

SQA unit J8RR 04

Assess Learner Achievement in the Workplace Using Direct and Indirect Methods

Source: CLDLD09 Assess Learner Achievement
(approved June 2021)

Originating organisation: Lifelong Learning UK

Original URN: L and D9

Overview

This unit is about assessing learning and development against agreed criteria. It covers a range of different assessments including competence, knowledge and understanding and skills.

Who this unit is for

This unit is for those who assess in the workplace using a wide range of assessment methods, both direct and indirect. To achieve this unit, the assessor-candidate will use the following direct methods:

- observation
- examination of work products
- questioning

They may also be involved in authenticating indirect evidence such as:

- discussion with learners
- testimony of others (witnesses)
- examination of learner statements
- assessing learners in simulated environments
- recognising prior learning (RPL) — also known as the accreditation of prior achievement (APA.)

The assessment decisions made by the assessor-candidate will be used to confirm achievement in a range of situations such as assessing SVQs, other regulated workplace qualifications or in-company standards.

For this unit, assessments must be of a substantial but realistic and manageable piece of the learner's work. Each assessment should cover the full assessment cycle to include planning, assessing, judging evidence, providing feedback and recording the decision.

In addition, the assessor-candidate will reflect on their own assessor practice as well as identifying and undertaking ongoing continuing professional development activity.

What this unit is about

The types of activities the assessor-candidate will be involved in include:

1. Preparing to assess.
2. Planning assessments.
3. Assessing learner performance and knowledge.
4. Confirming progression and achievement.

To achieve this unit, the assessor-candidate must assess the competence of two learners in their place of work, on two separate occasions (four assessments in total), using a set of standards such as those provided by a national awarding / standard setting body or the learners' employer.

The assessor-candidate's knowledge will be assessed by them taking part in a discussion with their assessor (recorded / noted), or answering questions (either written or oral), or providing a statement of how and why they carried out certain activities, or a combination of these.

The assessor-candidate's performance will be assessed by their assessor observing them carrying out assessments and by looking at products of their work such as:

- notes or documentation relating to pre-assessment planning discussions such as learner agreement documentation and Induction checklists.
- assessment plans agreed with learners.
- records detailing assessment decisions.
- feedback records used to convey progression / achievement to learners.
- records of the standardisation activities the assessor-candidate has been involved in.

The assessor will also observe the assessor-candidate assessing, giving feedback to at least one of the learners and reviewing progress.

Performance What the assessor-candidate must do:	Knowledge What the assessor-candidate must know
1. Prepare to assess. (a) Ensure learners understand the purpose, requirements and processes of assessment.	1. The organisational, legal and professional requirements that should be followed when planning learning and developments programmes. 2. The role of the assessor and the relevant requirements of the role. 3. The roles of those involved in maintaining the quality of assessment and the relevant requirements of these roles. 4. The agreed procedures for planning, preparing for and carrying out assessments. 5. How to judge when the learner is ready for assessment. 6. The range of information that should be made available to learners. 7. The key concepts and principles of assessment. 8. The current criteria against which assessments are made and the current regulations and requirements relating to their assessment. 9. The learner's job role and their work environment and how this influences which assessment approach to use. 10. Agreed procedures for preparing, planning and carrying out assessments in own area of responsibility. 11. How to ensure the health and safety of the learner is maintained during assessment.

Performance What the assessor-candidate must do:	Knowledge What the assessor-candidate must know
2. Plan assessments. (a) Identify evidence that is valid, authentic, reliable, robust, current and sufficient. (b) Plan to use valid, authentic, reliable, robust, current and sufficient assessment methods. (c) Plan assessment to meet requirements and learner needs.	1. Guidelines for assessment planning as appropriate to own area of responsibility. 2. The key concepts and principles of assessment (validity, authenticity, reliability, currency, sufficiency (VARCS)). 3. The key concepts and principles of quality assurance. 4. The uses, benefits and drawbacks of different assessment methods. 5. The types of risks that may be involved in the assessment process and how to manage these. 6. How to involve learners in the planning of assessments. 7. How assessment arrangements can be adapted to meet the needs of individual learners. 8. Issues related to equality and diversity that may affect the assessment process and how to address these. 9. How to make the assessment environment appropriate to the learner's needs and the criteria being assessed. 10. The relevant procedures when there are disputes concerning assessment.

Performance What the assessor-candidate must do:	Knowledge What the assessor-candidate must know
3. Assess learner performance and knowledge. (a) Collect evidence that is valid, authentic, reliable, robust, current and sufficient. (b) Use assessment methods that are valid, authentic, reliable, robust, current and sufficient. (c) Make assessment decisions against specified criteria in accordance with the relevant assessment guidance. (d) Work with others to ensure the standardisation of assessment practice and outcomes.	1. The key concepts and principles of assessment (competent versus not yet competent). 2. Appropriate criteria for judging the quality of the assessment process. 3. How to make sure that assessment decisions are made against specified criteria and are valid, reliable, fair and robust. 4. How to determine when evidence is sufficient to make an assessment decision. 5. How to judge the validity, authenticity, reliability, robustness and currency of evidence and what to do when there is doubt. 6. Standardisation processes and how to contribute to those. 7. How to co-operate and work effectively with others involved in the assessment process.
4. Confirm progression and achievement. (a) Provide feedback to the learner that affirms achievement and identifies any additional requirements. (b) Maintain required records of the assessment process, its outcomes and learner progress. (c) Reflect on own practice and identify professional development needs.	1. The purpose and value of feedback in the assessment cycle. 2. Factors to consider when providing feedback to learners. 3. How to record and store assessment decisions, who they should be made available to and the data protection and confidentiality guidelines that should be followed. 4. The current quality requirements for assessment processes and systems in your area of responsibility. 5. The value and purpose of continuing professional development for assessment practitioners.

Evidence requirements

Stage 1: Prepare to Assess.

Performance evidence

1. An explanation of how the assessor-candidate made sure their learners understood the purpose, requirements and processes of assessment, linking with the knowledge requirements.
2. Documentation, such as an Induction participation checklist and initial learner agreement, confirming each learner's agreement to be assessed and that they have received all of the relevant information. This evidence must cover two assessments of two learners (four assessments in total.)
3. An explanation of how the assessor-candidate prepared for the role and gathered information on the standards being assessed, assessment strategy / guidance, standardisation meetings / decision logs and relevant centre policies and procedures on assessment, linking with the knowledge requirements.

Knowledge evidence

The assessor-candidate must demonstrate they have the knowledge specified. This may be evidenced through one or more of the following:

- discussion with their assessor
- answering written or oral questions
- providing a personal statement

Stage 2: Plan Assessments.

Performance evidence

1. An explanation, with supporting documentation, showing how the assessor-candidate:
 - Identified evidence sources and assessment opportunities (in line with the principles of assessment) that ensured they could collect valid, authentic, reliable, robust, current and sufficient evidence.
 - Ensured they planned to use valid, authentic, reliable, robust, current and sufficient assessment methods in line with principles of quality assurance.
2. Evidence of planning and agreeing how and what is to be assessed for at least two assessments of two learners (four assessments / methods in total) to meet the learners' needs. Planning must cover the following assessment methods as a minimum:
 - observation of performance
 - examining work products
 - questioning

Evidence requirements (continued)

Evidence of planning to use one of other indirect methods listed below:

- discussion with learners
 - testimony of others (witnesses)
 - examining learner statements
 - assessing learners in simulated environments
 - Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) — otherwise known as the Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA)
3. Explanation of how to plan and use the indirect methods listed above, that were not used in practice. The assessor-candidate must include the benefits and drawbacks of using each of these methods.

Knowledge evidence

The assessor-candidate must demonstrate they have the knowledge specified. This may be evidenced through one or more of the following:

- discussion with their assessor
- answering written or oral questions
- providing a personal statement

Stage 3: Assess Learner Performance and Knowledge.

Performance evidence

1. Assessment records showing how assessments were carried out against specified criteria for two learners (four assessments / methods in total). There must be evidence that the assessor-candidate has used the following direct methods as a minimum:
 - observation of performance
 - examining the learner's products of work
 - questioning
2. Assessment records showing the use of at least one of the indirect methods listed below and knowledge evidence of how to assess using other such methods:
 - discussion with learners
 - testimony of others (witnesses)
 - examining learner statements
 - assessing learners in simulated environments
 - Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) — otherwise known as the Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA)

Stage 3: Assess Learner Performance and Knowledge (continued)

Performance evidence (continued)

The assessor-candidate should also provide an explanation of the methods they have not used. The evidence generated for methods not used in stage 2 may, if appropriate, be used to cover this requirement.

3. The assessor-candidate must also provide a statement confirming why they felt the assessment methods they used were valid, authentic, reliable, robust current and sufficient.
4. An endorsing statement and / or supporting record(s) from the person responsible for internal quality assurance, confirming the assessor-candidate has met all criteria in this stage.
5. Evidence of how the assessor-candidate, when working with others, contributed to standardisation in assessment practice and outcomes, evidenced through records of the standardisation decisions made and supported by witness testimony.

Knowledge evidence

The assessor-candidate must demonstrate they have the knowledge specified. This may be evidenced through one or more of the following:

- discussion with their assessor
- answering written or oral questions
- providing a personal statement

Stage 4: Confirm Progression and Achievement.

Performance evidence

1. An observation by the assessor of the assessor-candidate providing feedback and reviewing progress with a minimum of one learner.
2. Records of feedback and reviewing learner progress in relation to two learners covering four assessments / methods in total.
3. Authentication from the person responsible for internal quality assurance confirming the assessor-candidate has maintained records of learner progress and the outcomes of the assessment process.
4. Current evidence of continuing professional development in the relevant area of practice, demonstrating the assessor-candidate continues to meet the standard set out in the relevant assessment strategy.

Stage 4: Confirm Progression and Achievement (continued)

Performance evidence (continued)

Knowledge evidence

The assessor-candidate must demonstrate they have the knowledge specified. This may be evidenced through one or more of the following:

- discussion with their assessor
- answering written or oral questions
- providing a personal statement

Glossary

Within this unit, the following terms and explanations are used:

Assessment method

A means of generating evidence of a learner's knowledge and / or skills. Ways of measuring learning and development, for example, observation, questioning, checking products of work, setting assignments.

Assessor-candidate

The learner working towards the Assessor qualification who is assessing the competence, skills, knowledge and understanding of learners undertaking vocational workplace qualifications or in-company standards.

Assessment requirements

A broad term used to cover assessment criteria, assessment strategies, assessment tasks.

Assessment strategy

A method of ensuring quality control for vocational qualifications which may include information such as the overall scope of the strategy, related qualifications, quality assurance information, evidence criteria, and qualification requirements for assessors and verifiers in the subject area. Assessment strategies can be found via the websites of Awarding bodies or relevant sector skills organisations.

Authentic

A means of generating evidence of a learner's knowledge and / or skills. Ways of measuring learning and development, for example, observation, questioning, checking products of work, setting assignments.

Current

Current evidence should allow decisions to be made confidently about the currency of skills and knowledge claimed and that the learner is competent at the point of assessment.

Diversity

Acknowledging that each individual is unique, and recognising our individual differences in, for example, culture, ability, gender, race, religion, wealth, sexual orientation or any other individual characteristic.

Equality

A state of fair treatment that is the right of all people regardless of differences in, for example, culture, ability, gender race, religion, wealth, sexual orientation or any other group characteristic.

Glossary (continued)

Evidence

This could be for example learner progress, learner attainment, learner satisfaction, staff engagement as appropriate to the quality indicators.

Environment

This includes the physical environment in which learning and development takes place but also covers group dynamics and behaviour.

Fair

Ensuring that everyone has an equal chance of getting an accurate assessment.

Health and safety

This includes physical health and safety as well as emotional wellbeing.

Identify and collect evidence

This is done through the assessment process, for example by assessor observations, checking products of work, asking questions, setting assignments.

Learner

The individual entered for a qualification or in-company standards who is being assessed. Often used interchangeably with 'candidate' out with the context of Learning and Development and can be used in reference to a learner who is at the point of assessment.

Outcomes

These could be outcomes for the group, as a whole, for example, enabling team effectiveness and / or outcomes for the individuals who make up the group, for example individual skill acquisition.

Practice

This refers to the 'way' that you carry out your work and takes account of factors such as your approach to your work.

Quality requirements

These could be for example, organisational, legal / statutory, funding or awarding organisation requirements.

Reliable

Consistently achieves the same results with the same (or similar) group of learners.

Requirements

These could be the requirements of the practitioner's own organisation or those of an external organisation, such as awarding organisation.

Glossary (continued)

Risk assessment

This could be a formal and written risk assessment but could be informal and dynamic, monitoring and controlling risk on an ongoing basis. Risk includes health and safety but may also cover other types of risk, for example the risk of problems arising which interfere with the assessment process, or the risk of using inappropriate assessment methods.

Robust

Robust evidence is able to withstand criticism and its use can be easily justified.

Role

This is used to describe the job that you are contracted to carry out and the work that you do.

Special Assessment Arrangement

An agreement made with the learner and the employer / organisation to ensure fair assessment of the learner without diluting the standards. For example, taking account of shift working by arranging assessment opportunities to suit the learner's work pattern.

Sufficient

Enough evidence as specified in evidence requirements or assessment strategy.

Technology

This refers to both hardware and online tools / apps which can be used in the delivery and assessment of learning programmes.

Valid

Relevant to the criteria against which the learner is being assessed.

History of changes

Edition	Description of change	Date
01	Removal of “robust” and “robustness” as a Principle of Assessment and the acronym; VARCS from page 4, Stage 2, Knowledge point 2.	Aug 2025