The Built Environment Training Alliance Group

Guide to Assessment for the

BConstructive Programme

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CONSTRUCTIVE

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Contents

Introduction

Welcome to the BConstructive Guide to Assessment.

This guide has been prepared to help you achieve good practice in assessment against unit standards.

It outlines the roles and responsibilities of the people involved in the assessment of students and trainees.

The BETA Group encourages all assessors using BConstructive unit standards to use this document as a resource and reference.

Advice and Support

The BETA Group is committed to regular contact to assist with the training and assessment processes.

For assistance, contact:

☎ 0800 GO 4 BCON (0800 464 226)
info@bconstructive.co.nz

The Built Environment Training Alliance (BETA) Group

The BConstructive programme was developed by a group of construction related industry training organisations (ITOs) known as the Built Environment Training Alliance or BETA Group. Originally the BETA Group of ITOs consisted of the Building and Construction ITO, Creative Trades ITO, New Zealand Flooring ITO, InfraTrain, Joinery ITO, and Plumbing, Gasfitting, Drainlaying and Roofing ITO.

Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to find out whether a person can demonstrate knowledge or do a task to the required standard or not. Assessment is about gathering evidence to prove a Student/Trainee has met the specified elements of the unit standard. In doing so, it enables the Student/Trainee to receive formal recognition for their performance against the standard and gain credits leading to a National Certificate.

Assessment is not about "passing" or "failing", but about determining competence.

Assessment Methods

There are many different methods for determining competence. We will concentrate on the three critical methods.

Observation - of work in progress or work produced by the Student/Trainee.

Written - questions to check the knowledge of the Student/Trainee.

Verbal - questioning of the Student/Trainee to determine their knowledge.

Assessment Evidence

There are a few basic rules about assessment evidence that you should be aware of when you plan your assessment activities.

Assessment evidence must be:

Sufficient   You must have enough evidence to demonstrate the Student/Trainee is competent.

Valid   You must assess the skills and knowledge required by the unit standard at the correct level (not higher or lower).

Authentic   The work of the Student/Trainee being assessed must be their own. This can be difficult when groups do some operations.

Consistent   The Student/Trainee must be able to repeat the performance whenever necessary.

⇨ *Note: To conduct a fair assessment, keep it as short as possible but ensure enough evidence is generated to make a judgement on competency.*

The Assessment Cycle

The Assessment process follows the typical "PDCA" quality cycle. PDCA stands for:

Plan ➤ Do ➤ Check ➤ Action

Applied to Assessment the PDCA cycle means you:

- Plan the assessment. (Plan.)

- Gather and record evidence. (Do.)

- Check performance against the unit standard. (Check.)

- Make and record the assessment decision. (Action.)

- Plan future assessment activities. (Plan.)

Plan the Assessment

This involves a pre-assessment meeting with the Student/Trainee and the groundwork you have to do before you can conduct an assessment.

You and your Student/Trainee need to study the unit standards and ensure that you both know exactly what is going to be assessed. For example, if there is a theory and practical pair of unit standards you may wish to assess them together.

Consider the environment in which the assessment will be carried out. It should be non-threatening for the student especially in respect to other students and activities going on around them. If you will be assessing multiple students, consider how you can give each student the attention they deserve.

Is the Student/Trainee ready?

The Student/Trainee should ensure they have obtained assessment readiness before requesting an assessment be undertaken. That is, the Student/Trainee believes on reasonable grounds that the required standards have been reached, both in understanding the theory behind the process and in being able to demonstrate they can undertake the practical tasks involved as required. In simple terms, make sure the student understands what is expected of them. To this end, the first entry in the student resource for any unit is the section "What you need to do" and "How you will be assessed". Also, their records must be accurate and up to date, and any worksheets need to have been completed.

Copies of all material such as reports, certificates, references etc. that may be regarded as evidence for assessment purposes are gathered together by the Student/Trainee and shown to you.

Together you and the Student/Trainee decide:

- What evidence is required to show competency in the unit standard.

- How much evidence is required.

- How much can be observed while the Student/Trainee is carrying out their normal duties.

- How often assessment will occur.

Check that you, as the Assessor, fully understand the content of the unit standard to be assessed and that the Student/Trainee has all the required materials and tools available to complete the tasks.

You and your Student/Trainee have now come to an "agreement" on the assessment procedure.

Gather and Record Evidence

You will then gather evidence of the Student/Trainee competence as agreed to in the pre-assessment meeting. Examples of this could be:

- Any exercises or worksheets completed by the Student/Trainee and signed off by the teacher/trainer assessor.

- Any record of practical work experience completed and signed off by the designated on-site verifier.

- Oral questions if used, satisfactorily answered.

- Observations conducted over a period of time.

You will then observe the Student/Trainee performing their tasks and, using the appropriate assessment sheet, record what you have observed.

Remember to be as unobtrusive as possible while observing but remain within the Student/Trainee view. There is nothing worse than somebody hovering just out of sight over your shoulder.

If necessary you may need to follow the observation of tasks with oral questioning, recording the answers as correct or incorrect as you go.

Try not to ask questions while someone is working - it can be quite annoying and off putting.

It is better to wait for a natural break in the work routine to ask your questions. Try to do this out of earshot of other workers. If the Student/Trainee talks you through what they are doing - great! It means you will have only a few questions to ask at the end of your observation. However, it is unfair to insist a person talks you through the work routine because this might affect their concentration.

Note: No assessment should be carried out where the Assessor or the Student/Trainee is likely to be harmed or to harm other people. Where an unsafe situation exists no assessment must take place.

Check Performance against the Unit Standard

When you have gathered all the evidence you require, conclude the assessment by confirming that the assessment has been completed and you will complete the documentation and come back to them with feedback on performance.

You will be weighing up their performance against the standards as set in the Assessment Schedule. Remember to consider all the evidence when making your judgement.

Make and Record the Assessment Decision

After concluding the assessment, complete your documentation, check the evidence gathered and make your assessment decision of **COMPETENT (C)** or **NOT YET ACHIEVED (N)**.

You may decide you have not received sufficient evidence to be able to make a decision. You need to explain to the Student/Trainee what extra evidence you require to be confident of competency and arrange an opportunity for further evidence to be presented.

Assessors must act impartially, and be able to judge performance by reference to given criteria without allowing their personal preferences to affect their judgement.

Feedback

Giving feedback to the Student/Trainee is an important part of the assessment process as they will be eager to find out how their performance has been assessed and whether they are competent or not yet competent.

Remember that feedback should be specific, honest, constructive and clear. It should also emphasise strengths rather than weaknesses.

Recording and Reporting Results

Once successful completion of unit standards have been recorded, they need to be reported to NZQA for registration on the Student/Trainees own Record of Achievement. For recording and reporting results, follow your school's or organisation's standard procedures.

Appeals

Sometimes a Student/Trainee will disagree with your assessment decision and, as you know, they have the right of appeal. If this happens, follow the appeal procedures that your school or organisation has in place.

Moderation

NZQA requires that assessments for BConstructive programmes are fair, valid and consistent throughout the country. The BCITO, on behalf of the BETA Group, has set up a moderation system to check assessment decisions for the unit standards in the domain Building, Construction and Allied Trades Skills (BCATS).

The moderation system is as follows:

1. If you are new to assessing BCATS unit standards, please ring 0800 464 226.

2. Based on results reported in the previous year, the BCITO selects the unit standards to be moderated and notifies each School/Provider of these and of the date for materials to be posted to the moderator.

3. For each unit standards selected, photocopies of three samples of assessed student work together with the relevant assessment documents must be sent to the moderator by the due date. Cover sheets, checklists and an address label are provided to assist with collating and clearly identifying the samples.

4. All the materials for each unit standard will be destroyed (unless you request otherwise). You will receive a report outlining whether or not the decisions meet the national standard and recommending the next steps. where applicable.

Reviewing the Unit Standards

As an assessor you will be the person most familiar with the unit standards and the ideal person to ask whether or not they are fit for purpose.

If you believe that a unit standard is inconsistent, outdated, irrelevant or needs additional information, please forward your comments (preferably in writing) to the BCITO or info@bconstructive.co.nz . Your input is welcomed and valued.