Unit A2: Assess candidates' performance through observation

Overview

This unit is appropriate for you if you are involved in:

- assessing candidates against the agreed standards
- planning assessments with candidates
- giving feedback to candidates on your assessment decisions

The activities you are likely to be involved in:

- watching staff members in line with agreed assessment plans
- assessing candidates' performance
- assessing candidates' knowledge and how they apply their knowledge
- making a record of your assessment decisions
- working with other people who are affected by the assessment process, such as line managers or supervisors
- giving feedback to candidates

What the unit covers:

1 agreeing and reviewing plans for assessing candidates' performance
2 assessing candidates' performance against the agreed standards
3 assessing candidates' knowledge against the agreed standards
4 making an assessment decision and giving feedback

Scope

This unit covers assessing candidates by watching them in the workplace and assessing the areas of their knowledge that you cannot test by watching them work. You can do this by using materials and check lists from awarding bodies.

Observation may take place in person or using appropriate technology such as a video tape. Evidence may also include examining work products. You can use evidence from tests to support evidence of candidates' performance. You must also show you are aware of and understand the appeals and complaints procedures and the processes for handling them.

Element A 2.1. Agree and review plans for assessing candidates' performance

Performance Criteria
You must be able to do the following:

a Identify the best situations when you can assess performance.
b Use evidence that takes place in the workplace and ask relevant questions.
c Choose opportunities for assessment which disrupt normal work as little as possible.
d Choose opportunities for assessment which provide access to a valid, safe, reliable and fair assessment.
e Explain the options open to the candidates clearly and constructively if somebody disagrees with the proposed assessment plan.
f Discuss and agree the proposed assessment plan with the candidates and other people who may be affected.
g Review and update plans at agreed times to take account of candidates' progress.

Element A 2.2. Assess candidates' performance against the agreed standards

Performance Criteria
You must be able to do the following:

a Explain to candidates how the assessment of their work will take account of their needs.
b Watch candidates in a safe environment.
c Only use the agreed criteria when assessing the evidence.
d Assess evidence fairly against the agreed criteria.
e Identify and assess any other evidence that is relevant to the standards.
f Check that the evidence has come from each candidate's own work.
g Watch candidates without interfering with their work.
h Speak to the appropriate person if you or a candidate has any difficulties.
i Give candidates feedback after you have watched them in the workplace.

Element A 2.3. Assess candidates' knowledge against the agreed standards

Performance Criteria
You must be able to do the following:

a Identify which areas of candidates' knowledge have been covered by watching them in the workplace.
b Collect evidence of knowledge that has not been covered by watching the candidates in the workplace.
c Use valid methods to assess candidates' knowledge.
d Ask clear questions which do not 'lead' candidates.
e Speak to the appropriate person if you or a candidate has any difficulties.
f Give candidates feedback after you have asked them questions.

Element A 2.4. Make an assessment decision and provide feedback

Performance Criteria
You must be able to do the following:

a Base your assessment decision on all the relevant evidence.
b Give candidates clear and constructive feedback, which meets their needs after you have given them your assessment.
c Encourage candidates to ask for advice on your assessment decision.
d Make an accurate record of your assessment decisions.
e Pass on records that are accurate and easy to read to the next stage of the process.
f Follow the agreed complaints and appeals procedures if candidates do not agree with your assessment decisions.

Knowledge requirements

You need the following knowledge to perform this Unit of Competence. You will show this through the outcome of your work activities and through evaluations of your systems and processes.

You need to be able to show that you have general knowledge and understanding of the following:

The nature and role of assessments of national standards

1 what the national standards are and how to judge evidence against them fairly and reliably
2 how to identify relevant evidence from what is or may be available
3 why it is important to make an accurate judgement against only the agreed standards
4 how to identify the role of knowledge evidence in assessments and ways of collecting evidence
5 how to identify relevant knowledge evidence from candidates' performance
6 why it is important to collect evidence related to unpredictable events and how to do this
7 how to give candidates with special assessment requirements access to assessment

Principles and concepts

8 how to involve different candidates in putting assessment plans into practice
9 how to encourage candidates with different levels of confidence and experience to take an active part in their assessment
10 how to give constructive feedback to candidates in line with you assessment decision
11 how to adapt feedback to candidates' different levels of confidence and experience
12 how to offer different types of advice in a constructive way that will allow candidates to choose different options
13 how to encourage candidates to ask questions and get advice
14 how to identify evidence that takes place naturally in the workplace and why it is important for assessments
15 how to choose appropriate and efficient ways of collecting performance evidence
16 what the available sources of knowledge evidence are and how to use them
17 where to get advice on when and how to use simulations and alternative sources of evidence
18 how to check that evidence is relevant and genuine
19 how to set tests, questions and simulations
20 how to ask questions which will give you relevant evidence while not affecting candidates' confidence
21 how to judge knowledge evidence fairly and reliably
22 how to deal with disputes and appeals in line with agreed procedures
23 how to identify the difficulties you may have in collecting and assessing knowledge evidence
24 how to collect evidence by watching candidates in the workplace without interfering with their work
25 how to identify difficulties you may have in making fair and reliable judgements on evidence
26 who to speak to within the local and national system if you have difficulties

External factors influencing the assessment of national standards

27 how to meet candidates' needs for access to safe, fair and reliable assessments in line with relevant legislation
28 how to recognise and challenge unfair discrimination in assessment
29 how to identify different types of special assessment requirements and how to provide for them
30 who to get advice from when providing for particular assessment requirements
31 how to make a record of and process your assessment decisions
32 how to meet the requirements of the quality assurance process
33 how to use opportunities to update your skills and experience
34 how to identify and use information on current assessment best practice
35 how to use personal development opportunities to improve your assessment skills