

Assessor Training

Future Performance Training Academy | Version 1.1

LEARNER GUIDE



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Assessment Practice

Future Performance Training Academy

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Version 1.1

Learner Guide

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Welcome to Assessment Practice

Purpose

SAQA sees the role of assessment as “Measuring the achievement of specified National Qualification Framework Standards and Qualifications”.

Assessment needs to be conducted against the specific outcomes using the assessment criteria against unit standards which has been set out in the National Qualifications Framework. Therefore assessment links learning with the specific outcomes and evidence of the learning.

This course will help you to have a clear understanding of outcomes based assessment and recognition of prior learning. It will teach you to design and develop such assessments against set standards and criteria.

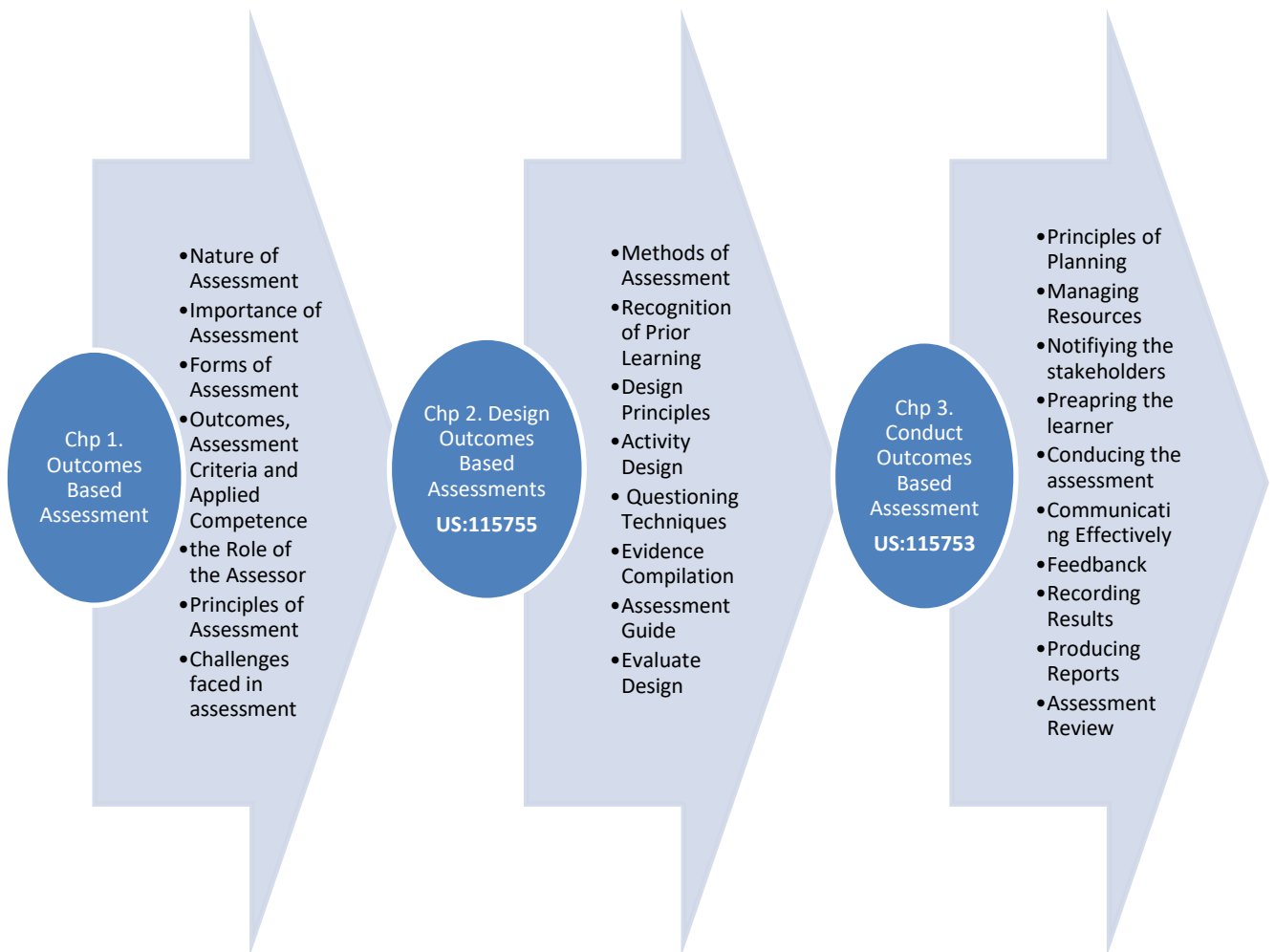
You will also be able to conduct outcomes based assessment according to guidelines given by SAQA, ensuring learner competence is measured effectively using sound assessment principles.

Learn how to document results and prepare reports according to the requirements of the different stakeholders in assessment.

Once you have completed this course you will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of outcomes-based assessment
- Prepare for assessments
- Conduct assessments
- Provide feedback on assessments
- Review assessments.
- Demonstrate understanding of design principles of outcomes-based assessment
- Design outcomes-based assessments
- Develop assessment activities
- Develop assessment guides
- Evaluate assessment designs and guides
- Demonstrate understanding of the conceptual underpinnings and purposes of the recognition of prior learning

Course Map



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Foreword

Before we start with the understanding of assessment, how it is planned, conducted and designed we must have a relative understanding of how it links into the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

The National Qualifications Framework has been designed to support the shift of education to quality.

Learners earn credits towards National Qualifications through a variety of learning, e.g. Schools, colleges, training courses, on the job, or even through the recognition of learning from prior experience.

All qualifications need to meet quality requirements set out by the NQF and will be based on clearly defined national standards.

This allows for assessment of competence against the standards. The emphasis are based on what a learner knows and can do, rather than how long it takes to complete a program of learning.

The NQF is based on the principles of access.

- The focus of the NQF is that everyone in South Africa should have access to learning of quality and portability, and that the skills should be transferable across the various sectors of the economy.
- The NQF aims to integrate education and training into a standardized structure and a recognized qualification system. All training and educational standards are registered according to fields of learning and the level of difficulty.

Many qualifications are awarded on the basis of work place assessments (WPA's). Individuals can, therefore, earn qualifications whilst going about their normal daily activities in their normal place of work.

This ensures that the person's ability truly reflects their competence and is not the reflection of a theoretical test or role play. It determines how individuals apply their skills and knowledge in a real life situation.

It compares the individual to an objective standard and not to the performance of other individuals. A person can take as long as they need to and continue to attempt to prove competence. This promotes lifelong learning of the individual.

In summary, the NQF is:

“A set of principles and guidelines which registers and recognizes learner achievement of acquired skills and knowledge, ensuring an integrated system that encourages life-long learning”

The concept of a National Qualifications Framework is not new. Countries including England, Scotland, Australia and New Zealand have established a National Qualifications Framework to address education and training issues.

Additionally, many other countries such as Canada, Argentina, Romania, the USA and Vietnam are already preparing for National Qualifications.

In New Zealand, the NZQA was established in 1990 to bring together all qualifications and education into a framework. They currently have an 8 level framework, with more than 10,000 unit standards registered. In Australia the national framework for the recognition of training (NFROT) became law in 1992. The move to outcomes based vocational education and training has become a key element of training reform in Australia.

In 1986 in the UK, the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) was given the responsibility of developing a comprehensive qualifications system. NVQ's were introduced and now the UK has a framework of over 800 NVQ's. Scotland has also introduced a similar system of SNVQ's.

Skills revolution is governed and driven by three main laws.

The South African Qualifications Authority Act (1995)

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is responsible for ensuring that all qualifications are of a high quality and are registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

The Skills Development Act (1998) –

Ensure that the skills of people in South Africa were improved.

The Skills Development Levies Act (1999)

Focuses on how skills development is to be funded.

Outcomes Based Learning

Within the context of the NQF and the Skills Development Acts, all learning programs are to reflect the OUTCOMES BASED Approach.

A “learning program” is a set of learning activities in which the learner will be involved in working towards the achievement of one or more outcomes.

In this Outcomes Based approach, the structure and design of the program is based on the skills, outcomes and competencies that need to be acquired and applied by the learner.

This involves deciding on what these skills, outcomes and competencies are and how they are to be assessed, before deciding on content or methods of learning.

Therefore learning programs will need to be aligned with the NQF, by being based and directed towards outcomes, competencies and unit standards.

Learning programs should also contain a set of learning outcomes to provide the learner and the facilitator with the knowledge and focus regarding the intended destination of the learning.

Learning is directed towards the specific outcomes and assessment criteria against unit standards which have been set out in the National Qualifications Framework.



Assessment will be against the specific outcomes using the assessment criteria against unit standards which has been set out in the National Qualifications Framework.

Therefore assessment links learning with the specific outcomes and evidence of the learning.

SAQA sees the role of assessment as “Measuring the achievement of specified National Qualification Framework Standards and Qualifications”.

It is therefore about making decisions and judgments regarding evidence provided by the learner.

Evidence, that is of the outcomes of learning in relation to specified criteria.

Benefits to Learners:

- Access to National Qualifications
- Receive quality education and training
- National and International recognition
- Recognition for Success at Work
- Increased Job Satisfaction
- Assists career advancement
- Flexibility & choice in what, where and how to learn
- Focused on their needs
- Portable between occupations and employers
- Acknowledgement of Record of Achievement
- More opportunity to constantly build credits
- Record of learning
- Facilitates lifelong learning
- Incentive for achievement
- Clearer career paths
- Better motivation
- Reduced grievances

Benefits to Managers:

- Reduces recruitment time
- Gives structure to coaching/mentoring process
- More professional employees
- Employee takes responsibility for learning
- Less subjectivity
- Easier decision making processes
- Makes job profiling easier
- Employees more motivated
- Eases pressure on budgets (RPL)
- Assist with succession planning

Benefits to Organizations / Employers:

- Assists with recruitment practices
- Training is measurable
- Competent workforce
- Job profiling is easier
- Improves skills of workforce
- A more professional industry
- Claiming of grants
- Reduced grievances
- Career pathing
- Training geared towards the needs of the job
- Increased productivity

Benefits to Society:

- More Professional Service
- Value for Money
- Service in Line with International Standards
- Skilled Workforce
- Adapt Quickly to Changes
- Globally Competitive
- Internationally Comparable Standards & Qualifications
- Greater Transparency in the Outcomes of Education and Training

You may read more about SAQA, SETA's, NQF, NSB etc to gain a deeper insight to where all of the above links to.

Acronyms and abbreviations used in the program

NQF	The National Qualifications Framework
ACE	ACE Advanced Certificate in Education
CHE	Council for Higher Education
CTS	Conformance to Specifications
DoE	Department of Education
DoL	DoL Department of Labour
ETD	Education, Training and Development
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance body
FET	Further Education and Training
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HI-EDQC	HI-EDQC (proposed) Higher Education and Training Qualifications and Quality Assurance Council
HRDS	HRDS Human Resource Development Strategy
HSRC	HSRC Human Sciences Research Council
ISO	International Standards Organisation
MoU	MoU Memorandum of Understanding
NAP	NAP (draft) A New Academic Policy for Programmes and Qualifications in Higher Education
NLRD	NLRD National Learners' Records Database
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSA	National Skills Authority
NSB	NSB National Standards Body
NSDS	NSDS National Skills Development Strategy
NSP	NSP National Skills Plan
OBE	Outcomes-based Education
QC	QC Qualifications and Quality Assurance Council
QMS	Quality Management Systems
RPL	RPL Recognition of Prior Learning
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SDF	SDF Skills Development Facilitator
SETA	SETA Sector Education and Training Authority
SGB	Standards Generating Body
SMME	SMME Small-, Medium- and Micro Enterprise
SO	Specific outcome
SSP	SSP Sector Skills Plan

TOP	TOP (proposed) Trade, Occupational and Professional Qualifications and Quality Assurance Council
TQM	Total Quality Management
TUP	TUP Training of Unemployed Persons
US	Unit standard
WSIP	WSIP Workplace Skills Implementation Plan
WSP	WSP Workplace Skills Plan

Section 1

Introduction to Outcomes Based Assessment

Learning Outcomes:

The following learning outcomes are covered in this section:

- ✓ Demonstrate understanding of outcomes-based assessment
- ✓ Understand the nature of assessments
- ✓ Understand the importance of assessment
- ✓ Explain the shift in assessment practice
- ✓ Identify the assessors role
- ✓ Apply the Principles of Assessment
- ✓ Understand the process of recognition of prior learning and how it fits into assessment.

What is Assessment all about?

To define assessment is a difficult task. According to Knight (1998) assessment is about

“... the collection of information about an individual learner/employee and thus making judgment that is based on the evidence about performance and or an inference about competence.”

Mabaso (2001) describes assessment as follows:

“it is essentially a process of determining whether the learner is competent as measured against the unit standards.”

There are three steps that make up assessment:

- generating and collecting evidence of achievement;
- evaluating this evidence against standards; and
- recording the findings of this evaluation.

(Mabaso 2001)

There is no doubt that the role of assessment has changed. The most definite change is that outcomes-based assessment focuses on continuous assessment, self- and peers-assessment and integrative assessment. The table below indicates the differences between traditional assessment and outcomes-based assessment.

	Traditional practices	Outcomes-based practices
Focus	Assessment of content as well as learning ability. Assessment is limited to one education stage.	Assessment of learning outcomes as well as the actual practice. Assessment is towards life-long learning.
Foundation	The foundation is in the curricula defined by a central body.	The building block is the standards and qualifications that require performance as defined by the relevant field (sector) and determined by many stakeholders who actively participate in the standards generation process.
Assessment requirements	Assessment is an integral part of the learning programme.	Assessment is linked to the learning programme because of its adherence to the common standards. Assessment is integrative and focuses on the application of competence as per the outcomes and assessment criteria.
Evidence	<p>Assessment evidence is drawn from the assignments and examination. The types of evidence are determined by the syllabus.</p> <p>Assessment is norm-referenced. Assessment evidence is collected mostly summatively. The learner is mostly passive in the decision about evidence of competence.</p>	<p>Assessment evidence is collected using a variety of methods in the appropriate context. The types of evidence collected are governed by quality criteria (criterion-referenced).</p> <p>Assessment evidence is collected both formatively as well as summatively. The learner is proactive about issues of evidence.</p>

According to the Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (2003) assessment should:

- enhance individual growth and development, monitor the progress of learners and facilitate learning;
- find out what a learner knows, understands and/or can do;
- make judgements based on valid and appropriate evidence – these judgements should enable us to make well informed decisions about what a learner needs to learn next;
- give an indication of the success of the programme of learning including how appropriate resources have been;
- include a variety of techniques;
- encourage learners to go beyond simple recall of data or facts;
- close the gap between the classroom and the real world;
- include opportunities for learners to perform tasks and solve problems; and
- make provision for adaptive methods of assessments.

When does Assessment Take Place?

Assessment can take place:

Before a learning programme: This can be called 'admission'. It is used to decide whether the learner have the required literacy and numeracy skills to succeed in the programme.

At the beginning of the programme: This can also be called 'placement' or 'needs analysis'. Placement can be done by educators after learners have been admitted to the programme. It is used to place learners into groups or to identify particular needs that learners might have.

During the programme: Assessment takes place to determine whether learners have achieved the required level of competence (formative or continuous assessment)

At the end of the programme: Assessment takes place to determine whether learners have achieved the required level of competence throughout the programme. (Summative assessment)

After the programme: Assessment after the programme takes place to evaluate the programme or through the recognition of prior learning.

Who Conducts Assessments?

There are three different categories of possible assessors:

Self-assessment: Learners assess themselves.

Peer assessment: Learners assess each other.

Assessor assessment: Assessors assess learner

Where Does Assessment Take Place?

There are three categories of where assessors take place:

The real-world environment: Assessment that takes place on site.

Example: Learners are taken to a river to compile evidence of pollution. The educator assesses the participation of learners.

A simulated environment: Assessment takes place in an environment that simulated the real environment.

The training environment: learners cannot demonstrate competence – they can only talk or write about what they would do in the real environment.

Nature and Uses of Assessment

Assessment has a prominent role in the outcomes-based approach to education and training, which is central to South Africa's National Qualifications Framework. It is therefore critical for curriculum developers, learning facilitators and assessors to have a thorough understanding of outcomes-based assessment, to plan, facilitate and assess learning programs.

Assessment is a structured process for gathering evidence about an individual's achievement in relation to specified learning outcomes. The evidence is used for making judgments and taking decisions about the learner's achievements and/or non-achievements.

Purpose of Assessment

This serve to gather information to be used for various reasons such as:

- Placement at a level in the learning program.
- Selection for access to study further and to job levels.
- Diagnosis of progress, achievement and challenges.
- Measurement of competence, potential and performance.
- Recognition of prior learning.
- Award of credits or qualifications in relation to standards and qualification.
- Monitoring and control of the quality of an education system and its processes.

Assessment can be used to make the following decisions:

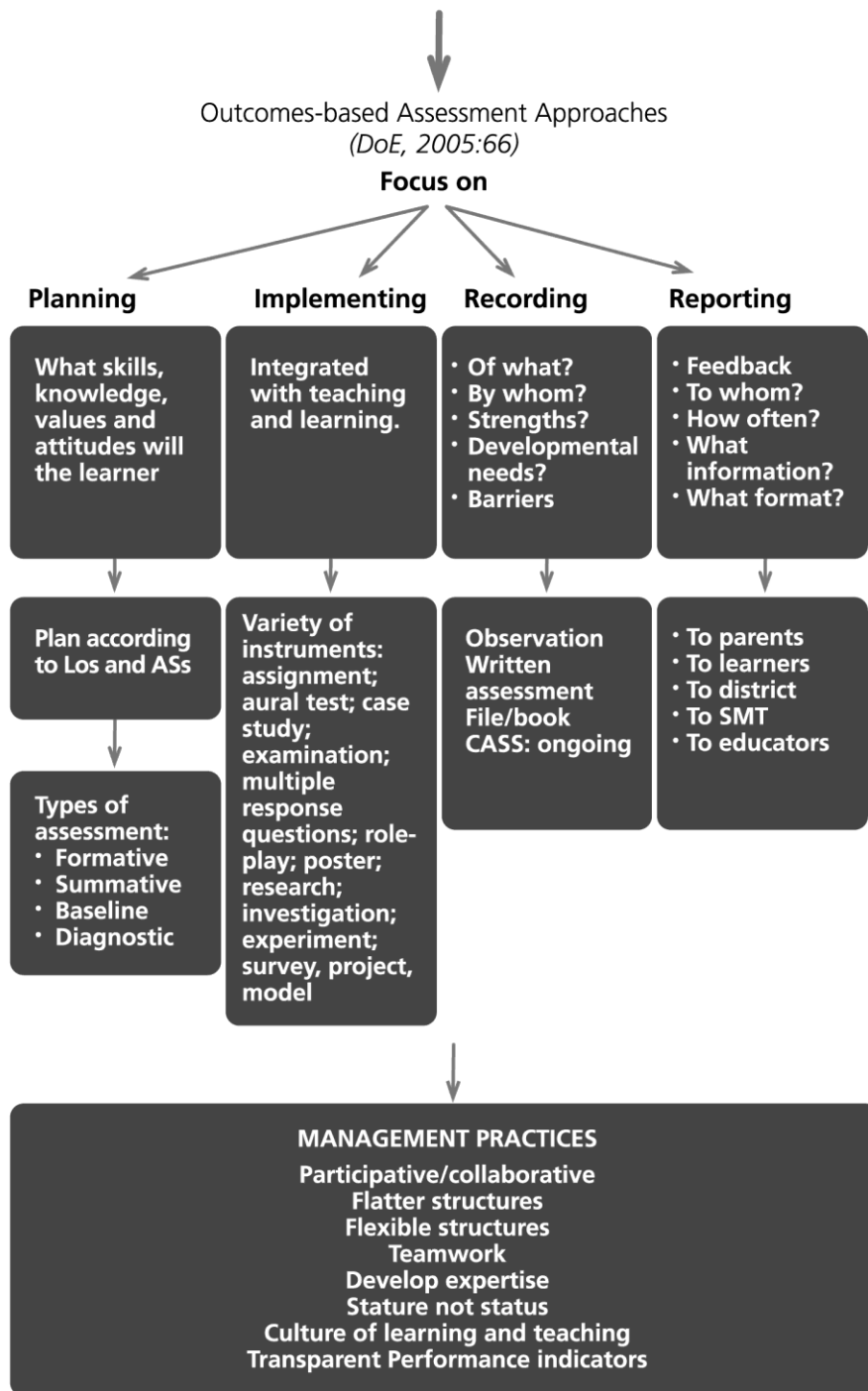
- Is the person able to do a certain job to the required standard?
- Which components of the job/task is he/she able to perform to standard?
- What other learning does he/she require to build the competence required to perform the specific task?
- Is the person ready to embark on a particular course of study, i.e. is the basis necessary for building further competence in place?

In an outcomes-based education and training system the focus is on what the learners must be able to know, understand, do and apply at the end of the learning experience.

The Importance of Assessment

The emphasis on assessment is driven by internal organizational demands as well as legal requirements. The following are the five main driving forces:

1. Demand for improved workplace performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive business environment
2. Demand for quality education and training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The skills required in the workplace must be developed. • Learning must translate into improved individual and organizational performance. • Skills must be measurable.
3. Requirements of the NQF.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and training must be outcomes-based. • Assessment must measure achievements of specified outcomes
4. Requirements for the registration of assessors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All assessors must be registered by ETQAs. • Assessors must be competent to conduct assessment in accordance with the generic Unit Standard for assessors.
5. Requirements for the accreditation of providers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the criterion for accreditation is evidence that the provider has a system for the effective management of assessment processes



The Shift in Assessment Practice

Outcomes Based versus Content Based Design and Assessment

This table below shows the major shift in the way assessment is conducted in an outcomes-based education and training system as compared to a content based assessment way:

	Outcomes based assessment	Content based assessment
Underlying philosophy	Emphasis is placed on learning outcomes of learning: What the learner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knows • understands • can do 	Instructional designers develop courses around the content. The outcomes of a course are written as objectives
Approach to assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - methods - techniques - tools • integrated into learning programmes and support learning and development 	Learners do assignments and write tests and examinations in order to indicate their level of competence Assessment criteria are non-existent or vague
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes and assessment criteria clearly specified, enabling the learner to know the goals towards he/she is working. • Learner centered • Learner paced • Allows learners to actively participate in education, training and assessment 	None as it is teacher centered.
Disadvantages	Can have a negative impact on learners if taught by people who are not trained on facilitation process	The teacher decides on the content. Learners are not actively involved

Traditional vs. outcomes-based assessment

This table below shows the major shift in the way assessment is conducted in an outcomes-based education and training system as compared to the traditional way:

Traditional assessment	Outcomes-based assessment
Assessment usually occurs at the end of the learning event.	Assessment is continuous and integrated in all OBE program.
Tests are used to assess the performance of learners.	A variety of assessment methods are used to assess learner competence (portfolios, self-assessment, peer assessment and Simulations).
The learner is perceived not to be able to assess his or her own performance.	Self-assessment is an essential component of outcomes-based assessment of the learner.
Assessment criteria are not defined or specified.	Assessment criteria are defined and clearly specified for the learners
Assessment is used to test the theoretical knowledge.	Assessment is used to assess what the learner is able to do in a real-life situation.
Learners have to repeat subjects they fail.	Learners get an opportunity to be reassessed on particular areas where they need to obtain the required standard of competence.

Criterion-referenced assessment vs. norm-referenced assessment

The table below compares criterion and norm-referenced assessment.

Criterion-referenced assessment	Norm-referenced assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes judgments about learners by measuring learners' achievements against set criteria. • The individual learner's achievements are assessed. • The criteria are pre-determined and are part of the standard set for the specific outcome. • The criteria are objective and attempt to be as clear as possible in terms of the nature of the assessment. • Where grading is used, learners are graded against the criteria for assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make judgments about learners by rating them in relation to each other. • The individual learner's achievements are assessed, but together with and in relation to a group of learners. • Assessments are curriculum-based. • Assessments are associated with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading and ranking of learners • Averaging of scores • Adjustment of scores to fit the profile of the learner group.

Outcomes, Assessment Criteria and Applied Competence

The three components that are central to outcomes-based assessment are:

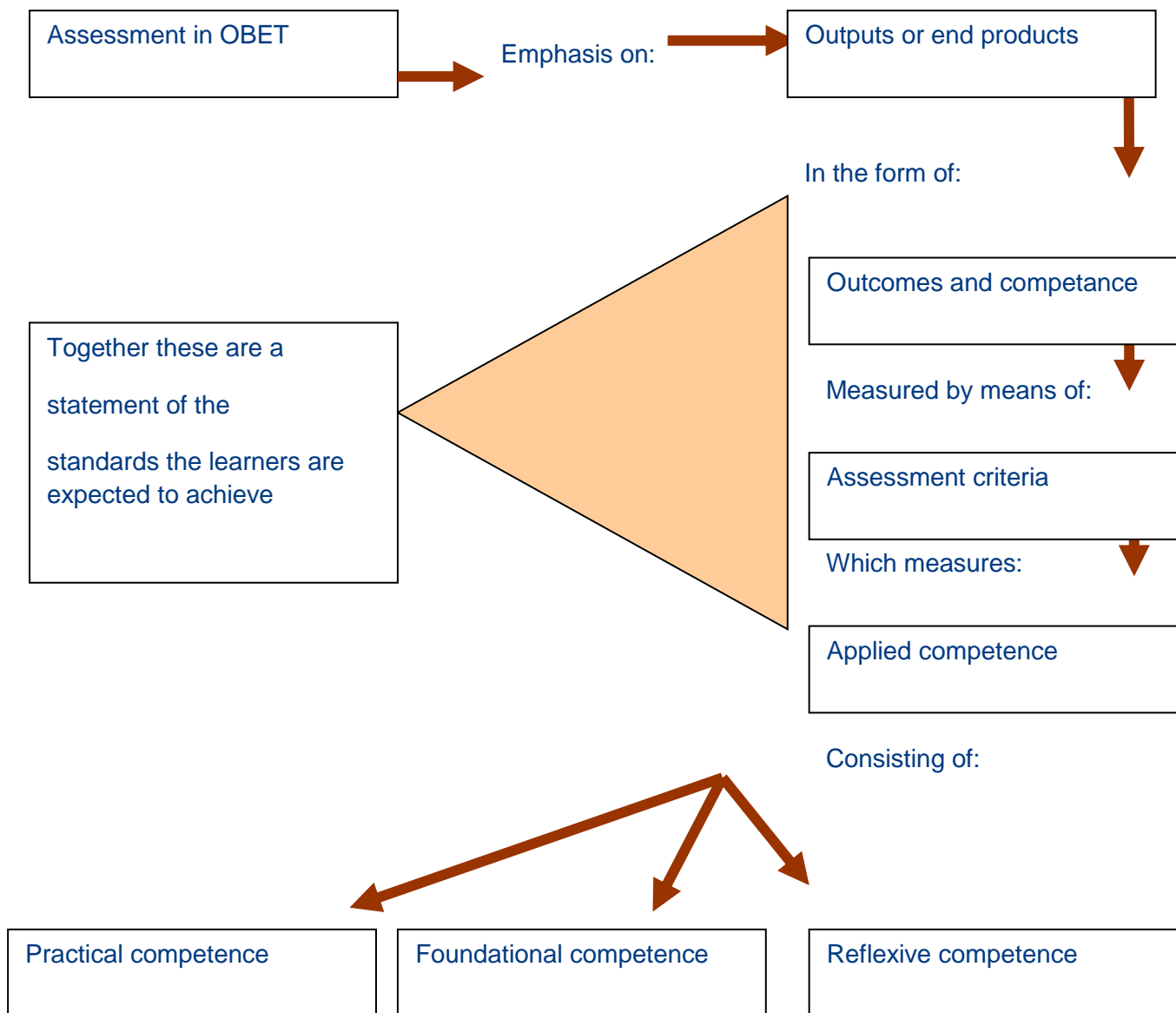
1. Outcomes
2. Assessment criteria
3. Applied competence

Outcomes

Assessment in OBET emphasizes the assessment of outputs and end products. These are expressed in outcomes and competence.

The assessment of the achievement (or non-achievement) of outcomes and competence is done against assessment criteria.

The statement of outcomes, competence and assessment together, is a statement of the standard that the learners are expected to achieve, and are therefore assessed against.



SAQA Criteria and Guidelines for Assessment of NQF Registered Unit standards and Qualifications Publication October 2008.

Following is a description of outcomes:

Outcomes are the demonstrable and assessable end products of a learning process. They are statements regarding elements of competence.

However, outcomes go beyond the specification of subject content and can include reference to:

- Actions, roles, knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes that a learner has to
- perform to demonstrate competence
- The criteria against which these will be assessed
- The particular contexts for performance of these
- The assessment of the performance of these

Unit standards are the parts which qualifications are made of. A qualification in SAQA terms are made up of a cluster of unit standards, including standards for fundamental learning, core learning and elective learning – this is to ensure that learners are not only competent in a particular field, but that they are developed holistically, with competence in inter alia, communication and numeracy, etc.

Assessment Criteria

Assessment criteria describe what would count as evidence that applied competence has in fact been achieved. They are statements that set guidelines for developing certain assessment tasks.

Assessment criteria are a **clear and transparent expression of requirements** against which successful (or unsuccessful) performance is assessed.

The assessment criteria

- provide a clear indication of what the assessor must look for during assessment; and;
- clarify the requirements for certification.

Criterion-referenced assessment is therefore appropriate in an outcomes-based system that is focused on ensuring that the learners have mastered the outcomes specified as the standard that has to be achieved.

Applied Competence

Applied competence is the ability to put into practice in the relevant context the learning outcomes acquired through a learning program.

Competence in SAQA terms is applied competence – the union of practical, foundational and reflexive competence.

Practical, foundational and reflexive competence should be integrated in every demonstration of competence.

PRACTICAL COMPETENCE	FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCE	REFLEXIVE COMPETENCE
<p>The demonstrated ability to perform a set of tasks in an authentic context.</p> <p>A range of actions or possibilities is considered, and decisions are made about which actions to follow.</p>	<p>The demonstrated understanding of what the learner is doing and why. This underpins the practical competence and therefore the actions taken.</p>	<p>The demonstrated ability to integrate performance with understanding, so as to show that the learner is able to adapt to changed circumstances appropriately and responsibly, and to explain the reason behind an action.</p>

Table taken from SAQA: Criteria and Guidelines for Assessment of NQF Registered Unit standards and Qualifications Publication October 2008.

Continuous Assessment

In an outcomes-based education and training system assessment should be a continuous and integral part of the training/learning process.

Once-off written examinations at the end of a program are seldom appropriate for assessing learner achievements of a range of outcomes.

Assessors should use a wide variety of assessment methods to ensure continuous assessment.

A variety of assessment instruments could be used, including knowledge tests, case studies, practical application exercises, or assignments in which learners are required to integrate a number of outcomes. It could also include self-assessment of learners against clearly described criteria, allowing learners to measure their own progress towards achieving the specified outcomes.

Assessors could also observe learners applying the learning in the workplace.

By using a combination of assessment instruments the assessor can ensure that the learning is so 'embedded' in the learners that they are able to demonstrate their competence in a variety of situations and in different ways.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment takes place on a continuous basis throughout the training/learning process.

Its main purpose is to determine the learner's progress towards achieving specified outcomes.

Formative assessment is also used to:

- Diagnose learner strengths and weaknesses
- Provide feedback to learners on their progress
- Develop strategies to address learner's weaknesses
- Motivate the learner through feedback on learning achievements and strengths
- Evaluate the success of learning and training strategies employed
- Inform how learning/training strategies can be improved
- Assess the learner, learning facilitator and/or assessor to plan future learning

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is aimed at assessing whether the learner has successfully achieved the outcomes or not, in terms of being awarded a credit, qualification or certificate.

It is conducted at the end of the module/program. Learners must be informed when an assessment is summative.

Compare the two forms of assessment:

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT	SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to support the teaching and learning process • Assists in the planning future learning • Diagnoses the learner's strength and weaknesses • Provides feedback to the learner on his/her progress • Helps to make decisions on the readiness of learners to do a summative assessment • Is developmental in nature • Credits/certificates are not awarded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of a learning program (Qualification, unit standard, or part (qualification)). • To determine whether the learner is Competent or not yet competent. • In knowledge and inputs-based systems, this usually occurs after a specified period of study, e.g. one year. • In OBET, learner-readiness determines when assessments will take place. • Is carried out when the assessor and the learner agree that the learner is ready for assessment

NOTE:

Results initially collected as results for formative assessment, can be used for summative assessment with the agreement of the learner. This will prevent having to assess outcomes twice.

The organization of the learning program will inform decisions on when summative assessments can take place, e.g. a learning program can be organized around one outcome or a set of outcomes, depending on what is appropriate in terms of ensuring learner success. Summative assessments are administered when a learner has gone through such a program and are ready to be assessed. On declaration of competence, credit is then given, recorded and reported.

Integrated Assessment

Integrated assessment assesses competence across a number of outcomes together in an integrated manner e.g. assessing the qualification as a whole, rather than each module of the qualification.

It provides the learner with an opportunity to demonstrate applied competence, i.e. the integration of practical, foundational and reflexive competence, and also the integration of knowledge, theory and practice.

The SAQA “Criteria and guidelines for assessment of NQF Registered Unit Standards and Qualifications” argues that integrated assessment refers to:

- assessing a number of outcomes together;
- assessing a number of assessment criteria together;
- assign a number of unit standards together;
- using a combination of assessment methods and instruments for an outcome/outcomes;
- collecting naturally occurring evidence;
- acquiring evidence from other sources such as supervisors' reports, testimonials, portfolios of work previously done, logbooks, journals, etc.

(SAQA 1999:29)

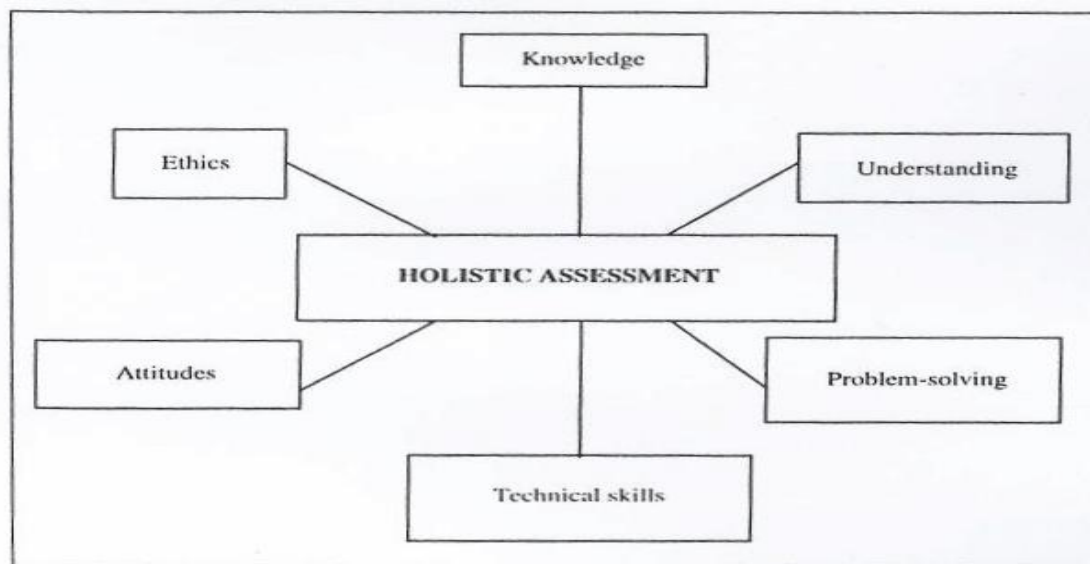
To understand the concept of integrated assessment it is useful to understand the concept of 'competence'. Competence refer to 'knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes' that the learner displays in the environment that is close to the field that sets the assessment. According to the SAQA (1999) requirements, competence is an umbrella term for three types of competence, namely:

Applied competence: Demonstrates the ability to perform a set of tasks.

Foundational competence: Understanding what one is doing and the reason for doing it.

Reflective competence: The ability to connect one's performance with one's understanding of the context and to learn how these actions can be integrated into real life events.

These concepts are illustrated in the diagramme below:



(Mabaso 2001:161)

In SAQA terms a qualification is:

A planned combination of learning outcomes with a defined purpose(s) that is intended to provide qualifying learners with applied competence and a basis for further learning.

In this case, the educator may organize learning programs around one outcome (or a set of outcomes), and therefore assess at the end of each learning program developed for this unit, or assessment could take place at the end of all the outcomes of the qualification.

This understanding of a learning program makes it possible for summative assessments to be done on a continuous basis throughout the learning experience. It can be carried out at any of the given points of the total learning experience.

This notion of summative assessment therefore does not confine assessment to a written examination that can only assess a sample of learning within a limited time (e.g. 3 hours). It allows for the use of a range of assessment methods (observation, product evaluation, written and oral questioning), and for a range of assessment instruments (practical, role plays, written assignments, tests, examinations, demonstrations, projects, case studies, simulations, etc.)

Also, by using a range of methods and instruments, evidence can be collected from a variety of sources (more about this in the next section).

This is applicable to both formative and summative assessment with the provision that the assessment method and instruments match what is being assessed and that appropriate and sufficient evidence has been collected.

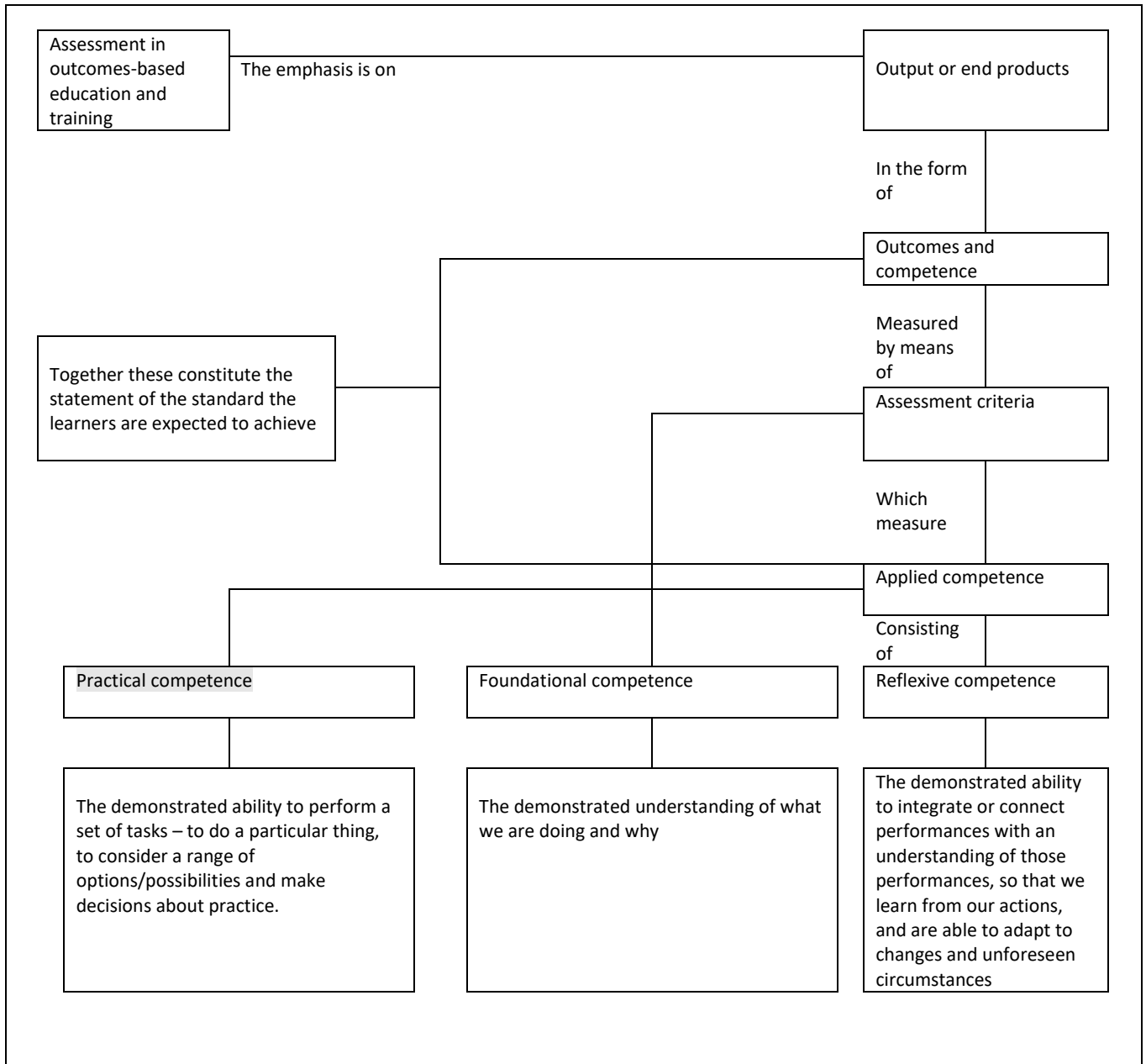
NOTE:

Transparency is imperative: it must be clear to the learner whether he/she is undergoing formative or summative assessments.

When summative assessment is carried out, it must be clear that the results of the assessment will be recorded and reported as a credit gained or not gained. The learner must also be clear about what he/she is being assessed on, by whom, and when.

Finally, every outcome and its associated assessment criteria specified in a unit standard or qualification has to be assessed for credit purposes.

The Outcomes-based Learning Process





Activity 1:

1.1 *What is the difference between formative assessment and summative assessment?*

1.2 *Define assessment.*

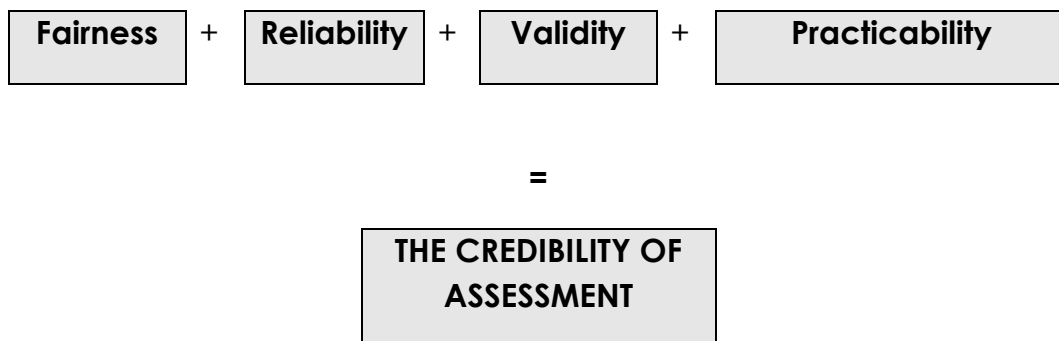
1.3 *Outline the difference between Outcomes Based versus another form of assessment.*

Principles of Assessment

As assessment is central to the recognition of achievement, the quality of the assessment is therefore important to provide credible certification.

Credibility in assessment is assured through assessment procedures and practices being governed by certain principles.

These principles are:



These principles help to allay the concerns and anxieties of users of assessment results.

The learners, parents, employers, learning institutions and the general public want the assurance that the assessment results are credible. This is because these results often affect personal, social and economic progression and mobility in society. In addition, the results provide accurate information about the individual.

These principles are looked at more closely below:

Fairness

An assessment should not in any way hinder or advantage a learner.

Unfairness in assessment would constitute:

- Inequality of opportunities, resources and appropriate teaching and learning approaches in terms of acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Bias in respect of ethnicity, gender, age, disability, social class and race in so far as that the assessment approaches, methods, instruments and materials do not take into account these differences.
- Lack of clarity in terms of what is being assessed.
- Comparison of learners' work with other learners, particularly in terms of diversity of learning styles, home language, values, gender, race, life experiences, etc.

Fairness in assessment would constitute:

- The above-mentioned influences are taken into account and addressed.
- The assessment process is clear, transparent and available to all learners.
- Appeal mechanisms and re-assessments are accessible to all learners.

Validity

Validity in assessment refers to measuring what it says it is measuring, be it knowledge, understanding, subject content, skills, information, behaviours, etc.

Validity in assessment would constitute:

Assessment procedures, methods, instruments and materials have to match what is being assessed.

For example:

A learner is assessed on research skills. However, a learner's ability to write may not necessarily provide evidence that the learner has the ability to do research.

The assessment must assess the **learner's ability to perform**. In this case, the learner should be assessed on the various activities of the stages of research, namely –

- Formulation of the research question
- Literature review
- Development of research instruments
- Collection of data
- Analysis of data and writing a report

Therefore, the assessment should stay within the parameters of what is required – not less than the unit standard or qualification, nor more than the unit standard or qualification.

In order to achieve validity in the assessment, assessors should:

- State clearly what outcome(s) is/are being assessed
- Use an appropriate type or source of evidence
- Use an appropriate method of assessment
- Select an appropriate instrument of assessment

Reliability

Reliability in assessment is about consistency. Consistency refers to the same judgments being made in the same, or similar contexts each time a particular assessment for specified stated intentions is administered.

Assessment results should not be perceived to have been influenced by variables such as:

- Assessor bias in terms of the learner's gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion,
- like/dislike, appearance and such like
- Different assessors interpreting unit standards or qualifications inconsistently
- Different assessors applying different standards
- Assessor stress and fatigue
- Insufficient evidence gathered
- Assessor assumptions about the learner, based on previous (good or bad) performance

To avoid such variance in judgment (results), assessments should ensure that each time an assessment is administered; the same or similar conditions prevail. Also, that the procedures, methods, instruments and practices are the same or similar.

In addition:

- Assessors should be trained and competent in administering assessments
- Assessors should give clear, consistent and unambiguous instructions
- Assessment criteria and guidelines for unit standards and qualifications should be adhered to
- Assessors should meet and talk to each other
- Assessors should be subject experts in their learning field(s)
- Where possible, more than one assessor should be involved in the assessment of one learner
- Assessors should use checklists, or other objective forms of assessment, in addition to
- other assessment instruments
- Internal and external moderation procedures for assessment should be in place
- Clear and systematic recording procedures should be in place

Practicability

Practicability refers to ensuring that assessments take into account the available financial resources, facilities, equipment and time. Assessments that require elaborate arrangements for equipment and facilities, as well as being costly, will make the assessment system fail.

NOTE:

Where the ideal assessment require specialized equipment and facilities, such assessment

could be done by means of a simulation or by means of collecting evidence in the workplace.

To conclude:

FAIRNESS + VALIDITY + RELIABILITY + PRACTICABILITY = CREDIBILITY

The critical overriding principle of assessment is that of **ethics**.

Because the results of an assessment can lead to an increase in pay, improved career prospects and the like, the principles of assessment should be applied ethically and responsibly.

Barriers to learning and assessment

The company's assessment policies should cater for all learners irrespective of the nature of their learning needs.

Needs such as the language, learners with physical disabilities, learners who are short sighted.

In terms of language, learners have the right to an interpreter or to use the assessor that can speak their language.

The challenge lies with the employers to ensure that their employees who are placed in a training program have the learning assumed to be in place.

Should the learners not have this, more release time from work need to be done or a bridging program for such employees need to be delivered before they engage into the final training program.

Learners with physical disabilities should be accommodated as in line with the Safety Act and the Employment Equity Act.

RPL – Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of prior learning (RPL), is a key principle of the NQF particularly in as far as **accelerated learning and ensuring the redress of past inequities** is concerned, though it is not confined for use in these instances. It can be defined as:

Recognition of prior learning is giving credit to what learners already know and can do regardless of whether this learning was achieved formally, informally or non-formally

RPL refers to a process through which qualifications may be achieved in whole or in part through the recognition of prior learning, which concept includes learning outcomes achieved through formal, informal or non-formal learning (SAQA).

The NQF recognizes that learning takes place in a variety of settings, for example:

- Formal education and training programs
- Formal and informal on the job education and training
- Self-study for enjoyment or improvement of qualifications
- Informal experience gained in the workplace or community
- Non-formal in-house education and training

Where appropriate, such learning should be recognized and credited. Assessment policies of ETQA's and their constituent providers have to contain policies and procedures for RPL.

NOTE:

There is no fundamental difference in the assessment of previously acquired skills and knowledge and the assessment of skills and knowledge achieved through a current learning program. The learner seeking credits for previously acquired skills and knowledge, still has to comply with all the requirements as stated in the unit standard and will be assessed to determine competence.

The only difference is that this learner will not need to go through a learning program.

Credentialing in OBET is not dependent on time spent in a learning programme, rather on the learner's readiness to demonstrate competence. A learner who feels ready can present himself/herself for assessment and/or submit the necessary evidence as required by the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

Exactly the same principles, i.e. currency of evidence, sufficiency of evidence, validity of evidence and authenticity of evidence, apply in an assessment of prior knowledge.

The Purpose of RPL

A means to the comparison of the previous learning and experience of a learner against specified learning outcomes required for:

- The award of credits for a specified unit standards or qualification
- Access to further learning
- Recognition in terms of meeting minimum requirements for a specific job
- Placement at a particular level in an organization or institution, or
- Advanced standing or status

This means that regardless of where, when or how a person obtained the required skills and knowledge, it could be recognized for credits.

The principles of RPL Involves the following:

Assessment for the recognition of prior learning, is therefore, as for any assessment, subject to the following principles:

- The application of NQF principles
- The application of the principles of credible assessment
- The application of the principles of the collection of and quality of the evidence

The assessment being planned and designed on the basis of understanding the requirements of the unit standard, part qualification or qualification that the learner is seeking credit for:

- Sourcing types of evidence as suggested
- The use of various methods and instruments mentioned
- The application of the assessment process outlined
- The application of moderation requirements

RPL Process

The RPL process involves the identification, documentation, assessment and recognition of learning (knowledge, skills, competencies and values acquired formally, non-formally and informally), through the award of credit for that learning. Since prior learning cannot be recognised before it has been assessed and because not all prior experience leads to learning, it is important for educators to design instruments that will identify, assess and verify prior learning so that credit may be awarded (adapted from Khanyile 2000:1)

RPL involves the following:

- Involves an assessment process of preparing for RPL
- Engaging with RPL candidates
- Gathering evidence
- Evaluating and judging evidence in relation to defined criteria
- Giving feedback and reporting results

Given that all candidates are assessed against the same criteria, credits awarded through RPL are therefore just as valid as credits awarded through any other assessment process.

RPL is an assessment process characterized by:

- The preparation phase.
- Engaging with candidates who needs the RPL
- Gathering evidence.
- Judging evidence in relation to defined criteria.
- Giving feedback and reporting results.

RPL is required by learners for:

- Awarding credits for a specified unit standard or qualification.
- Gaining access to further learning.
- Recognition in terms of meeting minimum requirements for a specific job.
- Placement at a particular level in an organization /institution.
- Advanced standing /status.

The process of recognizing of prior achievements is about:

Identifying	-	what the learner knows and can do
Matching	-	the learner's skills, knowledge and experience to specific standards and the associated criteria
Assessing	-	the learner against those standards
Crediting	-	the learner for skills, knowledge and experience built up through formal/informal/non-formal learning that occurred in the past

Impacts, Benefits and Challenges of RPL

Benefits and Impact of RPL on Individuals, learning organisations and the workplace:

Recognition of prior learning has been identified as a powerful tool for bringing people into the learning system—it reassures them that they don't have to start from scratch and that the skills they already have are valuable. The growing body of research on the subject has revealed evidence that RPL has many benefits.

Individuals use recognition of prior learning because it:

- saves time because they do not have to repeat learning for skills or knowledge they already have
- allows fast-tracking to recognised qualifications
- allows for employment-related gains and career development opportunities
- can have a significant impact on self-esteem and motivation
- can satisfy industry licensing arrangements.

Employers encourage recognition of prior learning because it:

- provides a way of more effectively and efficiently utilising skills already in the workforce
- allows fast-tracking, which means employees can become fully competent as quickly as possible
- enables skill gaps to be identified, providing a sound basis for training needs analysis and career planning
- fosters a learning culture, since it builds confidence to undertake further education and training
- Motivates employees.

Registered training organisations offer recognition of prior learning because it:

- meets the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework
- meets the wishes of employers and individuals
- is a potentially efficient and time-saving process; only training that adds value is required to be delivered
- can assist the development of learner and employer-centred training programs
- has genuine and valuable learning outcomes in its own right, regardless of whether recognition is awarded.

Recognition of prior learning can have a significant impact on learner confidence and motivation.

Through the RPL process people realise how much they already know and can do. As a result of this confidence boost, they may 'try, with enthusiasm, a qualification or training program that they otherwise might not have attempted, or at least would have approached.

Challenges of RPL

The challenges facing the implementation of RPL in South Africa include:

- ensuring that equity, redress and an holistic approach are developed and practiced;
- ensuring that new forms of exclusion and discrimination of adult learners do not become the norm at our education institutions;
- ensuring that education providers become more “adult learner friendly” as they deal with increasingly diverse learner populations;
- juggling institutional autonomy versus consistency within and between institutions in the nursing sector; and
- ensuring the participation and collaboration of all stakeholders in the nursing sector.

How is assessment for RPL different to programme or course-based assessment?

Generally, throughout a course or a programme of learning learners will be given specific assessment tasks at key points, either for feedback, remediation, or modular progression. At the end of a programme of study there will be some kind of overall summative assessment, based on the requirements of the exit level outcomes of a qualification or part of a qualification.

For RPL purposes learners are usually assessed mainly on the overall summative component. However, other forms of evidence may also be required (such as proof of specific workplace experience or performance, or in the form of different products).

It should be stressed, however, that there are many variations in the way RPL assessment can be carried out, in terms of both scope and methods. For example, RPL for credits against only one learning area, subject or set of unit standards will be very different to RPL against an entire qualification which is made up of many different learning areas. The former (depending on the subject) could be carried out by one written test or practical task; the latter may demand different kinds of evidence for different parts of the qualification, and even an overall integrated assessment against the exit outcomes. Also, RPL methods of assessment will obviously differ according to the nature of the area being assessed: the assessment model for a knowledge-based discipline (e.g. physics) will be very different to one in which experience is a key focus (e.g. teaching), or one in which practical skills need to be demonstrated (e.g. carpentry).

It should be noted that there is no clear cut division between RPL assessment and other forms of assessment. Any type of assessment could be used for RPL if the assessment is fit-for-purpose, and appropriate for the RPL context. The following general comments can be made:

- The approach or model for a particular RPL assessment may differ to that carried out for the programme leading to the same certification (e.g. timing, and some of the assessment tasks may differ).
- There may be different types of evidence required by the RPL model (e.g. documentary proof of experience).
- The RPL requirements may on the other hand include the same assessments as those in the programme (e.g. a formal, written summative examination may need to be written; a particular kind of practical demonstration may need to be carried out).



Activity 2:

2.1 *Define RPL*

2.2 *Discuss the purpose of RPL*

The Assessor and their Role in Assessment

The assessor has an important role in the conduct of outcomes based assessment.

The assessor must be competent in terms of recognized national standards, and have the appropriate expertise and recognition in the area being assessed.

The Role of the Assessor is to:

1. Plan for the assessment by:

- Getting to know the qualification or unit standard
- Advising and consulting with learners and Management
- Carrying out initial evaluation of learner's job function and appropriate qualification
-

2. Prepare the learner for the assessment by:

- Explaining assessment process, appeals procedure, purpose, methods and documents to be used
- Discussing learner's learning requirements, prior knowledge and experience
- Agreeing on logistical arrangements and timing of the assessment with the learner and relevant parties
- Advising learner on which units or qualification would be most suitable for him/her, and what is required to collect evidence of the learner's performance
- Informing learner about the unit standard and the qualification
- Advising on technical issues related to the collection of evidence
- Provide advice relating to company's strategic view on RPL's and the order in which they are being assessed.

3. Conduct the assessment according to established assessment principles and decide whether the learner is competent or not yet competent
4. Collect evidence of the learner's performance
5. Evaluate and judge the evidence
6. Record the assessment decision
7. Provide feedback to the learner
8. Complete all documentation and forward to the ETQA
9. Regularly review the assessment process and implement changes as and when required
10. Comply with all moderation and ETQA requirements

The assessor will need the following expertise:

- a) Interpersonal skills
- b) Subject matter expertise
- c) Assessment expertise

Interpersonal Skills

The assessor needs to have good interpersonal skills and to be able to communicate effectively with learners.

The assessor needs to brief and prepare learners for assessment by ensuring they know what is expected of them and how they will be assessed. They need to establish an open relationship with learners to enable them to perform optimally during the assessment.

The assessor must be honest and helpful when giving feedback to the learners after the assessment.

Subject Matter Expertise

Assessors need to be proficient in the subject matter of the learning area in which they are assessing. They should, also, preferably be experts on the unit standards or qualifications for which they are registered to assess.

It is not prudent to an assessor to assess in an area he/she is not competent or does not have experience.

Assessment Expertise

In order to be proficient in the assessment process, assessors need to:

- Be familiar with the unit standards that they will be assessing
- Know how to use assessment guides
- Plan the assessment
- Select and/or design assessment activities and materials
- Guide learners in the collection of evidence
- Work with others to collect evidence
- Provide clear feedback in a positive way to learners after assessment
- Record and report assessment results
- Participate in moderation requirements
- Review the assessment process and make appropriate changes

In addition to the above, the assessor must take responsibility for conducting the assessment in a fair manner. This includes confidentiality and implementing the principles of good assessment.

When the Assessor is a Supervisor or Manager

It is important to remember that when an assessor is a supervisor or manager, both learners and assessors have dual roles.

The assessor (superior) is both judge and coach. He or she trains and encourages, but also judges the evidence. The learner is expected to develop competence, but at the same time is expected to gather evidence that demonstrates that competence. It is crucial that the learner clearly understands the criteria and gathers and demonstrates the appropriate evidence and competency.

On the other hand, the assessor must appreciate that he or she is an integral part of the learner's education, and training is not merely as an assessor but contributing to the learning process as well.

Registering as an Assessor

Once you have completed this course you will receive a Certificate of Competence together with a Statement of Results from the ETDP SETA. These documents are used to apply with various SETA's/ETQA's as an assessor. Your application will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Years' experience in the field of work
- Qualifications obtained
- Level of education obtained

It will be necessary for you to gather all information you have about your ability to assess a certain subject, Unit Standard or Qualification.

Ensure you familiarize yourself with the process to apply as an assessor with the relevant SETA/ ETQA/



Activity 3:

3.1 *Identify what qualifications or unit standards you will be able to assess?*

3.2 *Do you know where you will need to register yourself as an assessor for the identified qualification or unit standards?*

Section 2

Design of Outcomes Based Assessment

Learning Outcomes:

The following learning outcomes are covered in this section:

- ✓ Demonstrate understanding of design principles of outcomes-based assessment,
- ✓ Design outcomes-based assessments,
- ✓ Develop assessment activities,
- ✓ Develop assessment guides, and
- ✓ Evaluate assessment designs and guides.

Assessment Methods

The assessment method refers broadly to how you assess an outcome, for example, orally, through a written activity, a demonstration or a project. An assessment method will be linked to an assessment tool, task or instrument.

This sets out specifically what learners are asked to do (e.g. an examination paper; instructions for a demonstration), and can include the criteria on which a candidate's performance will be judged. It can also refer to document used by the assessor in the process of assessment (e.g. an observation checklist), in which case it might include a place to record the level of a candidate's performance against those criteria as well as instructions to the candidate.

Sometimes an assessment tool may refer to a document that the candidate may not see, such as a marking memo.

Range:

The description of methods should cover situations for gathering evidence of:

- Problem solving ability,
- Knowledge and understanding,
- Practical and technical skills,
- Attitudinal skills and values.

Assessment Records:

Refer to the way in which an individual or a group of learners' performances are recorded over time. The assessment tools themselves may serve as records of a candidate's performance, or an organisation may have a separate form on which to record the results of a group of learners.

The outcomes and related assessment criteria given in standards and qualifications help determine your evidence requirements: that is, what is required to show competence.

The evidence requirements will often imply or demand a particular method (both the how and the where), such as a technical demonstration with required equipment, or documented evidence of performance in a context. From the point of view of the management of assessment, however, it is helpful to have a sense of the possible range of assessment methods upon which you can draw, and to have your own organisational terminology for your application of such methods.

Below you will find some examples of assessment tools or instruments, methods, evidence types, and recording approaches, and how they might relate to each other. Please remember that these could take a number of different forms depending on purpose of assessment and nature of learning area. For example, a portfolio method could be used to gather together to illustrate many different kinds of evidence which have been generated by different assessment instruments or tools.

Assessment Tools or Instruments <i>[i.e. instructions to learners and criteria against which they are being assessed; OR instructions to assessors]</i>	Assessment Method <i>[i.e. what do you ask the candidate to do, and how do you assess this]</i>	Evidence Type <i>[i.e. what learners produce as evidence]</i>	Assessment Records <i>[i.e. ways of recording the level or performance for a candidate or group of learners]</i>
Written task instruction and parameters with criteria for learners Mark memo or assessment grid with 'model answers' and criteria for assessors	<i>Written Assessments:</i> Exams Tests Assignments Projects Questionnaires Portfolios of evidence Written scenarios and case studies	Products: e.g. - written report - survey - visual products (graphs, diagrams, posters etc)	Recording forms
Instructions for candidate task Assessment checklist with criteria for observer/ assessor	<i>Observation:</i> Set tasks Problem solving Applied demonstrations Artefacts/ products (e.g. constructions)	Applied performance: e.g. - problem solving for technical fault in a workplace or simulated environment - managing a process in a workplace or simulated environment	Assessment checklist
Instructions for candidate task	<i>Oral assessments:</i> Presentations Oral questioning	Spoken presentation or dialogue	Assessment checklist

Assessment checklist with criteria for observer/ assessor	Interviews Questionnaires Simulations/ role plays		
Guidelines giving RPL requirements [e.g. list of approved evidence for currency and authenticity (e.g. certificates, letters of reference from supervisors etc)] Assessment criteria for RPL assessors	Review of portfolio of evidence	Supporting evidence for competence claim (e.g. for RPL this might include workplace reports from employers)	RPL recording forms
Assessment checklist with criteria for observer/ assessor (e.g. for individual role-taking in the group; or for quality of group product)	Assessment of group work	Group presentations or projects	Group work recording forms
Instructions with parameters and criteria for learners	Peer assessment: learners assess each other. Self-assessments: learners assess themselves. Group assessments: a group assesses and individual or another group.	Across a range of types of evidence	Assessment checklists to be generated/ supplied to groups and peers

There is a wealth of assessment methods used in education to assess students' achievements, but how to choose?

The primary goal is to choose a method which most effectively assesses the objectives of the unit of study. In addition, choice of assessment methods should be aligned with the overall aims of the program, and may include the development of disciplinary skills (such as critical evaluation or problem solving) and support the development of vocational competencies (such as particular communication or team skills.)

Hence, when choosing assessment items, it is useful to have one eye on the immediate task of assessing student learning in a particular unit of study, and another eye on the broader aims of the program and the qualities of the graduating student. Ideally this is something you do with your academic colleagues so there is a planned assessment strategy across a program.

When considering assessment methods, it is particularly useful to think first about what qualities or abilities you are seeking to engender in the learners. Nightingale et al (1996) provide eight broad categories of learning outcomes which are listed below. Within each category some suitable methods are suggested.

Thinking critically and making judgments

(Developing arguments, reflecting, evaluating, assessing, judging)

- Essay
- Report
- Journal
- Letter of Advice to (about policy, public health matters
- Present a case for an interest group
- Prepare a committee briefing paper for a specific meeting
- Book review (or article) for a particular journal
- Write a newspaper article for a foreign newspaper
- Comment on an article's theoretical perspective

Solving problems and developing plans

(Identifying problems, posing problems, defining problems, analysing data, reviewing, designing experiments, planning, applying information)

- Problem scenario
- Group Work
- Work-based problem
- Prepare a committee of enquiry report
- Draft a research bid to a realistic brief
- Analyse a case
- Conference paper (or notes for a conference paper plus annotated bibliography)

Performing procedures and demonstrating techniques

(Computation, taking readings, using equipment, following laboratory procedures, following protocols, carrying out instructions)

- Demonstration
- Role Play
- Make a video (write script and produce/make a video)
- Produce a poster
- Lab report
- Prepare an illustrated manual on using the equipment, for a particular audience
- Observation of real or simulated professional practice

Managing and developing oneself

(Working co-operatively, working independently, learning independently, being self-directed, managing time, managing tasks, organising)

- Journal
- Portfolio
- Learning Contract
- Group work

Accessing and managing information

(Researching, investigating, interpreting, organising information, reviewing and paraphrasing information, collecting data, searching and managing information sources, observing and interpreting)

- Annotated bibliography
- Project
- Dissertation
- Applied task
- Applied problem

Demonstrating knowledge and understanding

(Recalling, describing, reporting, recounting, recognising, identifying, relating & interrelating)

- Written examination
- Oral examination
- Essay
- Report
- Comment on the accuracy of a set of records
- Devise an encyclopedia entry
- Produce an A - Z of ...
- Write an answer to a client's question
- Short answer questions: True/False/ Multiple Choice Questions (paper-based or computer-aided-assessment)

Designing, creating, performing

(Imagining, visualising, designing, producing, creating, innovating, performing)

- Portfolio
- Performance
- Presentation
- Hypothetical
- Projects

Communicating

(One and two-way communication; communication within a group, verbal, written and non-verbal communication. Arguing, describing, advocating, interviewing, negotiating, presenting; using specific written forms)

- Written presentation (essay, report, reflective paper etc.)
- Oral presentation
- Group work
- Discussion/debate/role play
- Participate in a 'Court of Enquiry'
- Presentation to camera
- Observation of real or simulated professional practice

Variety in Assessment

It is interesting to note that the eight learning outcomes listed above would be broadly expected of any learner from an education program. Yet, when choosing assessment items, we tend to stay with the known or the 'tried and true methods', because they seem to have the ring of academic respectability, or possibly because it was the way we were assessed as undergraduates ourselves.

From learners' perspectives, however, it often seems as if we are turning them into 'essay producing machines' or 'examination junkies'. When choosing methods it is important to offer variety to learners in the way they demonstrate their learning, and to help them to develop a well-rounded set of abilities by the time they graduate.

This document refers to assessment methods and assessment instruments.

Assessment methods refer to the activities that an assessor engages in as he or she assesses a learner and the learner's work.

Normally these activities are:

- Observation – observing the learner while he/she is carrying out tasks, real or simulated, as defined in an outcome or outcome statement.
- Evaluation of a product – evaluating something the learner has produced after the task has been completed.
- Questioning – asking questions orally or in writing which are answered orally or in writing.

The questions could relate to the observation or to the product. This is done to check the learner's understanding of why certain activities were carried out or test the learner's ability to work within contexts required in the range statements or in other contingencies suggested by the assessment criteria.

Questioning is also an important means of establishing the learner's underpinning knowledge and understanding.

Assessment instruments refer to the nature of the assessment task given to the learner to do.

The table below lists different assessment methods and instruments:

	OBSERVATION	PRODUCT EVALUATION	QUESTIONING WRITTEN/ORAL
INSTRUMENT			
Alternative response questions			X
Assertion/reason questions			X
Assignments		X	X
Aural/oral tests			X
Case studies		X	X
Completion questions			X
Examinations/tests		X	X
Extended response question			X
Grid questions			X
Log books		X	X
Matching questions			X
Multiple response questions			X
Oral questions			X
Personal interviews			X
Practical exercises/ Demonstrations	X	X	X
Portfolios		X	X
Projects	X	X	X
Questionnaires		X	X
Role plays	X		X
Restricted response questions			X
Simulations	X		X
Short answer questions			X
Structured questions			X

Assignments

A problem-solving exercise with clear guidelines and a specified length.

More structured and less open-ended than projects, but they do not necessarily involve strict adherence to a prescribed procedure and they are not concerned exclusively with manual skills.

Possible uses: *Problem-solving around a particular topic*

Case studies

A description of an event concerning a real-life or simulated situation, usually in the form of a paragraph or text, a video, a picture or a role-play exercise. This is followed by a series of instructions to elicit responses from learners. Individuals or small groups may undertake case studies.

Possible uses: *Analyses of situations*
 Drawing conclusions
 Reports on possible courses of action

Logbooks

A useful means of assessing learner's progress and achievements. It should have clear instructions for use and give guidance on how essential information is to be recorded.

Possible uses: *In a workplace – monitor and check activities; record processes; record of Achievements.*

Practical exercises/demonstrations

An activity that allows learners to demonstrate manual and/or behavioural skills. The assessment may be based on the end-result of the activity (the product), or the carrying-out of the activity (the process), or a combination of both.

Possible uses: ***Demonstration of skill***

Portfolios

A collection of different types of evidence relating to the work being assessed. It can include a variety of work samples. Portfolios are suitable for long-term activities.

It is important that the evidence in the portfolio meet the requirements of sufficiency and currency.

The learner and assessor usually plan the portfolio jointly as sources of evidence may vary.

The learner is then responsible for the collection of evidence and the compilation of the portfolio.

Possible uses: ***Recognition of prior learning and experience***

Assessment of long-term activities related to each other

Assessment where direct observation may be difficult

Projects

A project is any exercise or investigation in which the time constraints are more relaxed.

Projects are:

- Practical
- Comprehensive and open-ended
- Tackled without close supervision, but with assessor guidance and support

Projects can involve individuals or a group of learners.

The choice of the project is directed by the assessor, usually by providing the learner with a topic or brief for the investigation.

Possible uses: ***Comprehensive range of skills can be assessed***
 Integration of activities within and across unit standards or
 different parts of a qualification

Role-plays

Learners are presented with a situation, often a problem or an incident, to which they have to respond by assuming a particular role. The enactment may be unrehearsed, or the learner may be briefed in the particular role to be played. Such assessments are open-ended and are person-centered.

Possible uses: ***Assessment of a wide range of behavioral and interpersonal skills***

Simulations

Simulations mirror actual activities or conditions. They are suitable for assessments where demonstrations and observation will provide reliable and valid results, but where, for a number of reasons, it is difficult or not practicable to assess under actual conditions.

Possible uses: ***Assessments of actions under 'safe' conditions, e.g. operating machines which could be dangerous or where the breakdown of such a machine will cause a halt in production or endanger lives***

NOTE:

All the assessment instruments mentioned above have been used successfully in a variety of contexts. However, to encourage learners to be reflective of their own learning, the following assessment instruments may also be used:

Reflective journal

A reflective journal gives learners the opportunity to critically reflect on their own learning, to express their thoughts and experiences and to present this in an acceptable way. Even though it is a form of self-assessment, it can be submitted for assessment.

Possible uses: ***It gives the assessor a unique opportunity to follow the thought-processes of a learner and to monitor the way a learner thinks and grows***

Critical evaluation of progress by the learner.

Self-assessment

A checklist, questionnaire completed by a learner, notes jotted down or other forms of structured self-assessment undertaken after an action, demonstration, oral examination, etc.

Possible uses: *Critical evaluation of progress by learner*

Peer assessment

Assessment by the learner's peers, usually in the form of a checklist.

Possible uses: *Assessment of paired or group activities*

Assessment of teamwork

NOTE:

Assessors should move away from the idea that assessment is only a final form of evaluation.

Assessment is integral to the teaching and learning process, i.e. assessment could be diagnostic (i.e. determining any gaps in teaching and learning), formative (i.e. determining the progress towards the outcomes) and summative (determining whether the outcomes have been reached).

Types of Assessment Task

This is a partial list. It shows some of the possibilities one can use in methods of assessment.

Essay

The essay has become an almost universal assessment task. Whatever precise definition the form may have had has been long lost.

Students are sometimes asked to 'write an essay on' something. They generally take this as an invitation simply to 'write about ...' something. On a bad day they may interpret it as an invitation to 'write as much as they can in the time of what they know about' something. With no clear purpose, no clear audience, little or no guidance on structure or style, students thus briefed sometimes produce less than satisfactory 'essays'.

There are many ways to clarify the task of writing an essay. As ever, the task should be derived from the learning outcomes.

- You could ask the students to describe, discuss, analyse, review, or evaluate an idea, theory, author or problem or situation.
- You could ask them to compare and contrast, make a comparative evaluation of, or make a reasoned choice between, two or more theories or models or schools of thought; you could give them data and ask them to select or develop a theory or model to account for or contain these data.
- You could become still more specific. You could ask them to take some particular role, or to argue for or against some particular position.

Report

But even with these more specific essay tasks we are still inviting students to break two important rules of communication: These rules tell us to be clear, about the audience for a communication and about its purpose.

Hence, the report.

Audience

The real audience is of course always the person who will assess -- almost always the tutor. But the target audience for a report can be anyone:

- the editor of a journal, (for a paper or review or letter)
- the purchasing manager (for a sales letter or brochure for a product or service)
- the chair of a planning enquiry (for a planning application or objection)
- a gallery manager and the gallery-going public (for an exhibition catalogue)

'Appropriate' is the key. With whom may your learner need to communicate professionally? The above is a list of possible audiences to whom they may address the work they produce during their studies.

Report specifications

The specification of a report really comes to life when we specify together audience and purpose with house style and constraints on length and all the other factors which make report writing in the real world such a regulated pleasure.

Product or exhibition

Engineering and design students routinely produce objects (and associated reports) for assessment; artists and architects, exhibitions. There is no reason other than tradition why other subjects should not use similar methods. Appropriateness is all.

Journal, log or portfolio

There is debate, some of it serious and substantial, about the extent to which we should assess product or process. Where we are concerned with how something is done as well as what was finally produced, a critical or reflective journal or log can show process as well as product. The portfolio, an annotated collation of work undertaken over a period of time, can fill a similar function.

Real-world tasks

Learners from vocational courses are employed because they can undertake real tasks and solve real problems in the real world. Real-world assessment tasks present problems. Where does the task specification come from? Who sets the standards for success? Who marks? How can we be sure of the comparability of different tasks done by different students? These problems are worth tackling because of the enormous motivation which real-world assessment tasks can bring and the enormous learning which can result.

Style of Assessment Task

Full or note-form?

Not every assessment task has to require the student to undertake a full-scale piece of writing. You can assess a great deal about approach, structure, factual knowledge, strategic sense or planning ability from an outline, sketch, or notes. And this will take you much less time.

From scratch, or based on prior student work?

Student work can be reused for different assessment purposes. For example they can be examined on a project, by asking them to describe the project process or to compare their results with some data provided in the examination.

Seen or not?

If students have prior sight of the assessment task, you can test their skills of library or field research as well as their skills of memory and reasoning.

If they take their notes into the examination, you can ask them to use data (and of course find data!) rather than remember it.

If you tell them a week or a month or indeed a term in advance from which published eight questions the three compulsory questions in the examination will be drawn, you will focus their studies onto whatever proportion of the syllabus the eight questions address.

Regulations and requirements

There will generally be requirements and regulations on the size and presentation of assessed student work. This year, the tasks you set will need to confirm to these. For next year, however, you may be able to negotiate changes. The underlying principle, a quite reasonable one, is that students should know what form of assessment to expect before they join a module.

The below table summarises the different tools and probably time allocation in assessing.

Assessment tool	Description	Time allocation
Demonstration	Learner demonstrates manual and/or behavioural skills.	Learners may be assessed during class hours but enough preparation time need to provided for learners to prepare
Oral tests	Assess learner's ability to listen, interpret and communicate	These assessments may take place just before or after a lesson to involve learners and achieve framework for lessons
Written tests	Learners show recall, problem-solving, understanding, etc.	Time allocated depends on the amount of questions asked.
Oral presentation	Learner presents information on a topic	Learners need time to prepare for presentation.
Interviews	Learners respond to a structured set of questions and interact with the assessor	These assessment methods takes place within several learning areas and depend on the instructions of the assessment.
Assignments	Learners do a problem-solving exercise	Assignments require research

	with clear guidelines and specific length	which requires adequate time.
Projects	Learners do staged, supervised assignments, as individuals or groups.	As with assignment, projects require research. Educators need to allow learners adequate time to prepare for these assignments
Completing documentation	Learner completes a relevant form	Assessment may take place during class time.
Role plays	Learner acts out a role similar to real life. Assesses range of behavioural and interpersonal skills	Learners need time to prepare and the role play will have to assume a cut off time to ensure all learners receive the same amount of time to convince the assessor.
Case studies	Description of event or scenario. Learner responds to questions. Assess analyzing, applying, drawing conclusions.	Case studies may be done during class time or as homework. Case studies need not exceed thirty minutes to complete.
Simulations	Real-life recreated in simulated setting when difficult or not safe to use actual demonstration	The assessment depends on the instructions of the activity
Portfolio	Variety of evidence collected by learner to demonstrate competence.	Portfolio assessment tasks need to take place over a period of time. It will be wise to restrict time of portfolio work to weeks or month in order to ensure that all learners still meet the requested performance levels.

Design Principles

Cost-Effectiveness of Assessment Design

A characteristic of good assessment is not only the practicality of the assessment procedures but also the cost effectiveness and implementation thereof. Factors such as the number of evaluators available, their status and specialties and cost have to be taken into account.

It is important to understand that the design of assessment must address the need for cost-effectiveness. The following should be taking into account when working on an assessment design budget:

1. the overall assessment plan and implementation thereof.
2. results of previous assessments, reports etc.
3. special needs of candidates (equipment, venue, aids etc)
4. assessment contexts.
5. the accessibility and safety of the environment and contingencies.

Assessment design should ensure:

1. Cost effectiveness in terms of finance and time.
2. That the assessment method used has minimal impact on company resources and employee productivity.
3. That naturally occurring evidence is used as far as possible.

Workplace Assessment

Workplace assessment is also called Naturally-occurring evidence which refers to evidence gathered during the normal course of learning or work.

This evidence is based on how one's daily activities link in with the exit level outcomes of a course or qualification one is to be assessed on.

This evidence includes daily workbased paperwork, cases, reports, feedback and a journal.

It is important that a Mentor supervises the gathering of evidence and guides the employee.

Activity Design

The Principles of Learning Activities

Developing learning activities needs to challenge a learner but also allow the learner allow the learner to develop their skills. In developing learning activities, the following principles need to be considered:

- do not overburden the learner with too many tasks;
- the time-frame of completing activities should be reasonable and appropriate;
- activities should be relevant to the learners' environment;
- activities should provide learners the opportunity to record their response; and
- learners should have a vehicle to give feedback on their responses to activities.

Learning activities need to follow a sequence of learning. Learners need to be able to move from simple to complex; concrete to abstract and from the known to the unknown. Designing assessment activities are one of the things that learners keep their minds on. Designing assessment activities will be discussed in a different session.

Activities Promote Integrated Assessment

Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education – Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (2001) shows that all learners must be assessed within the same curriculum and assessment framework. Learning activities need to be inclusive to ensure that no learners are left behind or excluded from the learning process.

According to the Revised National Curriculum 2003, educators need to ask themselves the following questions concerning their assessment practices when planning assessment activities:

- What concept, skills or knowledge is to be assessed?
- What should learners know?
- At what level should learners be performing?
- What type of knowledge is being assessed?
- Are all learners treated fairly, particularly those who experience barriers to learning?
- Are assessment practices non-discriminatory?
- Is gender equity promoted?
- Is equal attention paid to both boys and girls?
- Is the learning environment physically and emotionally safe?
- Are there opportunities for all learners to experience success?
- Are assessment practices aimed at increasing learning and participation and minimizing exclusion?

- Do the assessment approaches attempt to minimize the categorization of learners?
- Are ranges of assessment strategies used to allow all learners to display their skills?
- Have environmental influences such as poverty and trauma been taken into account during the assessment process?

Appropriate, Fair and Manageable Activities

The process of developing activities identifies the results that the course wishes to achieve. The course needs to underpin the educational principles as described earlier, include the role of the media, state the learning outcomes, recognise previous learning, motivate learners, provide background information, provides opportunities to practise and provides opportunities for feedback and direction. Each of these aspects will be discussed thoroughly.

Underpin educational principles

The learning programmes need to underpin the educational principles mentioned previously concerning the following:

- applied adult learning principles;
- language, literacy and numeracy compliance; and
- competence-based learning.

The role of the media

Using the media in learning programmes is an effective and creative way of education. The options available are vast and therefore needs to be planned and evaluated effectively. Media choices include:

- study guides;
- educational videos;
- computer-assisted learning;
- videoconferencing;
- the internet; and
- video and audio cassettes.

When considering the media as a supportive structure in education the educator needs to ask him-/herself the following:

- Is it really needed?
- Is it cost effective?
- Do the learners have the skills to use the media (are they computer literate)?
- Do learners have access to the facilities to use the media material?
- Will the choice of media not discriminate against the learners in any way?
- Will it be practical concerning the learners' competence-base learning skills?
- Does it help the learner to accomplish the learning outcomes?

State the learning outcomes

The learning outcomes need to be designed and structured in a way that will enable the programme to be relevant. The learning outcomes should be structured and mapped according to the instructions described in the section above. When the programmes are structured, the outcomes will become clear and accurate.

Recognising previous learning

To outline the strategy, previous learning needs to be recognised. This can be acquired through:

- formal training and education;
- self-study; and
- in-house training and education in a company structure.

Acknowledging prior learning allows the educator to design a programme that will be inclusive and valid. One of the functions of the NQF is to correct the previous system of assessing prior knowledge only by the certificates a learner has collected.

Motivating learners

Learners need to be motivated on a constant basis. The course material can be used to do that. The use of current real case studies is one way of incorporating motivational aspects to the learning material.

Background information

Providing background information to the learners needs to be outlined. This can be done by stating what the learners need to know, what they have to do and the consequences of not doing it.

Practicing

Assessment needs to be designed in such a way that the learners have the opportunity to practice their new attained knowledge.

Feedback and direction

Learners need to receive feedback on their assessed assignments. Educators have to design assessment methods that will provide for feedback and direction.

Clarify Outcome of the Learning Activity

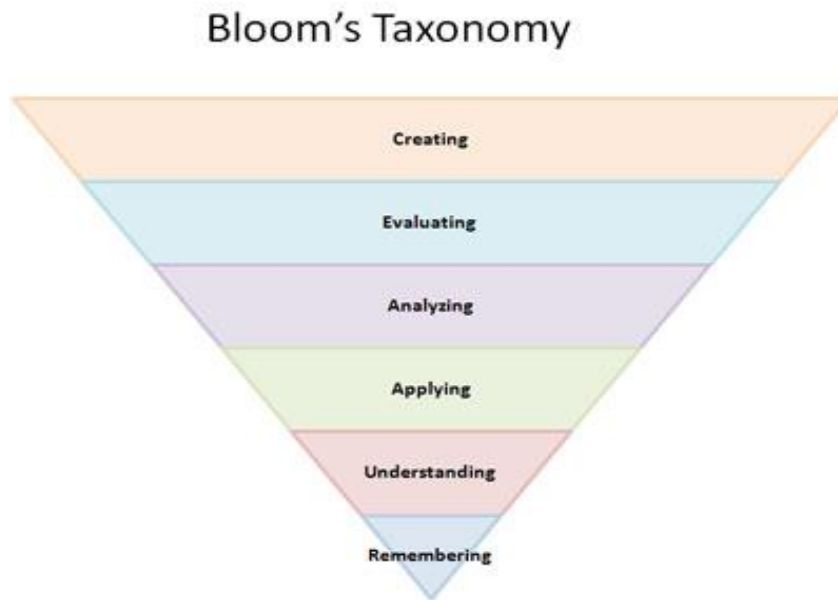
When activities are conducted, it is important to pay attention to the following:

- clear instructions should be given;
- give a time limit to exercise to keep learners focused.

As discussed previously, time allocation to tasks needs to be realistic and manageable.

Using Blooms Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy provides a useful structure in which to categorize test questions when assessing student learning. The table below describes skills demonstrated for each level of thinking according to Bloom as well as question cues that can be used to elicit student responses within that level. The same content information can be assessed at different levels of cognition.



Revised edition by Lorin Anderson (a student of Bloom)

Here's a really simple adapted 'at-a-glance' representation of Bloom's Taxonomy. The definitions are intended to be simple modern day language, to assist explanation and understanding. This simple overview can help you (and others) to understand and explain the taxonomy. Refer back to it when considering and getting to grips with the detailed structures - this overview helps to clarify and distinguish the levels.

Cognitive	Affective	Psychomotor
knowledge	attitude	skills
1. Recall data	1. Receive (awareness)	1. Imitation (copy)
2. Understand	2. Respond (react)	2. Manipulation (follow instructions)
3. Apply (use)	3. Value (understand and act)	3. Develop Precision
4. Analyse (structure/elements)	4. Organise personal value system	4. Articulation (combine, integrate related skills)
5. Synthesize (create/build)	5. Internalize value system (adopt behaviour)	5. Naturalization (automate, become expert)
6. Evaluate (assess, judge in relational terms)		

Cognitive Domain

The cognitive domain (Bloom, 1956) involves knowledge and the development of intellectual skills. This includes the recall or recognition of specific facts, procedural patterns, and concepts that serve in the development of intellectual abilities and skills. There are six major categories, which are listed in order below, starting from the simplest behavior to the most complex. The categories can be thought of as degrees of difficulties. That is, the first ones must normally be mastered before the next ones can take place.

Here are some examples of test questions reflecting the six levels of learning according to Bloom.

Competence	Skills Demonstrated
<p>Knowledge</p> <p>Recall data or information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observation and recall of information • knowledge of dates, events, places • knowledge of major ideas • mastery of subject matter • Question Cues: list, define, tell, describe, identify, show, label, collect, examine, tabulate, quote, name, who, when, where, etc. <p>Examples: multiple-choice test, recount facts or statistics, recall a process, rules, definitions; quote law or procedure</p> <p>Key Words: defines, describes, identifies, knows, labels, lists, matches, names, outlines, recalls, recognizes, reproduces, selects, states.</p>
<p>Comprehension</p> <p>Use a concept in a new situation or unprompted use of an abstraction. Applies what was learned in the classroom into novel situations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding information • grasp meaning • translate knowledge into new context • interpret facts, compare, contrast • order, group, infer causes • predict consequences • Question Cues: summarize, describe, interpret, contrast, predict, associate, distinguish, estimate, differentiate, discuss, extend <p>Examples: explain or interpret meaning from a given scenario or statement, suggest treatment, reaction or solution to given problem, create examples or metaphors</p> <p>Key Words: comprehends, converts, defends, distinguishes, estimates, explains, extends, generalizes, gives an example, infers, interprets, paraphrases, predicts, rewrites, summarizes, translates.</p>
<p>Application</p> <p>Use a concept in a new situation or unprompted use of an abstraction. Applies what was learned in the classroom into</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use information • use methods, concepts, theories in new situations • solve problems using required skills or knowledge • Questions Cues: apply, demonstrate, calculate, complete, illustrate, show, solve, examine, modify, relate, change, classify, experiment, discover <p>Examples: put a theory into practical effect, demonstrate, solve a problem, manage an activity</p> <p>Key Words: applies, changes, computes, constructs, demonstrates, discovers, manipulates,</p>

novel situations.	modifies, operates, predicts, prepares, produces, relates, shows, solves, uses.
<p>Analysis</p> <p>Separates material or concepts into component parts so that its organizational structure may be understood. Distinguishes between facts and inferences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeing patterns • organization of parts • recognition of hidden meanings • identification of components • Question Cues: analyze, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, arrange, divide, compare, select, explain, infer <p>Examples: Troubleshoot a piece of equipment by using logical deduction. Recognize logical fallacies in reasoning. Gathers information from a project and selects the required information to complete the project.</p> <p>Key Words: analyzes, breaks down, compares, contrasts, diagrams, deconstructs, differentiates, discriminates, distinguishes, identifies, illustrates, infers, outlines, relates, selects, separates.</p>
<p>Synthesis</p> <p>Builds a structure or pattern from diverse elements. Put parts together to form a whole, with emphasis on creating a new meaning or structure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use old ideas to create new ones • generalize from given facts • relate knowledge from several areas • predict, draw conclusions • Question Cues: combine, integrate, modify, rearrange, substitute, plan, create, design, invent, compose, formulate, prepare, generalize, rewrite <p>Examples: identify constituent parts and functions of a process or concept, or de-construct a methodology or process, making qualitative assessment of elements, relationships, values and effects; measure requirements or needs</p> <p>Key Words: categorizes, combines, compiles, composes, creates, devises, designs, explains, generates, modifies, organizes, plans, rearranges, reconstructs, relates, reorganizes, revises, rewrites, summarizes, tells, writes.</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Make judgments about the value of ideas or materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compare and discriminate between ideas • assess value of theories, presentations • make choices based on reasoned argument • verify value of evidence • recognize subjectivity • Question Cues: assess, decide, rank, grade, test, measure, recommend, convince, select, judge, explain, discriminate, support, conclude, compare, summarize <p>Examples: review strategic options or plans in terms of efficacy, return on investment or cost-</p>

effectiveness, practicability; assess sustainability; perform a SWOT analysis in relation to alternatives; produce a financial justification for a proposition or venture, calculate the effects of a plan or strategy; perform a detailed and costed risk analysis with recommendations and justifications

Key Words: appraises, compares, concludes, contrasts, criticizes, critiques, defends, describes, discriminates, evaluates, explains, interprets, justifies, relates, summarizes, supports.

The Affective Domain

The affective domain (Krathwohl, Bloom, Masia, 1973) includes the manner in which we deal with things emotionally, such as feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasms, motivations, and attitudes. The five major categories are listed from the simplest behavior to the most complex:

Category	Example and Key Words (verbs)
<p>Receiving Phenomena: Awareness, willingness to hear, selected attention.</p>	<p>Examples: Listen to others with respect. Listen for and remember the name of newly introduced people.</p> <p>Key Words: asks, chooses, describes, follows, gives, holds, identifies, locates, names, points to, selects, sits, erects, replies, uses.</p>
<p>Responding to Phenomena: Active participation on the part of the learners. Attends and reacts to a particular phenomenon. Learning outcomes may emphasize compliance in responding, willingness to respond, or satisfaction in responding (motivation).</p>	<p>Examples: Participates in class discussions. Gives a presentation. Questions new ideals, concepts, models, etc. in order to fully understand them. Know the safety rules and practices them.</p> <p>Key Words: answers, assists, aids, complies, conforms, discusses, greets, helps, labels, performs, practices, presents, reads, recites, reports, selects, tells, writes.</p>
<p>Valuing: The worth or value a person attaches to a particular object, phenomenon, or behavior. This ranges from simple acceptance to the more complex state of commitment. Valuing is based on the internalization of a set of specified values, while clues to these values are expressed in the learner's overt behavior and are often identifiable.</p>	<p>Examples: Demonstrates belief in the democratic process. Is sensitive towards individual and cultural differences (value diversity). Shows the ability to solve problems. Proposes a plan to social improvement and follows through with commitment. Informs management on matters that one feels strongly about.</p> <p>Key Words: completes, demonstrates, differentiates, explains, follows, forms, initiates, invites, joins, justifies,</p>

	proposes, reads, reports, selects, shares, studies, works.
<p>Organization: Organizes values into priorities by contrasting different values, resolving conflicts between them, and creating a unique value system. The emphasis is on comparing, relating, and synthesizing values.</p>	<p>Examples: Recognizes the need for balance between freedom and responsible behavior. Accepts responsibility for one's behavior. Explains the role of systematic planning in solving problems. Accepts professional ethical standards. Creates a life plan in harmony with abilities, interests, and beliefs. Prioritizes time effectively to meet the needs of the organization, family, and self.</p> <p>Key Words: adheres, alters, arranges, combines, compares, completes, defends, explains, formulates, generalizes, identifies, integrates, modifies, orders, organizes, prepares, relates, synthesizes.</p>
<p>Internalizing values (characterization): Has a value system that controls their behavior. The behavior is pervasive, consistent, predictable, and most importantly, characteristic of the learner. Instructional objectives are concerned with the student's general patterns of adjustment (personal, social, emotional).</p>	<p>Examples: Shows self-reliance when working independently. Cooperates in group activities (displays teamwork). Uses an objective approach in problem solving. Displays a professional commitment to ethical practice on a daily basis. Revises judgments and changes behavior in light of new evidence. Values people for what they are, not how they look.</p> <p>Key Words: acts, discriminates, displays, influences, listens, modifies, performs, practices, proposes, qualifies, questions, revises, serves, solves, verifies.</p>

The Psychomotor Domain

The psychomotor domain (Simpson, 1972) includes physical movement, coordination, and use of the motor-skill areas. Development of these skills requires practice and is measured in terms of speed, precision, distance, procedures, or techniques in execution. The seven major categories are listed from the simplest behavior to the most complex:

Category	Example and Key Words (verbs)
<p>Perception: The ability to use sensory cues to guide motor activity. This ranges from sensory stimulation, through cue selection, to translation.</p>	<p>Examples: Detects non-verbal communication cues. Estimate where a ball will land after it is thrown and then moving to the correct location to catch the ball. Adjusts heat of stove to correct temperature by smell and taste of food. Adjusts the height of the forks on a forklift by comparing where the forks are in relation to the pallet.</p> <p>Key Words: chooses, describes, detects, differentiates, distinguishes, identifies, isolates, relates, selects.</p>
<p>Set: Readiness to act. It includes mental, physical, and emotional sets. These three sets are dispositions that predetermine a person's response to different situations (sometimes called mindsets).</p>	<p>Examples: Knows and acts upon a sequence of steps in a manufacturing process. Recognize one's abilities and limitations. Shows desire to learn a new process (motivation). NOTE: This subdivision of Psychomotor is closely related with the "Responding to phenomena" subdivision of the Affective domain.</p> <p>Key Words: begins, displays, explains, moves, proceeds, reacts, shows, states, volunteers.</p>
<p>Guided Response: The early stages in learning a complex skill that includes imitation and trial and error. Adequacy of performance is achieved by practicing.</p>	<p>Examples: Performs a mathematical equation as demonstrated. Follows instructions to build a model. Responds hand-signals of instructor while learning to operate a forklift.</p> <p>Key Words: copies, traces, follows, react, reproduce, responds</p>
<p>Mechanism: This is the intermediate stage in learning a complex skill. Learned responses have become habitual and the movements can be performed with some confidence and proficiency.</p>	<p>Examples: Use a personal computer. Repair a leaking faucet. Drive a car.</p> <p>Key Words: assembles, calibrates, constructs, dismantles, displays, fastens, fixes, grinds, heats, manipulates, measures, mends, mixes, organizes, sketches.</p>
<p>Complex Overt Response: The skillful performance of motor acts that involve complex movement patterns. Proficiency is indicated by a quick, accurate, and highly coordinated performance, requiring a minimum of energy. This category includes performing without hesitation, and automatic</p>	<p>Examples: Maneuvers a car into a tight parallel parking spot. Operates a computer quickly and accurately. Displays competence while playing the piano.</p>

<p>performance. For example, players are often utter sounds of satisfaction or expletives as soon as they hit a tennis ball or throw a football, because they can tell by the feel of the act what the result will produce.</p>	<p>Key Words: assembles, builds, calibrates, constructs, dismantles, displays, fastens, fixes, grinds, heats, manipulates, measures, mends, mixes, organizes, sketches.</p> <p>NOTE: The Key Words are the same as Mechanism, but will have adverbs or adjectives that indicate that the performance is quicker, better, more accurate, etc.</p>
<p>Adaptation: Skills are well developed and the individual can modify movement patterns to fit special requirements.</p>	<p>Examples: Responds effectively to unexpected experiences. Modifies instruction to meet the needs of the learners. Perform a task with a machine that it was not originally intended to do (machine is not damaged and there is no danger in performing the new task).</p> <p>Key Words: adapts, alters, changes, rearranges, reorganizes, revises, varies.</p>
<p>Origination: Creating new movement patterns to fit a particular situation or specific problem. Learning outcomes emphasize creativity based upon highly developed skills.</p>	<p>Examples: Constructs a new theory. Develops a new and comprehensive training programming. Creates a new gymnastic routine.</p> <p>Key Words: arranges, builds, combines, composes, constructs, creates, designs, initiate, makes, originates.</p>

Other Psychomotor Domain Taxonomies

Dave's (1975):

- **Imitation** — Observing and patterning behavior after someone else. Performance may be of low quality. Example: Copying a work of art.
- **Manipulation** — Being able to perform certain actions by following instructions and practicing. Example: Creating work on one's own, after taking lessons, or reading about it.
- **Precision** — Refining, becoming more exact. Few errors are apparent. Example: Working and reworking something, so it will be “just right.”
- **Articulation** — Coordinating a series of actions, achieving harmony and internal consistency. Example: Producing a video that involves music, drama, colour, sound, etc.
- **Naturalization** — Having high level performance become natural, without needing to think much about it. Examples: Michael Jordan playing basketball, Nancy Lopez hitting a golf ball, etc.

Harrow's (1972):

- **Reflex movements** — Reactions that are not learned.
- **Fundamental movements** — Basic movements such as walking, or grasping.
- **Perception** — Response to stimuli such as visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or tactile discrimination.
- **Physical abilities** — Stamina that must be developed for further development such as strength and agility.
- **Skilled movements** — Advanced learned movements as one would find in sports or acting.
- **No discursive communication** — Effective body language, such as gestures and facial expressions.

Example of a Test Outline:

Chapter - Evaluation and Assessment

Topic	Knowledge	Mark	Comprehension	Mark	Application	Mark	Analysis	Mark	Synthesis	Mark	Evaluation	Mark	Total Questions	Total mark
1.Evaluation	Define Evaluation	2	Explain the principles of evaluation	4					Plan an evaluation session	10	Compile a swot analysis on evaluation processes	10	4	26
2.Assessment	Define Assessment	2					Distinguish between assessment and evaluation	6					2	8
3.Blooms Taxonomy	Define Blooms Taxonomy	2	Give an example of Cognitive Domain testing		Construct a test using Blooms Taxonomy	10							2	20
Total												8	54	

Collecting of Evidence

What is evidence?

It is a demonstrated proof of competence.

Evidence collected provides the educator with proof that the learner complies with the criteria of the standard or outcome for which credit is sought. Evidence should be collected over time, from many different sources, in different circumstances, in routine and non-routine situations and the forms of evidence is appropriate to the context. Different types of evidence can be distinguished.

Needless to say, the Assessor gathers evidence to make judgement. The Assessor will at this stage, apply the rule of evidence to make evaluation of evidence and make judgments. This is another stage of the assessment process; the Assessor is evaluating the evidence gathered by the learner. The Assessor will deem the learner

- A. Competent – if the evidence gathered has met all the specific outcomes and its related assessment criteria of the unit standard.
- B. Not Yet Competent (NYC) – if the evidence gathered does not meet the specific outcome and criteria or more evidence is required. The Assessor plays a pivotal at this point in time and support. The feedback must be relevant and constructive. Further assessment will require that the learner be reassessed against the outstanding specific outcomes and criteria. This allows the learner to close gaps.

Who collects the Evidence?

This process is confusing to most people; the Assessor holds the meeting with the learner to discuss the process of Assessment and always referring to the unit standard. Assessor explains to the learner what is required of him or her to demonstrate his or her Competency

NOTE WELL: this is the point of departure for this process.

Types of Evidence

Documentary Evidence

The best way to collect documentary evidence is to compile a portfolio. Anything on paper is seen as documentary evidence. Documentary evidence is divided into three different categories:

- working documentation (reports, letters, essays, memos, etc.)
- personal reports (planning, reasoning behind actions)
- witness testimony (others confirmation)

Performance Evidence

Performance evidence refers to behavioural evidence or evidence of exemplary characteristics. Performance evidence can be direct, indirect or/and supplementary.

Direct evidence: Actual evidence collected by learner.

Indirect evidence: Evidence collected through simulation and projects and \ examinations of completed work.

Sources of indirect evidence include:

- Team outputs
- Work completed at an earlier stage
- Performance appraisal
- Training records
- Testimonials
- Reviews and commendations
- Certificates and qualifications
- Medals, prizes and trophies
- Customer / client ratings

Supplementary evidence: A reflection of the learners acquired knowledge. Learners are asked to respond to question (written or oral).

Knowledge Evidence

Knowledge evidence is collected through the indication of the learners' ability to recall, apply and transfer knowledge.

Historical evidence

What the learner was capable doing in the past is a collected through historical evidence. There is no time limit on this evidence collection technique but it is the least reliable because it might not reflect the true nature of the learners' knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Some examples of historical evidence are:

- Projects and Portfolios
- Video/audio taped performance/ photographs
- Document completed by the learner
- Performance appraisal
- Training records
- Testimonials
- Review and commendations
- Certificates and qualification
- Medals, prizes and trophies
- Customer or client ratings

What must the Evidence prove?

Does the learner understand what the unit standard requires him/her to demonstrate?

What form of Evidence has the learner collected or provided?

- Direct Evidence, supplemented with Indirect and Historical

Does the evidence conform to the **VACSS** rules?

- This is the most important question the learner should ask when evaluating the Evidence s/he has gathered.

Also note that it is important to have the learner give you, the assessor feedback on the process used during assessment – this will give you and the moderator valuable information of what could be done to perfect the assessment techniques etc.

Rules of Evidence

The evidence must be (VACCS/VARS)

- **Valid** – meet the specific outcomes and its related assessment criteria i.e. fit for purpose
- **Authentic** – created by the learner
- **Consistent/Reliable** – the evidence will give the same results about the learner's competence either by different Assessors or over a period of time
- **Current** - the evidence applies to the latest version of the standard or reflect current practises
- **Sufficient** – evidence covers all the specific outcomes and criteria and the learner can demonstrate competency at an acceptable level



Activity 4:

4.1 Discuss the different types of evidence

4.2 Explain how evidence should be

4.3 Give principles of good Assessment

4.4 Discuss the methods of evidence that you think is appropriate. Take into consideration the learners that might require RPL

Facilitate Valid, Sufficient, Authentic and Current Evidence

Learning activities are important in developing outcomes-based assessment. They provide learners with the opportunity to practice their new knowledge acquired from the learning material.

Learning activities include the following:

- completing questions;
- completing charts and grids;
- preparing a flowchart;
- matching words and definitions;
- going on a field trip;
- using a piece of equipment; and
- compiling a folio of newspaper clippings.

Forms of Assessment

The assessment can take a variety of different forms. The most common factors are that it is done under comparatively short, timed conditions and usually under observed conditions which ensures it is the student's own work (although there are examples of exams where students take the questions away).

Major criticisms are that because of the comparatively short time allowed answers may inevitably be superficial and/or not all the learning outcomes may be assessed. They may also encourage the rote learning of potential model answers. This can be avoided if the focus of the tasks set is on the application of what has been learnt, presenting the student with a previously unseen context or scenario or set of data which they have to 'do' something with.

Some of the most common variations of exams are:

Seen

Where the questions to be answered are given at a pre-specified date beforehand. The intention is to reduce the need for 'question-spotting', to reduce the anxiety, and to increase the emphasis on learning.

Open-book

During the assessment students have access to specified texts and/or their notes. The intention is to reduce the emphasis on memorising facts, to reduce anxiety and allows more demanding questions to be set.

Unseen

Arguably makes the student revise the whole syllabus because anything may appear on the paper (although in practice may do the opposite as the student may 'question-spot' and gamble on certain topics coming up).

MCQ

Objective tests asking multiple choice questions (MCQ) where the student simply selects from a bank of potential answers. Easy to mark (can be done by a machine or even administered on a computer) and can ensure students revise the complete syllabus. However, it is arguably difficult, if not impossible, to assess higher order skills, and writing good questions is very difficult. If you can find an appropriate textbook there will probably be a bank of questions which come with it on disk.

Viva

Possibly used in conjunction with any of the above methods, this involves the student having to answer questions orally. In a comparatively short space of time it is possible to ascertain both what the student knows and the depth of this understanding (and possibly the amount they contributed to a group project and the nature of that contribution).

Performance

In many cases, when it comes to practical outcomes, the only sensible way of really assessing whether an outcome has been learnt is through watching the student actually perform it – whether ‘it’ is literally a performance, as in the performing arts, or a nursing student taking a patient’s blood pressure. Because in such cases the assessed ‘product’ is transient, for purposes of moderation and external validation you may need to find ways of recording the event (audio or video). Such recordings can also play a vital role in giving the student feedback.

Self and Peer Assessment

There is strong evidence that involving students in the assessment process can have very definite educational benefits. Not so much a type of assessment like those already listed, this is something which can be done in conjunction with any type of assessment. The important aspect is that it involves the student in trying to apply the assessment criteria for themselves. This might include: a marking exercise on ‘fictitious’ or previous years’ student work; the completion of a self-assessment sheet to be handed in with their work; ‘marking’ a peer’s work and giving them feedback (which they can then possibly redraft before submission to the tutor); or really marking other students’ work (i.e. allocating marks which actually count in some way) – a seminar presentation, for example, or a written product using a model answer.

The evidence is that through trying to apply criteria, or mark using a model answer, the student gains much greater insight into what is actually being required and subsequently their own work improves in the light of this.

An additional benefit is that it may enable the students to be set more learning activities on which they will receive feedback which otherwise would not be set because of lack of staff time.

Communication

(One and two-way communication, communication within a group, verbal, written and non-verbal communication. Arguing, describing, advocating, interviewing, negotiating, presenting, using specific written forms)

- Written presentation (essay, report, reflective paper etc.)
- Oral presentation
- Group work
- Discussion/debate/role play
- Participate in a 'Court of Enquiry'
- Presentation to camera
- Observation of real or simulated professional practice

Questioning Techniques

Following is a description of the use of each of the above-mentioned instruments. The principles of assessment should be kept in mind when deciding to use a particular instrument, i.e. the assessment instrument should ensure fairness, should be reliable, valid and practical.

These are some of the different types of questions that can be used:

Alternative response questions

True/False; Yes/No questions

- Possible uses:**
- Recall of information
 - Ability to discriminate

Assertion/reason questions

Consists of an assertion and supporting explanation.

The learner has to decide whether the assertion and explanation are true, and if true, whether the explanation is a valid reason for the assertion. Sometimes the learner is asked to select his/her answer from a list of possibilities, e.g. True; True + Valid; True + Invalid.

Possible uses: -Ability to weigh up options and to discriminate

Aural/oral tests

These are mainly used to generate evidence on learners' ability to listen, interpret, communicate ideas and sustain a conversation in the language of assessment.

Possible uses: -Interpretation of ideas.

-Expression of ideas

Completion questions/short answer questions

Learners are presented with a question with a pre-determined answer consisting of a few words, or may be given a statement where key words are omitted. They are then required to complete the statement by filling in the word(s). Such questions may also involve the use of numbers, diagrams and graphs.

Possible uses: -Recall of factual information
-Test understanding and application of knowledge, e.g. in mathematical Concepts

Examinations/tests

These usually consist of a range of questions. Learners are required to respond to questions within a specified time.

Possible uses:

- Recall of information
- Cognitive skills such as problem solving or analyses

Extended response questions

These are usually in a written form. There are few restrictions on the content and form of the response. Continuous prose is normally required, but there may be limits on the length and/or time allocated.

Possible uses:

- Open-ended debates or other responses
- Arguments
- Reports

Grid questions/matching questions

Grid questions and matching questions are variants of each other. The learner is presented with two lists – a set of statements and a set of responses. The learner is required to indicate which response from the second list corresponds or matches each statement in the first list.

Grid questions are presented in grid format.

They differ from the other selected-response assessment instruments in that each question may have more than one correct response and each response may be used more than once.

- Possible uses:**
- Recall of information
 - Application of knowledge

Multiple choice questions

Multiple choice questions consist of an incomplete statement or a question, followed by plausible alternative responses from which the learner has to select the correct one.

Outcomes involving higher order analytical skills are probably more validly assessed by means of free-response assessment instruments such as extended response questions, but multiple choice questions can be useful if carefully constructed.

- Possible uses:**
- Recall of information
 - Check understanding; analyses

Oral questions/restricted response questions

The form and content of the response is limited by the way in which the question is asked. These questions do not have pre-determined correct answers (as in short answer questions, etc.) and the assessor has to exercise his/her professional judgment when interpreting learner's responses.

- Possible uses:**
- Allows for self-expression when questions are oral
 - Supports observation of tasks where underpinning knowledge - and understanding are tested

Personal interviews

A personal interview is probably the oldest and best-known means of eliciting information directly from learners. It combines two assessment methods, namely observation and questioning. An interview is a dialogue between the assessor and the learner, creating opportunities for learner questions.

Possible uses:

- A range of applications using different forms of questions, particularly open-ended questions
- Guidance and support to the learner

Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a structured written interview consisting of a set of questions relating to particular areas of performance. Unlike a personal interview, it is administered and judged under standard conditions.

Possible uses:

- Assessment of outcomes particularly concerned with attitudes, feelings, interests and experiences

Structured questions

A structured question consists of a stem (which describes a situation), followed by a series of related questions. The stem can be text, a diagram, a picture, a video, etc.

- Possible uses:**
- Recall of information
 - Application of knowledge and understanding
 - Analyses
 - Debates
 - Arguments

Assessment Guide Design

Assessment guides are used to assist assessors in understanding how to use:

- a unit standard;
- an assessment instrument designed around a unit standard;
- the evidence collected using the assessment instrument; and
- the process of assessment.

Assessment guides can include the entire assessment process or just a one page summary of the assessments used. These guides and the learners' portfolios of assessment go hand in hand. They should contain exactly the same information and need to provide external assessors with the tools to re-assess the learners' work, if that is required.

Assessment Guide details

An assessment guide should contain the following:

- the unit standard being assessed;
- the constructs being assessed
- the evidence to be collected in the assessment;
- the assessment activities;

- the assessment instruments;
- competence required of the assessor;
- procedures for the conduct of the assessment;
- the criteria to be used in assessing the evidence;
- record-keeping instruments;
- feedback forms;
- samples of learner work; and
- evidence of validity, reliability and practicality of the assessment instruments.

Structure of Assessment Guide

The assessment guide needs to be structured according to the requirements of the different Learning areas. An assessment guide should be structured according to the content that it contains. Firstly, the guide should contain all the assessment work organized by the educator and frame that the Learning area requires. Within the guide, overall learner performance needs to be collected as well.

This will be an indication on the standard of the assessment activity. The assessment guide needs to include records of possible feedback to the assessor to provide the assessor with information on how to improve on future assessment activities.

Guide Providers Support Material and/or References

In addition to the details required in the assessment guide, support material and/or references should be included as well. Support material and/or references involve the material needed to achieve assessment.

This information includes the following:

- assessed performances;
- quality of evidence collected;
- assessment methods used;
- resources used;
- conditions and time allocation for assessments;
- accountabilities for assessments;
- deadlines of assessments;
- moderation arrangements;
- details of the learners; and
- instructions to assessors.

Evaluate Quality of Assessment Design and Guide

A quality assurance framework assures assessments are conducted on standard. Such a framework should include the following:

- the use of qualified assessors;
- a register of qualified assessors and their area of expertise;
- a list of accredited assessor training providers;
- guidelines for the conduct of assessment;
- a relevant data base;
- an appeals process;
- audit requirements;
- provision for promotion, consultation and advice

The quality management system needs to provide learning and assessment methods, the range of parties involved in the assessment process, moderation requirements, assessment information, records of assessment, confidentiality, the processes and results of assessment and appeal procedures.

Evaluation Results Described and Justified

Feedback is an effective part of the learning process to assist learners to achieve the performance standards. The following roles for feedback can be identified:

- it provides the learner to evaluate own performance;
- it gives the learners the opportunity to improve on performance problems;
- the learners have the opportunity to come up with their own solutions;
- it builds learner confidence; and;
- it gives educator information about the suitability of the assessment activity.

The following guidelines for giving feedback:

Be specific: Do not be vague. Learners might not understand information and will not learn how to improve on performance.

Focus on what should be changed: It is important to comment on the aspects that can be changed, rather than the aspects that cannot.

Choose the most important aspects: Clear up the most basic aspects first to allow learners to achieve on base level first and thereafter comment on the smaller detail.

Balance the positive and the negative: Do not just comment on the negative aspects of the assignment, indicate positive aspects as well.

Allow space for questioning: Allow the other party to give their own feedback. This will allow educator the opportunity to know whether they were understood.

Recommendations Contribute towards Improvement

Recommendations must contribute to learners' performance. The learner needs to understand that assessment is:

- an incentive to study;
- a means to indicate areas in which a learner will require assistance;
- a recognition of learner's knowledge; and
- a means of entry into another level.

It is therefore important that recommendations made by educator is uplifting and contributes to the learners' level of confidence.



Activity 5:

5.1 Discuss guidelines for drafting an Assessment Guide

5.2 Discuss the guidelines in giving feedback

5.3 What information should be included in support material and/or references that involve the material needed to achieve assessment.

Section 3

Conduct Outcomes Based Assessment

Learning Outcomes:

The following learning outcomes are covered in this chapter.

- ✓ Demonstrate understanding of outcomes-based assessment;
- ✓ Prepare for assessments;
- ✓ Conduct assessments;
- ✓ Provide feedback on assessments; and
- ✓ Review assessments.

Preparing for Assessments

Planning for assessment requires an Assessor to think laterally and be innovative so that the evidence gathered can meet all the specific outcomes and its criteria.

The Assessor needs to take the following aspect into consideration

- Assessment plan
- Evidence to be gathered
- Select the assessment tools that are valid
- Compare strengths and weakness of the assessment methods
- Time frame
- Resources i.e. equipment, venue, people, etc.
- Assessment to be cost effective
- Unfair barriers, e.g. accessibility of resource to the learner
- Validity and sufficiency of evidence
- Prepares the environment so as to allow an accurate reflection of the learners competence
- Make sure that the critical cross-field are incorporated in the assessment process

The Assessor should indicate the possible cost that could be incurred in the assessment process and ensure that assessments are cost effective. The assessment plan should indicate cost incurred in the following aspects

- Stationery
- Equipment
- Venue
- Communication
- Travel

In preparing for assessment there are key documents that the provider should have and these are:

No	Item	Function
1	Assessment strategy	<p>Gives a strategic overview.</p> <p>Outlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proportion of assessments to take place. • any common compulsory assessments for all learners. • any external assessment requirements (e.g. exams in the schooling system) • any additional assessment requirements in terms of learner ships or skills programme. <p>e.g. RPL, feedback to group of learners, integrated assessments.</p>
2	Assessment plan	<p>Gives an overview of the methods, time-frames, and responsibilities for assessment and moderation for the agreed delivery period.</p> <p>This includes but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-programme assessment for RPL. • Variety of methods to be used. • Where and when assessment will take place. • Opportunities for re-assessment. • Moderation plan. • Record-keeping and administrative requirements.
3	Assessment guide	<p>Assist assessors and moderators in the implementation process.</p> <p>Should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment activities and tasks, including instructions to learners. • Assessment and recording tools such as skills list, observation sheet, Rubrics, marking memo including minimum requirements for competence.

Planning steps

By following each step, you will create a student assessment plan customized to your needs. While some of the tasks may seem self-evident, they are all necessary to create a valid assessment.

It is advisable that the Assessor draws up an assessment plan after s/he has met the learner because some changes can be made after they have met either through a meeting or other means of correspondence like fax, e-mail or telephonically for as long as the evidence for that communication is recorded.

STEP 1: Describe the learning context

Considering the subject area, difficulty, constraints, student information, and other characteristics of the course or activity will set the frame of reference for all subsequent planning decisions in a student assessment.

STEP 2: Identify stakeholders and their needs

Explore your goals as the assessor, and especially the characteristics and needs of the students in order to clearly determine your assessment purpose and learning objectives of the course or activity.

STEP 3: Create the learning objectives

Identifying clear objectives for the course or activity helps determine how to conduct the assessment. These objectives are statements that describe the knowledge, skills, or behaviors students are expected to learn by the end of a course or activity.

STEP 4: Determine how you will use the results

Determine whether you will use your assessments to informally monitor student work, provide feedback, document progress, or to formally evaluate student knowledge. Decide how frequently you would like to conduct student assessment.

This will help you monitor student progress and make any adjustments that might be necessary. How you use assessments and how frequently you use them will help you determine which assessment method(s) to use.

STEP 5: Create an assessment plan

The assessment plan is a detailed description of how to implement the assessment and can be displayed in a separate document or within the course syllabus. The plan includes the course learning objectives, assessment points, the assessment method(s) that will be used, and performance criteria for each method.

Prepare for Assessments

Preparation for assessment relates to organizing and preparing resources, people, schedules, venues, assessment instruments and documentation for a particular assessment and / or related assessment for an individual or a number of assessment candidates/learners. Preparation is to be carried out in situations where the candidate assessor has access to:

- *Relevant organizational assessment and moderation policies and procedures, and*
- *Assessment guides and instruments for the assessment at hand, including the relevant outcomes and*

2.1	Preparation of assessment resources, logistics, documentation and environment meets the requirements of the assessment at hand and ensure fairness and safety of assessment	
2.2	Parties involved in the assessment are notified in good time. Checks are carried out to ensure parties involved in the assessment are ready and available to meet required schedules <i>Range: Parties include assessment candidates and moderators, and may include assessment facilitators and / or assistants, teachers,</i>	

	<i>trainers, invigilators and safety personnel.</i>	
2.3	All pre-assessment moderation requirements are carried out in accordance with relevant assessment policies, moderation plans and ETQA requirements	
2.4	Assessment details are explained to candidates clearly and constructively. Opportunities for clarification are provided and responses promote understanding of the requirements <i>Range: Assessment details cover the specific purpose, process, expectations, roles, responsibilities and appeals procedures related to the assessment at hand, as well as the general context of assessment in terms of the principles and mechanisms of the NQF, as applicable to the situation and assessment context.</i>	
2.5	Inputs are sought from candidates regarding special needs and possible sources of evidence that could contribute to valid assessment, including RPL opportunities. Modifications made to the assessment approach on the basis of the inputs do not affect the validity of the assessment	
2.6	Candidate readiness for assessment is confirmed. In cases where candidates are not yet ready, actions take are in line with assessment policies	

In preparing for assessments all stakeholders need to be involved which are:

- Learners
- Evidence facilitator (if applicable)
- Moderator

The lecturers:

1. decide what the students will have to do in order to pass
2. want most of the students to pass
3. aren't supposed to tell the students exactly what they have to do to pass

Assessment details explained to Candidates

This process is confusing to most people; the Assessor holds the meeting with the learner to discuss the process of Assessment and always referring to the unit standard. Assessor explains to the learner what is required of him or her to demonstrate his or her Competency when assessment is to take place.

NOTE WELL: this is the point of departure for this process.

1. Does the learner understand what the unit standard requires him/her to demonstrate?
2. Does the learner understand what is required from him or her during assessment?
3. Are there anything the learner would like to discuss with regards to the understanding of what is required of him/her during assessment
4. The learner is to specify to the assessor if there is any barriers that they can foresee during the assessment.

What form of Evidence is the learner required to collect?

- Direct Evidence, supplemented with Indirect and Historical

Does the evidence conform to the VACSS rules?

- This is the most important question the learner should ask when evaluating the Evidence s/he will be gathering.

After it is clear that the learner knows what he / she will be assessed on the documentation must be signed the learner is given the assessment plan and guide and needs to gather all the evidence required.

Inputs sought from candidates with regards to special needs

It would be good to explain to the learner at the assessment meeting how the assessment is planned and what inputs they might have with regards to the assessment.

The assessor should at this stage also identify if there are special needs and possible sources of evidence that could be contributed to validate assessment and RPL opportunities.

At this point modifications can be made to the assessment plan.

Here are some documentation that can and should be used during the planning of assessment.

The students:

- want to know what they will have to do to pass
- know that rules 1, 3 and 3 above apply

Given this, what rules should govern your behaviour in helping students to prepare for assessment? We would suggest:

- checking out local regulations and customs on helping students prepare for assessment.
- helping students to prepare for assessment without breaking rule 3.

This section concentrates on rules 6 and 7, informed by the previous five.

What will this first word try to do?

It will help you to prepare your students for assessment in a way which is sensitive to their needs and to the norms of the course. It will try to persuade you that helping the students to understand the learning outcomes and the assessment criteria does not contravene rule 3!

Clarifying the formal assessment requirements***Regulations***

If you haven't already received them, get hold of the relevant assessment regulations and course and module. Work through them, and see what they mean, for the students and for you.

Requirements

As well as regulations there will be assessment requirements. For example, for projects there will be hand-in dates, required formats, and obligatory cover sheets.

Students will expect you to know what these requirements are.

Discover what they are, be familiar with them, work through them to see what implications they have for students, and for you.

Answering student questions

A student asks you: 'If I fail one of my modules this year but get at least a B in the rest can I still do my current selection of modules in the third year?'

Do you work through the regulations with the student to find the answer; investigate and answer such questions yourself; or refer the questions or indeed the student to the module, year or course leader?

Talk to the module leader about what he or she would prefer you to do. In general, be cautious in answering the more complex questions about assessment regulations and requirements. Anything you say on the subject may be taken down by the student and used, not necessarily entirely accurately, later.

A student asks you 'What's the hand-in date for this piece of work?' You should know the answer, or be able to find it within seconds.

Clarifying learning outcomes

Getting a clear view of what a learning outcome means takes time. Don't plan to spend one whole session with your students working on outcomes and criteria, and assume that will do it. Spread the work out through the course. Here are some approaches:

At an early meeting of the class

Draw the student's attention to the section of the course or module guide, handbook or syllabus where the learning outcomes are listed. Tell them that these are the things they will need to be able to do to pass the course or module. Tell them, briefly, what you think they mean. Ask them if they have any questions. They probably will, generally along the lines of, 'What exactly does that mean?' Because learning outcomes can seem a bit abstract or unclear, give the students some examples of what they mean. For example, show them a question from last year's examination and explain how you think it tests a particular learning outcome. Encourage discussion. Reassure the students that you'll keep on coming back to the learning outcomes during the course.

During the course

Routinely start sessions by saying something like, 'Today the class relates mainly to these learning outcomes' and then refer to them in the course or module handbook. When you are setting student work, talk through how the work relates to one or more of the course outcomes: 'You'll see that, once you can answer questions like this correctly, you've achieved most of outcome 4.'

Encourage and support continued discussion on what the current learning outcome means and how it relates to the session. This is excellent preparation for assessment.

Clarifying assessment criteria

Once the students start producing work, in the class or between classes, you can start similar work on the assessment criteria. This can lead to fascinating and important discussions.

For example, an overall assessment might say, in part: 'To obtain maximum marks the essay must be within + or - 10% of the specified length, and must provide a comprehensive overview of the main debates around the topic, leading to a definite and well-reasoned conclusion.'

Apart from encouraging them to find out how the word-counter works on their word processor, you could hold lively and productive discussions on the meaning, within the course, of each of the underlined words or phrases in the sentence.

Helping students to make assessment judgments

When we assess, we can learn almost as much about the assessment process and the judgments we make as we learn about the students and what they have learned. You can use this fact to help your students prepare for being assessed by doing some assessing for themselves. Here's a possible sequence of activities.

Good news, bad news

Give the students each a short piece of student work (real, maybe from one of last year's students, or simulated) on the topic. Ask them what they think is good about it and what they think is bad, and how it could be improved. Get them to work on this alone, then in pairs, then in bigger groups, finally pooling their conclusions for you to write up publicly. This is usually a lively and very productive exercise. It's a fine and relevant ice-breaker to use in the first two or three weeks, of a course.

Devising a marking scheme

Tell the students what marking schemes are. Show them one or two. Give them an example of the kind of question they could be asked to do on the course; even better, tell them about a piece of work they're actually going to be doing in the near future. Then, informed by the 'good news, bad news' exercise and using the same sort of group method, get them to devise marking schemes. Discuss them. Try to agree one with the class as whole. They'll probably be able to settle on some common elements, but not on everything; they'll be unlikely to agree on the weightings of marks which should be given to each element.

Using a marking scheme

Get hold of some answers to the question you worked on in the previous activity. Ask the students to mark them, using the marking schemes they devised. Have them do their own, or the class composite one. They should do this in pairs or threes.

Write up the marks which each small group awards. Then get them to explore; perhaps after remixing the student groups; the reasons for any discrepancies in their marks. Work with them to revise the marking scheme to produce fewer discrepancies in marking.

Explore with them the issues which underlie any remaining disagreements, about the 'right' marking scheme or about assessments made using the marking scheme.

A good alternative is to ask them each to produce at least an outline answer to the question. They could then mark their own answers; then and when you judge that the degree of trust in the class is high enough, each other's. You can collect a few sample answers and their associated marks, and again explore the adequacy of the marking schemes and the issues and problems involved in their use.

Devising assessment criteria

After all this, you can usefully encourage the students to go beyond marking schemes, which are specific to one question, and devise more general assessment criteria for work in the module. The sorts of processes suggested above will work.

Using assessment criteria

Much the same exercise suggested above for using marking schemes can be used with assessment criteria. Again students need to use the criteria to see what they mean in practice, and to see what problems the use of criteria solves and does not solve.

Learning the technical skills of being assessed

Every year, students do less well than they could in assessments, especially in examinations, for reasons that have little or nothing to do with their knowledge of or ability in the subject. They answer the wrong number of questions on the paper. They don't notice that some questions carry more marks than others. They "describe" when they should have "analyzed" or "compared and contrasted". As well as giving thorough briefing, you can help your students avoid such traps by offering one or two sessions in which they practice being examined.

In a hour they can at least plan how they'd answer a three-hour examination, or they could answer one question. Afterwards, review with the students how they did.

Final Comments

Should you really be giving all this emphasis to assessment? I think so -- for at least two reasons.

First and most obviously, students care a lot about assessment. It seems appropriate to help them to do as well as they can, paying due regard to the rules suggested at the start of this first word.

My second reason is that, in discussing what makes a piece of work in the subject good or less good, we are surely dealing with the very heart of the subject.

Learners get to understand the meaning of standards and quality in that subject. Assessment is, in the best possible sense of the term, an academic business, and a very proper topic for discussion between tutor and students.

Yes all of this takes time. And it pays off. Investing time in clarifying assessment during a course gives students a much better view of what they are trying to achieve.

This increases their ability to become effective independent learners. You're reallocating time from trying to teach them everything to helping them develop skills of goal-directed learning.

The learner is invited to the pre-assessment meeting where the following is discussed and minutes of the meeting compiled.

- Purpose of the assessment
- Unit standard (s) to be assessed
- Specific outcomes to be assessed.
- Assessment criteria including any relevant integrated assessment
- Method of assessing each specific outcome

- Evidence required for each assessment criteria
- Assessment date and the type of venue and resources required.
- Assessment date and time
- Date for giving feedback
- Related assessment policies including the rights of the learner (such as right to an interpreter, right to appeal)
- Procedure to follow if the learner is found competent or not yet competent.
- Contingency plan (inclusive of special needs).

Once the above have been discussed the parties should sign the minutes and the learner should be given an opportunity to confirm her/his level of readiness by signing the learner agreement form.

Pre-Assessment Interview / Meeting

An Assessor has options s/he can hold a meeting with the learner or an interview if the learner is within the organization or the place is within the proximity of the workplace. If the learner is not close to the Assessor, they can communicate through the phone or fax or e-mail, the communication should be documented and put on the Portfolio of evidence for the purpose of Authenticity.

When the Assessor decides to hold a meeting with the learner, the minutes of the meeting should be recorded and they should include the Agenda of the meeting, this allows the Assessor to be able to verify whether all the criteria for Prepare the candidate or Assessment have been met.

Moderator Preparation

The moderator will be informed about the assessment process including the date, venue, method of assessment and the unit standard to be assessed.

This will ensure that the moderator is prepared for the moderation date.



Activity 6:

6.1 Why is it important to prepare for assessment?

6.2 Identify which steps are to be taken when preparing for assessment.

ASSESSORS TIP

- Keep learning assessment criteria at the centre of your consciousness as you work on any aspect of assessment. They describe, after all, the basis on which your students will be guided in their future work and marked on their past work.
- Tell the students what criteria you will be using for assessment. Learning outcomes and assessment criteria together provide a clear target for students to work towards.
- Discuss assessment criteria with students. They'll be interested in the discussion. They'll contribute to it. Standards of achievement in your subject and your module are a very proper subject for classroom discussion.
- Set class exercises in which students devise assessment criteria, and then apply them to assessing work.
- Continue to work to clarify assessment criteria, for yourself and also for and with your students. Work on words such as 'reasonable', 'clear', 'accurate', 'appropriate'. In the context of the module or the assignment, or the examination, you need to be able to say more about what these words mean.
- Continue to explore the relations among the course aims, learning outcomes and assessment criteria. These three elements should be closely interdependent, in the course and also in your and your students' thinking about the course, the subject and the assessment.

Managing Resources for Assessment

At this stage the learner and the assessor are ready to conduct the assessment process.

The assessor needs to make sure that all the relevant documents are ready such as:

- Assessment tool
- Assessment checklist
- Questions and memorandum
- Venue

Design a Checklist that will assist you in managing your tasks throughout assessment.

Don't forget to notify the stakeholders about the assessment that is to take place. Ensure you take into consideration any disabilities or specific requirements that needs to be arranged for assessment purposes.

Ensure that your learner is prepared for assessment.

Conducting the Assessment

Good practice in Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is assessment designed to support and inform educators and learners so as to ensure continuing progress towards the outcomes, unit standards and skills programmes or qualifications targeted. In the schooling sector it is also known as continuous assessment (or CASS). It is used during the course of learning to support the candidate by giving him/her feedback on progress. It can be used for diagnostic and remedial purposes, and can be used to build up and document a candidate profile over time in order to feed into summative results linked to the award of credit.

The main purpose of formative assessment is to support learning, and it can be described as developmental. Good practice in formative assessment is guided by the principles of good assessment, and the process is guided by the unit standard '*Plan and conduct the assessment of learning outcomes*'.

Here is a summary of some key characteristics of good formative assessment:

- Assessment must be clearly linked to critical and specific outcomes.
- Assessment must be designed to reflect the importance of critical outcomes and of demonstrating applied competence.
- Learners are clearly informed about how, when, where and by whom they will be assessed in an assessment plan explained to, and signed by each candidate at the beginning of the programme.
- Assessment should not be an 'add-on' to teaching and learning, but should be integrated into learning activities and used to identify learning needs and give feedback and support to learners.
- A variety of assessment methods and techniques should be used.
- Assessment should be contextualized where possible.
- Learners should take an active role in assessment, helping formulate task-specific criteria and engaging in self and peer assessment.
- Assessment should be sensitive to gender, race, language and cultural issues.
- Provision should be made for learners with special needs.
- Moderation procedures must form part of an assessment system in order to assure quality.

Although formative assessment is designed to track candidate progress and to identify and address strengths and weaknesses, it may often generate evidence of applied competence. Whenever this happens, the evidence should be preserved or recorded and the record preserved. If assessment is well designed and integrated into learning activities, and if evidence is systematically collected, organised and kept in a safe place, much of the evidence needed for summative purposes can be generated during learning activities, and the amount that needs to be assessed by specially designed summative assessments will be dramatically reduced. This will make the assessment more practicable, saving both time and money.

Learning activities carried out under the supervision of a trainer, facilitator, mentor, coach or supervisor who is not a registered assessor may generate evidence of applied competence. If the person collecting this evidence is not a registered assessor, the evidence will later have to be authenticated by a registered assessor.

Evidence facilitators may be trained to assist relevant people in workplaces to collect, organise and present evidence in such a way that it will be acceptable to a registered assessor.

Good practice in Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is conducted by a registered assessor to confirm that learners or RPL candidates have met all the requirements to be awarded a unit standard, skills programme or qualification. Summative assessment can be made up partly or entirely of evidence collected through formative assessment or through activities that are part of current or previous work or other life experience. The collection of evidence is assessed against a standard or qualification in order to award credits or a qualification.

Summative assessment can also refer to a type of assessment during a course, such as an end of module test or task, to signify the completion of a particular portion of a learning programme. In this case, the learning activities and formative assessments are already completed, and the purpose of the summative assessment is specifically to generate evidence of competence.

Summative assessment should be planned to allow the use of a range of assessment methods (e.g. observation, product evaluation, written and oral questioning) and for a range of assessment instruments (e.g. practical, role play, written assignments, tests, examinations, projects, case studies, simulations). Although summative assessment at the end of a programme has not traditionally been accompanied by feedback to a candidate, it is considered an essential part of good summative assessment practice to give feedback wherever practically possible to relevant parties.

Is it necessary or desirable to assess each assessment criterion separately?

This is a contentious issue, and many assessors and assessor training providers interpret the requirements of summative assessment differently. Whilst some claim that you cannot be certain about competence unless separate evidence is obtained in relation to each criterion, others insist that this goes against good educational and assessment practice, which emphasizes integration and a holistic approach, rather than separation and a fragmented approach. SAQA supports the latter position.

Arguments against assessing each criterion separately include:

- In OBET outcomes are assessed; assessment criteria are provided to help assessors to assess each OUTCOME consistently. Assessment criteria should not be assessed separately: this would make them into mini-outcomes, not assessment criteria.
- Too many small separate assessments leads to fragmentation. Fragmentation of assessment leads to fragmentation of learning programmes. The emphasis should rather be on integrating and linking theory, practice, reflection, problems solving, etc. in an appropriate applied context.
- The kind of assessment which focuses on each assessment criterion one at a time tends to be of a check-list variety which works against giving learners challenging and extensive tasks involving, for example, projects or simulated or real life problem-solving.
- Applied competence at qualification (or skills programme or unit standard) level cannot be assessed without at least one more far-reaching integrated assessment.
- The assessment, record keeping and administrative time involved in assessing each criterion is far too onerous, and is out of line with the principle of 'practicability'.

The unit standards and registered qualifications spell out what has to be assessed. This does not change. But the assessment can be packaged in different ways, and the ETDQA does not recommend an approach of checking off each criterion individually. Rather it recommends that outcomes and standards should be clustered for assessment, much as they might be for delivery. This is also the position of SAQA.

So what is an assessor or a moderator or verifier to look for? Much as in the case of defining evidence requirements, it will be important to reach agreement and achieve consistency across sub-fields. In the mean-time, however, there are many pointers to follow.

Here is a guide for assessors, about what is required when conducting assessment:

- Where there are notes for assessors in the qualification or unit standard, follow the guidance given.
- Where there is a range statement, make sure that the range has been covered in the learning programme and ask for a third party statement to ensure full coverage if there is only evidence for partial coverage.
- Where there is a Qualification Assessment Strategy (or a Learnership or Skills Programme Assessment Strategy Guide), follow the guidance given.
- Where issues of health and safety are at stake, look for complete, direct and current evidence in relation to each assessment criterion. (Of course this may be inferred from a third party statement about the observance of standard operating procedures over time, but some direct assessment, for example through observation or questioning by an assessor is advised).
- Where error could have a profound negative impact, again look for direct and current assessment in relation to each assessment criterion, for example through observation or questioning by an assessor.
- Where the learning achievement is heavily knowledge-based (as in certain ETD practitioners' subject matter expertise), recognize that sampling is essential, but look for evidence of adequate coverage

resulting from learning activities and formative assessment. Similarly, look for evidence of breadth of relevant experience in RPL candidates.

- Insist on evidence of application of each relevant critical outcome in at least one context in a skills programme, learnership or other qualification.
- Once satisfied that the evidence available covers all the critical (health, safety, high impact and Critical Outcomes) aspects and a representative sample of the rest of the standards, look for evidence of applied competence through an integrated assessment at qualification level.
- Where outcomes and/or unit standards can be clustered together and assessed through a single multi-faceted task it is both educationally sound and good assessment practice to choose this route.
- For learners in a learning programme, the assessment strategy and timetable, the right to appeal, and arrangements for re-assessment should be explained to them on registration and they should sign that they have understood at this point. This is typically an administrative job, but an assessor should be available to answer questions at or before registration. Similarly, RPL candidates should be asked to sign their assessment plan and their awareness of their rights at the time that the plan is agreed.
- Assessors making a final summative assessment judgement should give their reasons in writing and sign off the decision and learners and RPL candidates should sign that they have been informed of the decision, indicating whether they accept it or intend to appeal.

Unacceptable practice and irregularities in assessment.

There are many possible types of unacceptable practice that assessors should be aware of and prepared to act on. These include:

- Assessment instruments were not available: the assessment instruments and assessment specification for unit standards were not available for scrutiny by the moderator or verifier.
- Assessment instruments were inappropriate: the assessment instruments selected did not assess the relevant outcomes validly, e.g. a practical

outcome, which should have been assessed by a practical assessment was assessed by a written test.

- No evidence or insufficient evidence of the candidate's competence was supplied.
- The candidate's performance was judged inappropriately: the assessor has incorrectly interpreted the evidence supplied by candidate and has judged the candidates competent when the standard specified in the assessment criteria has not been met, or not yet competent when the standard has been met.
- No record of candidate's achievement: The provider has failed to keep records about candidate's performance.
- Moderation arrangements were unsatisfactory:

In addition there are a number of possible irregularities based on unethical behaviour. These include:

Unethical behaviour by a candidate:

- cheating, copying or accessing assessments in advance in cases of written test and examinations;
- bribing, blackmailing, threatening or harassing the assessor or others involved in the assessment process;
- offering third party witness statements, references, historical records, certificates or other forms of evidence that are not authentic.

Unethical behavior by an assessor:

- not declaring a family or business relationship with a candidate;
- responding to bribes, threats, etc. by favouring or disadvantaging any candidate over any other candidate;
- allowing personal bias (e.g. in relation to race, class, gender, educational background, ethnicity or religion) to influence assessment judgments;

- not making appropriate arrangements for candidates with disabilities or language disadvantages (unless the assessment is focusing on the language in question);

Unethical behavior by a moderator:

- responding to bribes, threats, etc. by ignoring irregularities detected in a candidate or assessor;
- allowing personal bias (e.g. in relation to race, class, gender, educational background, ethnicity or religion) to influence moderation judgments.

Unethical behaviour by a provider:

- aiding and abetting learners, assessors or moderators in any of the above behaviors.

Unethical behavior by a verifier or other employee or representative of an ETQA

- responding to bribes, threats, etc. by favouring or disadvantaging any candidate over any other candidate;
- allowing personal bias (e.g. in relation to race, class, gender, educational background, ethnicity or religion) to influence the award of learner achievements;
- allowing personal likes and dislikes, relationships etc. to influence the award of learner achievements.

After the pre-assessment meeting was held – it was noted what the special needs of candidates were – these must be amended in the assessment plan.

The assessment must now be carried out according to the assessment plan in accordance with the assessment guide.

The assessment guide could be in the form of a Learner Workbook – where the learner and assessor is guided through the process of assessment.

The assessor has met the learner at the pre-assessment meeting and the learner is fully aware of what is to be assessed. The Unit Standard which is to be assessed must be available for referral.

In the assessment plan it must be noted what questions will be asked – what methods is to be used in assessment and what principles to follow during the assessment meeting.

It must be noted that the assessor must be familiar with the course material and this should also be available at the assessment meeting.

Communicating Effectively during Assessment

Language and Assessment

Learners should, generally, be able to be assessed in a language that they are most proficient in. In South Africa in particular, this is important. It is stipulated that:

- The official languages of South Africa are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tsivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu.
- Measures must be taken to elevate the status and advance the use of the historically
- diminished status of indigenous languages
- All languages must enjoy parity of esteem and must be treated equitably

Furthermore, it is stipulated that:

Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions, taking into account equity, practicability and the need for redress.

These constitutional provisions give learners the right to determining the language(s) of learning and teaching. Assessment policies, therefore, should ensure, as far as possible and is practicable, that this right is upheld for all learners.

Giving Feedback**Introduction - why give feedback?**

Learning is an active process. To learn, we need to plan what we're going to do; attempt to do it; and then receive feedback on our work.

We then use this feedback to improve the work we have just done; or, more often in education, to ensure that the next work we do embraces what we have learned.

Feedback also affects how we feel about our work, and inevitably also about ourselves; feedback thus also affects student motivation. Students learn like this, given half a chance. And the feedback remains essential. They may even snooze through the odd few minutes of a lecture or seminar, but they will read, pore over, analyse, debate, argue with, and quite possibly treasure, your feedback. Especially if the feedback is written to be useful.

Giving good feedback is a skill which can be learned and honed. This should help you to give feedback which merits such intense attention from your students.

What will this "first word" do?

It should help you to:

- React positively to good things in students' work;
- Make helpful suggestions on ways in which their work could have been improved;
- Correct misapprehensions revealed in their work;
- Make suggestions for how they can change their approach in the future;
- Do this in a way which respects the individuality and worth of each student;
- Do this in a way which makes good and efficient use of your time;

This also links to getting feedback from students outside a class. Student work contains lots of feedback for teacher on their teaching!

The feedback sandwich

We recommend the feedback sandwich.

First, give them the good news.

They need to know what they've done **right**, or **well**. They need to know this so that they'll keep on doing it right or well, and also because it will make them feel appropriately good about themselves and their work, which in itself aids learning as well as feeling good.

They also need to know **why** it was right or good. Learners sometimes do well by accident - so tell them why it was right or good, in what respects it was right or good.

Good news needs to be:

- **Clear** Don't beat about the bush. If you think it was 'great' or 'excellent' or 'admirable' or 'very stimulating', then say so. Have the courage of your convictions. (Don't worry about using clichés!)
- **Specific** Words like 'great' or 'excellent' carry a strong emotional message, but when the emotional buzz fades, the intellectual hunger remains.

As we suggested above, say what, exactly what, was good and say why it was good.

- **Personal** That is, make the person you're giving feedback to feel acknowledged as an individual. This will get easier as you get to know your students. Using their name in the feedback helps - "*Emma, I thought the way you handled this was both valid and original. I particularly liked the way you*"
- **Honest** As well as truthful, honest good news clearly distinguishes between fact and judgment. A numerical answer is 'right'; this is a fact. A design was undertaken 'rigorously'; this is an opinion, though hopefully based on clear criteria for 'rigour'. An argument was 'original'; a fact, at any rate relative to your own current knowledge. An argument was 'elegant'; an opinion, or at any rate a judgment. Be clear what the nature of your good news is.

Next, give them bad news - constructively! - and tell them why it is bad and what to do about it

They also need to know what they've done **wrong**, or **poorly**, or performed in some other way which is **inappropriate** within the subject. And, immediately and always, they need to know in what respects it was wrong or poor or inappropriate, and they need suggestions on ways in which it could have been correct or better.

In primarily numerical or scientific disciplines, where some at least of the answers to some of the questions can be right or wrong, reasons for giving prompt and reasoned feedback on wrong answers include:

- So that the learner won't repeat the specific error;
- So that they can identify the misunderstanding which led to the error;
- So that they can develop a new and correct understanding.

In disciplines where answers are more likely to be considered good or bad rather than primarily right or wrong, reasons for giving this kind of feedback on poor answers include:

- To help them appreciate why their approach or answer was inappropriate;
- To help the learner see the preferred approach;

Bad news needs to be:

- **Specific** Make it clear to what you are reacting - which word, which idea, which equation, which stylistic feature. Make it clear in what respects the work is wrong, inappropriate, whatever it is.
- **Constructive** Suggest how the work could have been made accurate, good, conforming to the paradigm of the subject, whatever. Suggest sources of information and guidance. Give them a handle, encouragement, whatever seems right.
- **Kind** Specific is kind. Constructive is kind. "Poor" scribbled at the bottom is cruel.
- **Honest** (See above under 'good news')

Finally, end of a high note of encouragement.

Round off your feedback with a high note and encouragement. "You really seem to be getting to grips with this", "Your analytic skills are improving steadily", "You're making good use of evidence". Say whatever you can that's encouraging and truthful. There's usually something that meets these two criteria.

Giving feedback more efficiently

Students often greatly value useful feedback on their work. Feedback is individual attention, an individual response. Your carefully considered comments on their work, your suggestions on how they could have tackled the work differently, your suggestions for a particular piece of further reading which casts important new light on the topic all these will be very well received.

The trouble is, you probably don't have an hour or more to spend giving feedback to each student on their work. How can you make sure the students get quality feedback on their work without you staying up all night providing it? There are several ways:

Give feedback in terms of explicit criteria

In short, the idea is to say in advance what will be the characteristics of a good piece of work for this assignment. Some of these criteria may be universal : 'the right number of words', 'clearly presented'. Others will be more specific 'each step clearly described and explained'; 'appropriate use of varied and novel sources'; 'calculations accurate'; 'imaginative and empathic account'

Feedback from themselves and each other

Here, we focus on ways in which you can give good feedback in a reasonable amount of time.

Only give feedback on one aspect of their work each time

Say you require three sets of work from each student during the module. For example, in the first set of feedback you could concentrate all your feedback on the factual accuracy and the content of their work. On the second you could focus on the quality of argument and reasoning. In the third, on presentation and referencing. Choose your own aspects.

Give audio feedback

Record your immediate reactions onto a cassette as you read through their work, not a carefully considered response after you've finished reading. This gives them feedback quickly, personally, directly, and cheaply.

Use attachment sheets

List the ten or twenty (or more) comments, corrections, observations which you're most likely to make in giving feedback; in general or on this work. Write them up as a list with space for ticks, or as a numbered list.

Add space at the top for the student's name, course, and assignment name.

Print as many copies as there are pieces of work to assess. Then you can 'give feedback by numbers!' On the list, tick the comments which apply to the piece of work you're marking. Or, a bit more sophisticated, place the number of the comment alongside where it applies in the student's work.

This gets individual feedback to each student. It saves you the need to write out the same comments lots of times. It leaves you some time to make individual comments on errors or strokes of brilliance which aren't on your pre-printed list.

Here's an example of a tick-list:

Psychology Practical Comment Sheet				
Name:	Date Submitted			
Practical:		Mark:	Marker:	
Checklist of Comments				
TITLE				
Present	Appropriate	Accurate	Too short	Too long
ABSTRACT				
Present	Correctly headed	Length 150 - 200 words	Clear	At beginning of report
Includes hypothesis	Includes aim of practical	Includes experimental design	Includes procedure	
Includes result	Includes conclusion	Clear Succinct		
Contains material which belongs elsewhere , e.g. . . .				
INTRODUCTION				
Present	Correctly headed	Length 250 - 350 words	Too similar to handout	
Tightly structured	Includes hypothesis	Includes rationale	Reviews previous findings	
Refers to relevant readings	Good use of references	Uses relevant theories	Well argued	
Some material included here belongs elsewhere, e.g. . . .				
. . . and so on for each section of the report, concluding with some general comments on the work as a whole. ¹				

¹ Dr R. Paton and Dr S. Fearnley.

At this stage the assessor needs to portray further professionalism, accuracy and not be biased when giving the assessment feedback to the learner.

The organizational code of conduct comes into play as this process includes factors such as:

- Confidentiality
- Privacy

The feedback can only be given to the learner and other parties as outlined in the organizational policy.

Feedback Process

Feedback can only be given to the learner after the assessment process has been moderated, the ETQA has verified the results (where necessary) and the ETQA has endorsed the statement of results.

When giving feedback to the learner the assessor must use the assessment report.

The assessor needs to give report against each unit standard assessed and against each assessment criteria.

It is advisable that the assessor start with good statement put any negative issues in the middle of the conversation and ends up with positive statement.

This advice must be used when giving feedback to learners who were declared competent and to those declared not yet competent.

The learner needs to indicate by signing the feedback document, that she/he has received the feedback.

Should there be any disputes; the learner is then advised to follow the appeal procedure in line with the organizational appeal policy.

Qualities of Feedback

- It is a two way process (there is communication between the learner and the Assessor)
- It is constructive and developmental
- It is given as soon as the Assessor has evaluated evidence
- The Assessor and the learner should identify weaknesses
- It is handled confidentially
- The Assessor and the learner agree on an action plan for further development or re-assessment process

Procedures for giving feedback

- It is given in a manner based on facts that are related to the unit standard.
- In an appropriate sequence
- In an open and relaxed mood
- The Assessor should be precise about gaps in the learner's performance.

If the learner is **Not Yet Competent**

Plan of action

- The learner needs your support
- Start with the good things you have identified
- Do not blame the learner
- The learner should be told what steps he can take to close gaps
- Close the session with motivating comments or suggestions

If the learner is not satisfied with the results they must follow the Appeals and Disputes Procedures as stipulated in the training provider's Policies.

- Write a detailed feedback that is constructive and affirming
- Make judgments for each Specific Outcome.
- Complete Assessor Report
- Review Assessment

Feedback on assessment is important because it:

- Monitors the progress of the assessment.
- Allows for modifications and improvements to be implemented.
- Prevents assessment from becoming outdated
- Helps justify the explicit and implicit cost of training

The purpose of feedback is to help the learner and not to use as punishment of the learner or as an outlet for your own frustrations.

- Do not present opinions or judgments to the learner as facts.
- Remember to reinforce good performance through praise.
- Keep your feedback to observable performance.
- Evaluate performance based on the criteria previously agreed on for the task.
- Invite the learners to suggest practical ways in which they feel they may improve their performance.

The Don'ts by the assessor in the whole assessment process.

- Do not assess without initially preparing for the assessment.
- Do not assess without any assessment tools.
- Do not assess using inappropriate assessment tools.
- Do not make a competent judgment when the learner has not submitted sufficient evidence.
- Do not make judgment without any record of candidate achievement.
- Do not give feedback to the learner without the moderator's report.
- Do not be bribed by the learner or organization.

Receiving feedback from Candidate

It is important to receive feedback from the learners with regards to the entire assessment.

It is best to have this done in a form and signed by the candidate. This will be needed as part of the Assessors evaluation by the Moderator.

Conclusion

These suggestions will help you give useful feedback to students, and to do so efficiently. A few more points to remember and act on.

1. Your negative comments have a more powerful impact on students than do your positive ones. Go easy on the negatives; use them where appropriate, but always back them up with suggestions on how to do better next time.
2. Students are very interested in marks and grades. On ungraded work, they may take more interest in your feedback if you tell them what grade it would have got, and why, and what they could have done to get a higher grade.
3. Protect your own time. Note how long the first set of feedback you give takes. Use some of the methods suggested here to make your feedback-giving more efficient. Keep noting how long you spend on feedback.
4. Ask your students how useful they find your feedback, and what you could do to make it more useful to them. They'll probably be happy to tell you!

**Activity 7:**

7.1 Briefly discuss unacceptable practice and irregularities in assessment?

7.2 Briefly discuss good practice in formative assessment.

7.3 Briefly discuss good practice in summative assessment.

Recording Results

Records of Assessment

For many years it has been accepted practice in industry training to base assessment on the notion of competence. Large employers in particular would have their own standard operating procedures, their own competence-based standards to be met for production, services, health and safety practices, and these would be recorded and used as a basis for education, training and assessment.

One of the problems for learners was that these standards were normally in-house, so not portable (they might not be recognised elsewhere if the employee wanted to change jobs or seek further education or training). Equally they were not linked to any qualification or career path. The NQF has provided a national context, generating nationally recognised unit standards linked to nationally recognised qualifications which include fundamental unit standards, thereby encouraging training with a broader base to produce more flexible and adaptable learners/employees.

The usual way of reporting the results of assessment in the context of industry has been: Competent/Not yet Competent. This makes sense because so many of the requirements are absolute. No-one wants a builder who understands and applies 60% of the requirements for constructing safe and lasting buildings, or a miner or chemical worker who sometimes ignores the safety regulations, a machine operator who is 70% competent, or a sanitation worker who might sometimes open the wrong valve and empty raw sewage into the drinking water system, or a bus driver who just occasionally sleeps on the job! Minimum requirements are spelt out and each one must be met.

The significance of recoding 'Not yet Competent' rather than 'Not Competent' is to indicate that we recognise the need for lifelong learning, and learners may have opportunities to work at improving performance until they are ready to be re-assessed and hopefully found competent at a later stage.

The assessment result is quite correctly either competent or not, and might be reported something like this:

Unit standard	Competent	Not yet Competent	Evidence and reference	Recommendation
XXXXXXXXXXXX	✓		Witness testimony and observation record See section 3 of Portfolio of Evidence	
YYYYYYYYYYYY		✓	Workplace assessment 20.1.03 See candidate record	Needs three weeks more work experience with coaching

Many ETD practitioners and assessors have found it useful to expand these categories, for example various Departments of Education use the following categories for GETC (schooling) reports:

4. Candidate's performance has exceeded the requirements of the Learning outcomes for the grade
3. Candidate's performance has satisfied the requirements of the Learning outcomes for the grade
2. Candidate's performance has partially satisfied the requirements of the Learning outcomes for the grade
1. Candidate's performance has not satisfied the requirements of the Learning outcomes for the grade

The IEB uses the following reporting grades for its ABET assessments:

Ungraded NYC: candidate should not have been entered for this assessment):	Threshold (NYC: candidate should become competent with further support)	Credit (competent: meets minimum requirements)	Upper credit (competent: exceeds minimum requirements)	Merit (competent: excellent performance: far exceeds minimum requirements)
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However, some forms of learning do not fit into this kind of categorisation so easily. Language proficiency, for example, is something that can better be described using some kind of grading system, similar to those sometimes included in job applications, for example:

	Speaking				Listening/understanding				Reading				Writing			
Language	poor	fair	good	excel	poor	fair	good	excel	poor	fair	good	excel	poor	fair	good	excel
IsiZulu				✓				✓			✓			✓		
English			✓					✓			✓				✓	

Some providers have been insisting that the only acceptable way of recording learner achievement is through a straight 'Competent/Not yet Competent' system. Rubrics and grades are often used in the education sector, and it is important that ETD practitioner candidates be reassured that they are perfectly acceptable in an OBET system.

In some contexts the level of achievement can best be described in relation to rubrics. A rubric is used when it is important to distinguish different levels of performance, but relate these to clear assessment criteria rather than by giving a mark or a percentage.

A percentage or mark is usually reached by using assessment criteria, but, notoriously, different assessors can award different marks or percentages to the same piece of work.

Rubrics are often written as a set of ascending or descending criteria, as in the following example:

- 5 Shows original thought and insight; creative work or a very good synthesis of available information; detailed reasoning.
- 4 Shows own thinking, has considered the issues and chosen well, well explained.
- 3 Grasped the issues and has made good choices of what to do but cannot explain well why the choices have been made.
- 2 Has complied with the instructions, but shows little insight; has prepared enough but has mostly copied without trying to re-work personally.
- 1 Has not followed the instructions well; confused about the issues and does not seem to have prepared enough.

If a rubric were to be used for summative assessment, it would be necessary to define what description fitted the minimum requirement for the unit standard in question, and thus determine the point at which competence is achieved. It is perfectly acceptable and often helpful in terms of feedback to result candidate achievements using rubrics or other scales, grades or symbols linked to criteria, but naturally the point at which competence is achieved must be defined.

Therefore, to use an example, if using the rubric in the example above, it might be decided that a minimum score of 4 was required for competence.

Unit standards ideally spell out exactly what level of competence is required in the particular context, so the distinction about C/NYC is clear.

However, with generic standards which are used in a number of different contexts, like the fundamentals, this is sometimes more difficult.

SAQA does not prescribe the format or method of recording and reporting. It simply expects assessors to assess against unit standards and assessment criteria in a transparent way, and record in such a way that the evidence of achievement and the reasoning behind the assessment judgment are available for scrutiny by the moderator and verifier. It expects providers to have in place an assessment management system that ensures moderation is properly conducted and that verifiers have access to evidence of candidate achievement and moderation reports. In addition providers must comply with ETQA requirements in relation to the registration of learners and the submission of learner results.

Elements of a Recording and Reporting System.

Recording and reporting in an effective way is the key to good assessment, and to the smooth implementation of skills programmes, learnerships, and other qualifications. All assessment evidence and results for individual learners must be recorded and stored in a secure place, to ensure availability in case of appeals, re-assessments and for verification purposes.

Data capture systems must be suitable for processing and recording results and submission of results to the ETQA in the required format. These are in line with the requirements of SAQA's National Learner Records Data-base (NLRD), and make it possible to upload learner achievements and other information to the central NLRD.

The ETQA suggests that providers consider the following elements for a recording and reporting system:

- **An internal candidate record per candidate:** every provider must keep learning records for each individual, capturing registration information and personal details. The provider will have submitted the **ETQA Learner Registration Form** to the ETQA at the beginning of the programme or RPL process.

- **A candidate assessment record:** every candidate will have his/her own assessment record, which records assessment results and achievements of unit standards throughout the course. The design of this form could vary: its purpose is to record competency judgements against unit standards, and it should include any reporting and observation tools and forms signed off by an assessor. It does not include the direct evidence generated by a candidate (e.g. observation records, assignments, etc.) as these will go into a candidate's portfolio of evidence (see below). When all necessary requirements have been met and the candidate has been assessed as competent, the **ETQA Submission of Learner Results** will be submitted on the required form. This will trigger the necessary verification processes. The ETQA will then upload the information to SAQA so that the learners' achievements are recorded on the NLRD. This form is provided in the ETQA file. This form is provided in the ETQA file and is also now available electronically.
- **A portfolio of evidence (PoE):** this is the file in which all assessment evidence (e.g. assignments, third party evidence, performance reports, tests and observations) is gathered and kept. It would include copies of reporting and observation tools that go in to a candidate's assessment record, and any other products that have been used for assessment. The ETDQA may request samples of PoEs, in conjunction with the relevant learners' assessment records, as part of its verification process.

Moderators' Reports: Moderation should occur at provider level, especially in cases where training is happening at different sites. Moderator reports, noting issues of process and the standard of assessment evidence and judgments, should be an integral part of the recording and reporting process.

Declaration of interest

On being requested to assess learners, an assessor must inform the provider:
Whether they have (past, present) family relationship with any of the candidates.

Whether they might have, or be seen to have difficulty in assessing any candidate objectively because of friendship or other obligation.

Any actual or potential conflict of interest involving candidates, moderators and other relevant parties.

Producing Assessment Reports

Ensuring that Assessment Judgment is consistent?

We have listed what is considered to be the most important criteria for evaluating the overall quality of assessment. You can use these criteria to compile a checklist or rating form for the purposes of evaluating assessment.

Assessment must be:

Fair and objective: Assessment must set out to evaluate what knowledge, skills and attitudes the learners have acquired. Many assessors will fail in this respect, because they attempt to find out what the learners do not know by trying to catch them out.

Check to see that each assessment question is adequately covered by appropriate objectives. Pay particular attention to the action or verb used in the instructional objective. This will guide you in selecting the type of question.

Comprehensive: The breadth of coverage of the assessment must be comprehensive enough to cover the objectives of the course, unit or lesson.

Functional: The assessment must be easy to administer and mark. Here are a few guidelines in this regard:

- Arrange assessment form easy to difficult
- Make sure the layout of the assessment is used consistently throughout the assessment.
- Group all the items of the same type.
- Provide clear concise directions to learners and the people who must administer it.

Valid: The assessment must measure what is intended to measure.

Reliable: The marks obtained on the assessment by a particular learner must remain the same when the learner is tested more than once, using the same instrument, taking into account any learning that might have occurred as a result of already having taken the test.

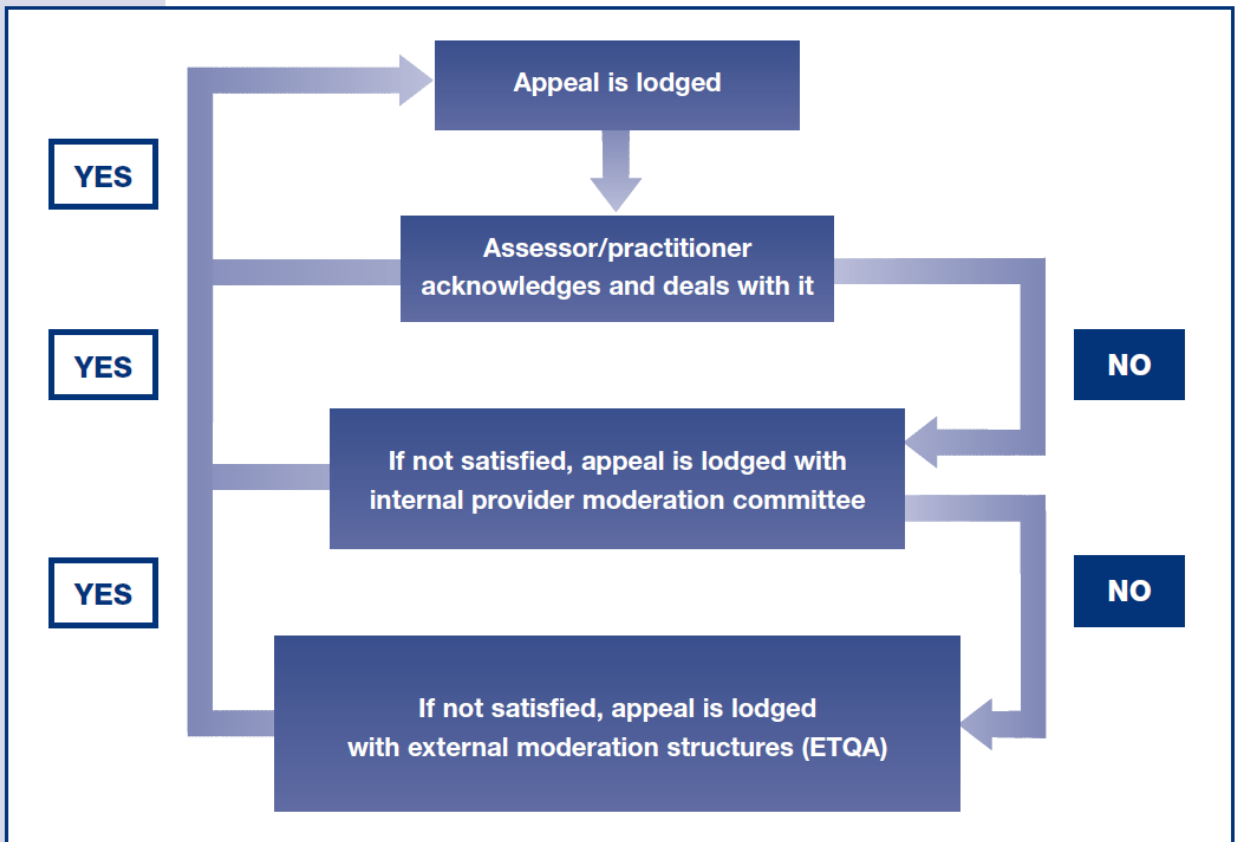
Discriminating: The assessment should differentiate those learners who have made more progress during the training programme from the assessment.

Cost-effective: This means that the expense of administering the assessment should not exceed the benefits of the results derived from it.

True to the purpose of the test: If we are conducting a diagnostic assessment, the results should succeed in accurately diagnosing specific shortcomings in the learning outcomes of the learner.

Provide clear instructions: Test instructions must only allow one interpretation by the learner.

Example of an appeals procedure:



Assessment Review

As an assessor you need to consider the fact that you deal with different situations, like RPL, learners and you assess different Unit Standard or qualifications. The conditions require the Assessor to review the Assessment process for each Assessment conducted.

What do you look at when you review the Assessment Process and Design?

- Good and bad practises in Assessment design and process
- Recommendations for improvements
- Feedback given by the parties who were involved in the process. For example, the assessor should read the comments made by the learners and other parties about the whole process when they do evaluation that could assist him/her to identify the weakness and strengths.
- Credibility of assessment
- Quality of the unit standard

Parties to be involved in the review

The candidate

The candidate is given the evaluation form where s/he is given an opportunity to evaluate the assessor.

This assist the assessor to pick up comments from the candidate learner with the aim of improving her/his assessment skill in the future.

Assessment team

These can include the facilitator (training personnel), the moderator and the verifier if any.

The assessor needs to have the meeting with this team and cite both the strengths and the weaknesses of the assessment.

This is also the time when the assessor shares any challenges she/he had during the assessment process and how she/he handled those challenges.

The team is also expected to give formal inputs which are recorded and utilized in conducting the future assessment.

6.4 Type of evidence required at this time

6.4.1 The evaluation form from the assessed learner.

6.4.2 The final report from the assessor indicating the challenges and weaknesses of the assessment.

6.4.3 The agenda for the assessment team meeting

6.4.4 The minutes of the assessment team meeting signed by all members who attended the meeting.

Evaluating the Assessors Role in Assessment

At this stage the assessor needs to evaluate her/his own role during the process of conducting the assessment.

The common questions for the assessor to ask revolve around the principles of good assessment.

The assessor needs to review the process, assessment method, assessment tools used, reporting systems and the feedback session.

Was the process: fair, valid, reliable and practical?

Was the assessment method fair, valid, reliable and practical?

Did the learner understand the feedback and was s/he given an opportunity to ask questions on the results?

Steps to inform relevant bodies

Steps to take when assessment design and process have compromised fairness of assessment:

1. Define the problem
2. Develop goals based on problem identification
3. Describe how your problem and goal are aligned with mission and goals.
4. Identify stakeholders
5. Identify/develop theoretical/conceptual framework for foundation for reaching goal
6. Identify/develop measurable summative outcomes that would exist if goal was reached
7. Identify and develop outputs
8. Identify and measure inputs.
9. Develop strategies anchored in theoretical/conceptual framework to reach goal
10. Develop action steps anchored in theoretical/conceptual framework to implement the strategies
11. Develop, measure, and evaluate formative assessment for strategies and outcomes
12. Measure outputs.
13. Measure summative outcomes
14. Evaluate outcome data
15. Report/present summative and formative evaluation
16. Review/reallocate/advocate for more resources.
17. Retool program based on formative and summative evaluation

Moderator's surname:			
First name:			
Assessor's Surname:		First name:	
Date:		Sample size:	
The assessor is informed of the moderation procedure and what will be evaluated	The moderator made an appointment with the assessor to witness an assessment in progress	The moderator reviewed gathered evidence and completed documentation.	The moderator observed an assessment and reviewed documentation gathered evidence and completed documentation.



Activity 8:

8.1 What should you look at when reviewing the assessment process?

8.2 Briefly discuss the parties should be involved in the review process

References

SAQA: Criteria and Guidelines for Assessment of NQF Registered Unit standards and Qualifications - (Publication October 2008) ISBN 0958441944

Assessment: Case Studies, Experience and Practice (Case Studies of Teaching in Higher Education Series By: Peter Schwartz and Graham Webb

Embedded Formative Assessment by: Dylan William, PhD

Assessment: In Special and Inclusive Education by: John Salvia

Assessment: An Incredibly Easy! Pocket Guide by Lippincott

Website Resources

http://www.umass.edu/oapa/oapa/publications/online_handbooks/program_based_assessment/ch3.php#WhatDoesAnAssessment

http://www.assessmentsonline.co.za/recruit?gclid=CjwKEAju5NihBRCZmdLkuuTHyWYSJACTCY0JtZkB932pxzOQaWE4Y6ELxeXs4uJtULihKJYo2mT2IhoCr6Pw_wcB