information in this section relates to TASK 12 OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 3.

THINKING ABOUT WHAT YOU JUST DID

There are many ways to finish off a course of study.

The easiest – and perhaps one of the most common - is to just finish with the last bit of information that the learner needs to know and believe that if they even got to the end then chances are they are really not interested in reading anything else.

Another is to refer back to the beginning of the course and remind learners of what the course was meant to do, and hope that they did that along the way.

For the more philosophical, perhaps the end comes with a statement about the ‘bigger picture’ and how the course fits into some greater thing, be it the fabric of society or something else.

For me, for this course, I think that none of these are really appropriate. I struggle to conclude this information, because it is not meant to mark an ending. If we accept the idea that continuous improvement is at the heart of being good at the work of a trainer and assessor, then surely we must reflect on what we have learned, put it in the context of our own work, and start to think about better ways.

Better ways sure, but not for everything or everyone. But, better ways for you to better meet the needs of your learners, so that they will better learn.

This course represents what the Business Services Industry Council wants you to know and be able to do as a trainer/assessor. If you are able to now look back over it in a critical way, a way that shows that you can make the link between how it was presented and how people learn, then perhaps ironically, the course has succeeded in doing its job.

It is now over to you.

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1. LEARNING PROGRAM SUMMARY

<i>Name of Training Organisation:</i>		
<i>Title of Training Program</i>		
<i>Client Name/Address</i>		
<i>Client Contact Person and contact details</i>		
<i>Requirements of the Learning Program</i>		
<i>Context of the Learning Program</i>		
<i>Scope Statement</i>		
<i>How will I identify:</i>		<i>Related Document</i>
<i>Training needs</i>		
<i>Learning characteristics</i>		
<i>Learner support requirements</i>		
<i>Constraints to delivery</i>		
<i>Risks to delivery</i>		
<i>People who need to be involved</i>		
<i>Specific Learning Objectives</i>	<i>Learner Characteristics</i>	<i>Learner Support Needs</i>

1.		
2.		
3.		
<i>Risks</i>	<i>Constraints</i>	<i>People Involved (Responsibilities)</i>

2. DETERMINE TECHNIQUES AND RESOURCES RELEVANT TO LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND LEARNER CHARACTERISTICS

<i>Learning Objectives</i>	<i>Possible Delivery Techniques</i>	<i>Learner Characteristics</i>	<i>Selected Activities</i>	<i>How can they be contextualized?</i>
1a.				
1b.				
etc				

3. RESOURCES

<i>Selected Activities</i>	<i>How can they be contextualized?</i>	<i>Existing Resources</i>	<i>New Resources Required</i>

<i>Selected Activities</i>	<i>How can they be contextualized?</i>	<i>Existing Resources</i>	<i>New Resources Required</i>

4. PROGRAM DELIVERY PLAN

Session	Date/Time	Learning Objectives	Learning Activities	Resources <i>E: existing</i> <i>N: New</i>	Assessment Methods	OHS Issues	Trainers	Related Documents
1								
2								
3								
4								

<i>Session</i>	<i>Date/Time</i>	<i>Learning Objectives</i>	<i>Learning Activities</i>	<i>Resources</i> <i>E: existing</i> <i>N: New</i>	<i>Assessment Methods</i>	<i>OHS Issues</i>	<i>Trainers</i>	<i>Related Documents</i>
5								
Confirmed By:					Signature:		Date:	

5. SESSION PLAN TEMPLATE

<i>Name of Training Organisation:</i>		<i>Venue:</i>	
<i>Title of Training Program</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Client Name/Address</i>		<i>Time:</i>	
<i>Client Contact Person and contact details</i>		<i>Trainer/s:</i>	

Delivery Strategy

<i>Time</i>	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Learning Objectives</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Learning Objectives</i>

Confirmed By:	Signature:		Date:
Self-Evaluation:			
Signature/Date:			

6. ORGANISATIONAL TIMELINE

<i>Week Commencing</i>	<i>Tasks</i>							
	<i>Resource</i>			<i>Venue Organisation</i>	<i>OHS</i>	<i>Comms.</i>	<i>Complete</i>	<i>Comment</i>
	<i>Collection</i>	<i>Modification</i>	<i>Development</i>					
							†	
							†	
							†	
							†	

Assessment Plan

Qualification			
Name of RTO contact person		Telephone	
ASSESSMENT PLAN			
Assessment Task:			
Assessment Method:			
Assessor/s:			
Date of Assessment:			
Units of competency – elements to be assessed			
Brief assessment of task:			
Resources Required:			
Instructions for Candidates:			

Adapted from: Learning and Assessment Strategy Outline Template, Learning and Assessment Strategies – Part 2: Resource Guide (ANTA, 2002).

Assessment Plan (2)

Qualification			
Name of RTO contact person		Telephone	
ASSESSMENT PLAN			
Assessment Task:			
Assessment Method:			
Assessor/s:			
Date of Assessment:			
Units of competency - elements to be assessed			
Brief assessment of task:			
Resources Required:			
Instructions for Candidates:			

Adapted from: Learning and Assessment Strategy Outline Template, Learning and Assessment Strategies – Part 2: Resource Guide (ANTA, 2002).

Assessment Tool

Qualification			
Name of RTO contact person		Telephone	
ASSESSMENT PLAN			
Assessment Task:			
Assessment Method:			
Assessor/s:			
Date of Assessment:			
Units of competency - elements to be assessed			
Brief assessment of task:			
Resources Required:			
Instructions for Candidates:			
Instructions for administering:			

Assessment Plan

Qualification			
Name of RTO contact person		Telephone	
ASSESSMENT PLAN			
Assessment Task:			
Assessment Method:			
Assessor/s:			
Date of Assessment:			
Units of competency – elements to be assessed			
Benchmarks for assessment:			
Reasonable adjustments:			
Specified variations or restrictions			
Rules for verifying assessment decisions:			
Identified hazards in the assessment environment and appropriate controls and reporting mechanisms:			
OHS Requirements			
Information on access and equity requirements:			
Checklist for evaluation of work samples:			

Adapted from: Learning and Assessment Strategy Outline Template, Learning and Assessment Strategies – Part 2: Resource Guide (ANTA, 2002).

Assessment Tool (2)

Qualification			
Name of RTO contact person		Telephone	
ASSESSMENT PLAN			
Assessment Task:			
Assessment Method:			
Assessor/s:			
Date of Assessment:			
Units of competency - elements to be assessed			
Brief assessment of task:			
Resources Required:			
Instructions for Candidates:			
Instructions for administering:			
Benchmarks for assessment:			
Reasonable adjustments:			
Specified variations or			

restrictions on the assessment tool:	
Rules for verifying assessment decisions:	
Identified hazards in the assessment environment and appropriate controls and reporting mechanisms	
OHS requirements:	
Information on access and equity requirements:	
Checklist for evaluation of work samples:	

VALIDATION ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

Validation Issue	What action is required?	Who is responsible for this action?	When will this action be reviewed?

Comments:

Name:

Date:

Signature:

COLLABORATION PLAN TEMPLATE

	When	Purpose	With whom?	Method	Desired outcome
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

LEARNING PROGRAM COMPETENCY MAP

Program title	
Unit/s of competency addressed	
Delivery mode	

Sessions							
Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6	Session 7	Session 8

Unit code and title:									
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									

RISK CONTROL PLAN TEMPLATE FOR A LEARNING PROGRAM

Name of learning program			
Delivery mode		Training environment	

Hazard	Risk	Control	Monitor
	→	→	→
	→	→	→
	→	→	→
	→	→	→

LEARNING PROGRAM PLAN TEMPLATE

COVER SHEET

Program name	
RTO	
Client	
Purpose/Focus	
Qualification	
Competency standards	
Prerequisites	
Delivery mode	
Program duration (total)	
Assessment	
Number of learners	
Target learner group (profile)	
Special needs	
Venue and equipment required	
Learning materials and other resources required	
Pre-program information or pre-work	
Program administration	
People to be informed	
OHS issues	
Other logistics	
Review mechanisms	

continued

LEARNING PROGRAM CONTENT AND AGENDA

Session no. & Title	Time	Learning outcomes: <i>Learners should be able to...</i>	Content (topics)	Delivery	Application/ Assessment	Resources

End of learning program plan template

REVIEW STRATEGY FOR A LEARNING PROGRAM DRAFT

Name of learning program	
Principal developer/s	
Focus of the review	
Data to be collected	
Method for gathering feedback	
Stakeholders who will provide feedback	
Method for reviewing, collating and summarising feedback	
Recommended improvements to be approved by	
Version control considerations	
Ongoing review strategy	

EVALUATION TOOL FOR A LEARNING PROGRAM DRAFT

Name of program reviewed	
Name of reviewer	
Date completed	

Instructions for the reviewer

Thank-you for helping to review this learning program!

1. Please use the space provided to answer all questions listed below.
2. Email your completed evaluation to someone@somewhere.com.au by <date>.

1. Focus: Is the focus and purpose of the learning program clear and appropriate?	
Strengths	
Weaknesses	
Recommendations	

2. Competency requirements: Are all requirements of the unit/s of competency addressed in the content and structure of the program?	
Strengths	
Weaknesses	
Recommendations	

3. Chunking & sequencing: Does the learning sequence provide effective & manageable blocks of learning?	
Strengths	
Weaknesses	
Recommendations	

4. Activities: Are they interesting, relevant and appropriate to outcomes and learner characteristics?

Strengths	
Weaknesses	
Recommendations	

5. Assessment: Are assessment points, methods and tools appropriate and effective?

Strengths	
Weaknesses	
Recommendations	

6. Equity: Are equity needs effectively addressed?

Strengths	
Weaknesses	
Recommendations	

7. OHS: Are risk areas and contingencies identified? Is the program safe and effective?

Strengths	
Weaknesses	
Recommendations	

Any other comments?

WORKPLACE LEARNING PLAN TEMPLATE

General information		
Learner		
Trainer		
Date		
Workplace		
Reason for learning		
Learning goals		
Learner information		
Date of pre-program consultation		
Job title		
Key duties		
Learner characteristics	<i>General</i>	
	<i>LL&N</i>	
	<i>Health issues</i>	
	<i>Learning preferences</i>	
	<i>Availability for training</i>	
Support needs		

continued

Workplace learning plan template, cont'd

Logistics	
Monitoring progress and assessing achievement of learning goals	
Use of workplace routines to promote learning	
Resources	
OHS issues	
Personnel to support the plan	
Personnel to be informed	
Administrative requirements	
Review processes	

continued

Workplace Learning Pathway			
Phase 1: Summary & Duration	Dates/Times		
	Outcomes		
	Location		
	Activities		
	Assessment		
	Personnel		
Phase 2: Summary & Duration	Dates/Times		
	Outcomes		
	Location		
	Activities		
	Assessment		
	Personnel		
Sign-off			
Trainer	_____ (name)	(signature)	(date)
Learner	_____ (name)	(signature)	(date)
Supervisor	_____ (name)	(signature)	(date)

end of workplace learning plan template

SESSION PLAN TEMPLATE (SKILL SESSION)

Session title		Total time	
Outcome			
Resources			
Preparation			

Time	Activities	
INTRODUCTION		
	I	
	N	
	T	
	R	
	O	
	S	
BODY		
	Demonstrate	
	Practice	
	Summarise	
	Assess	
CONCLUSION		
	O	
	F	
	F	

SESSION PLAN TEMPLATE (KNOWLEDGE SESSION)

Program			
Session title		Total time	
Outcome			
Resources			

Time	Activities	Resources
INTRODUCTION		
	I	
	N	
	T	
	R	
	O	
	S	
BODY		
	Explain	
	Apply	
	Summarise	
	Assess	
CONCLUSION		
	O	
	F	
	F	

QUALITY EVIDENCE CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to help determine whether or not evidence you have selected as the basis for assessment is of an acceptable quality.

Does the evidence identified as the basis for assessment:	Yes	No
1. Address all elements and performance criteria of the unit/s addressed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Address all specific or critical aspects of evidence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Address all required knowledge?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Address all required skills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Demonstrate the relevant employability skills to an acceptable standard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Include at least one source of direct or indirect evidence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Include enough supplementary evidence to back up direct/indirect evidence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Include evidence of products and processes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Demonstrate the candidate's ability to perform the task in realistic working conditions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Demonstrate the candidate's ability to perform the task over a period of time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. And finally... is it enough without being too much?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ASSESSMENT PLAN (RPL ASSESSMENT)

RTO	
Date prepared	
Candidate	
Assessor	
Competency standard/s	
Process undertaken to determine evidence required (tick appropriate box)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting between assessor and candidate <input type="checkbox"/> Other—describe:	
Evidence to be submitted by candidate	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
How RPL evidence will be presented (tick appropriate box):	
<input type="checkbox"/> as a written portfolio <input type="checkbox"/> in an RPL interview— anticipated duration: _____ hours	
<input type="checkbox"/> Practical assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	
Assessment date/s	
Assessment location	
Venue requirements	
Documentation required	

continued

Assessment plan (RPL assessment), cont'd

OHS issues	
People to be informed	
Specialist support required?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (describe):
Other issues?	

Signed by:

 Assessor

 date signed

 Candidate

 date signed

ASSESSMENT PLAN
(TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT PATHWAY ASSESSMENT)

RTO	
Date prepared	
Program name	
Competency standard/s	
Candidate/s	
Assessor/s	
Assessment date/s & timeframes	
Assessment procedure	
Assessment location	
Venue requirements	
OHS issues	
Documentation required	

continued

Assessment plan (training and assessment pathway assessment), cont'd

People to be informed	
Reasonable adjustments	
Provision for specialist support	
Other issues	
Recording and reporting mechanisms	
Review mechanisms	

Signed by:

Assessor

date signed

Approved by:

Authorising party (print name)

Signature of authorising party

date signed

ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT TEMPLATE: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Instructions and requirements

- This checklist is to be completed by the assessor
- For a satisfactory result, all steps of the procedure must be performed to the standard described below.

Details of observation			
RTO			
Candidate name			
Assessor name			
Competency standard			
Assessment date			
Task/procedure observed			
Observation checklist			
Did the candidate:		Yes	No
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
Results			
Overall performance	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Not Yet Satisfactory		
Feedback to candidate			
Assessor signature	Date:		
Candidate signature	Date:		

ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT TEMPLATE: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written test—

<Name and code of competency standard addressed or name of test>

Candidate name: _____

date: _____

Instructions and requirements

<Add information here as appropriate>

Part A: True/False

Instructions: Circle the true or false beside each statement (1 point each)

1. <statement here>	true	false
2. <statement here>	true	false

Part B: Multiple Choice

Instructions:

Circle letters A, B, C or D below each statement to indicate the correct response (1 point each)

3. <state question here>:
- A <answer option 1>
 - B <answer option 2>
 - C <answer option 3>
 - D <answer option 4>

Part C: Short answer questions

Instructions: Answer the following questions—about _____ page required per question.

4. <Question here>

An **answer key** must also be developed!

TOTAL SCORE: _____ out of _____ = _____%

OVERALL RESULT: Satisfactory (score of _____% or higher)
 Not Yet Satisfactory (score of _____% or lower)

ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT TEMPLATE: VERBAL QUESTIONS

Verbal questioning instrument—

<Name and code of competency standard addressed or name of questioning instrument>

Candidate name: _____ date: _____

Assessor name: _____

Instructions for assessors

- Please ask the candidate the questions below
- Document quality of answers provided by using the space and checklists provided below
- For a satisfactory result, <state requirements for satisfactory completion here>

Question 1:				
Key information required for 'satisfactory' result (tick when provided)		Assessor notes	S	NYS
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Question 2: Another question				
Key information required for 'satisfactory' result (tick when provided)		Assessor notes	S	NYS
Key information required for 'satisfactory' answer	<input type="checkbox"/>			

OVERALL RESULT: Satisfactory (all questions answered to a satisfactory standard)
 Not Yet Satisfactory (not all questions answered to a satisfactory standard)

Assessor signature: _____

Date signed: _____

ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT TEMPLATE: PROJECT

Project—

<Name and code of competency standard addressed or name of project>

Instructions for candidates

<Use this space to note how to complete project and what to do when completed>

Requirements for satisfactory result for this project

All evidence must be of a satisfactory standard to achieve a satisfactory result overall.

Assessment tasks

Overview

<Use this space to give an overview of the project>

Submit the following

Assessor to complete these columns
→

Item to submit		Required quality	Quality of evidence	
			S	NYS
1			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Feedback for candidate

Additional **Instructions for assessors** may also be needed in another document.

Overall result

- Satisfactory (all evidence was provided and was of required quality)
 Not yet Satisfactory

Assessor signature: _____

Date signed: _____

ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT TEMPLATE: RPL EVIDENCE PLAN AND ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

RTO				
Date of RPL				
Candidate				
Assessor				
Competency standard/s				
Process undertaken to determine evidence required (tick appropriate box)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting between assessor and candidate <input type="checkbox"/> RPL guide used <input type="checkbox"/> Other				
Evidence required				
Assessor to tick (☑) correct column when reviewing evidence →			S	NYS
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
Reviewing the evidence (assessor to complete): Did the evidence provided				
fully address the requirements of the competency standard assessed?			yes	no
demonstrate the candidate's ability to perform the task/s in a workplace, over a period of time			yes	no
Overall Result (assessor to complete and candidate to sign when completed)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Competent <input type="checkbox"/> Not yet competent				
Assessor signature:		date:		
Candidate signature:		date:		

COMPETENCY MAP (MATRIX)

Unit: <Note name and code of competency standard here>

Tasks:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Elements and performance criteria		Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4
1.					
1.1					
1.2					
1.3					
1.4					
1.5					
1.6					
2.					
2.1					
2.2					
2.3					
2.4					
2.5					
2.6					
(optional) Map to other parts of unit (e.g. critical aspects for assessment or required knowledge)					
•					
•					
•					

ASSESSMENT BRIEF CHECKLIST

Candidate name	
Assessor name	
Competency standard assessed	
Date of assessment brief	

Tick if the following was discussed/clarified with the candidate:

Reason and purpose of the assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Competency standards being assessed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confirm candidate understanding of how competency-based assessments work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment procedure—what candidate must do and how long it should take	<input type="checkbox"/>
Requirements for 'competent' result	<input type="checkbox"/>
What will happen if result is 'C' (competent) and what will happen if result is NYC (not yet competent)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time / date / location of assessment and/or assessment deadline	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other information about the assessment as needed: <i>e.g. what to bring, what to wear, how to prepare</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reasonable adjustments and/or specific support needs—note here if applicable:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appeals process	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confidentiality and names of those who will have access to assessment records	<input type="checkbox"/>
Responsibility to submit authentic evidence (where appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment choice	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed by:

candidate signature

assessor signature

date signed

date signed

RECORD OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS

RTO		
Candidate name		
Assessor name		
Competency standard		
Assessment pathway	<input type="checkbox"/> Training & assessment <input type="checkbox"/> RPL	
Assessment date/s		
Assessment location/s		
Assessment attempt	<input type="checkbox"/> First attempt <input type="checkbox"/> Second <input type="checkbox"/> Third	
Results for each element	C	NYC
Element 1:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Element 2:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Element 3:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall Result		
<input type="checkbox"/> Competent <input type="checkbox"/> Not yet competent <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmit (more evidence needed)		
Assessor comments/details of action plan (if applicable)		
Assessment decision and action plan accepted by candidate?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No—the candidate will appeal the assessment decision.		
Assessor signature:	date:	
Candidate signature:	date:	

ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK FORM

RTO	
Candidate name	
Assessor name	
Competency standard	
Assessment pathway	<input type="checkbox"/> Training & assessment <input type="checkbox"/> RPL
Assessment date/s	
Assessment location/s	

Instructions for the candidate Please rate your assessment experience by ticking (<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>) the appropriate column beside each question below.	Excellent	Very good	Fair	Poor
1. Did the assessor clarify the assessment process with you before the assessment began?				
2. Were assessment documents clear and helpful?				
3. Did your assessment experience match expectations?				
4. Did the assessor support you both during your preparation and throughout the assessment?				
5. Do you think the assessment was appropriate for the competencies assessed?				
6. Do you feel that the assessor made a fair assessment decision?				
7. Did you receive specific, useful feedback about your performance?				
8. Did you and the assessor discuss what will happen after the assessment?				
9. Was the assessment environment comfortable and suitable?				
Overall, how would you rate:				
10. The assessment process				
11. The assessment materials and documentation				
12. The assessor				
13. (if applicable) assistance provided by other RTO staff.				

Provide space on the second page for the candidate to note strengths of assessment, recommendations for improvement and other comments

TEMPLATE: RECORD OF ASSESSMENT VALIDATION

Cover sheet	
Purpose of validation	
Relevant competency standard/s (if applicable)	
Resources needed	
Validation date/s, time/s and length	
Validation location	
Validation approach	<input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone or on-line chat <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Validation moderator	
Other participants	
Preparation required	

continued

Appendix 13—Template: Record of assessment validation, cont'd

Validation Criteria Checklist				
Criteria	S	NYS	Comments	
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
Summary of feedback/results				
Recommendations for improvement				
Action required	By whom?		By when?	
1				
2				
3				
Signatures of validators				