Assessing in workplace settings
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An approach to assessment that involves the collection of evidence of competence within workplace settings.

Reasons for assessing in workplace settings

- Assessment in a workplace setting enables access to operational environments and technology that may not be available in institutional contexts. This can improve the authenticity of the assessment, particularly if simulation of a workplace context is not practical or sufficiently realistic.

- Assessing in workplace settings is also more meaningful to candidates and assessors. This ensures that candidates subsequently deemed as competent are more likely to be job-ready to work in the industry and/or workplace concerned.

The three step approach for improving assessment in workplace settings

1. Examine and analyse the workplace setting concerned

2. Develop the assessment resources and prepare assessment personnel

3. Trial the resources and procedures for assessing in a specific workplace setting
1  Examine and analyse the workplace setting concerned

- Consult with key personnel in the workplace setting concerned. Dependent on the specific workplace context, this may include training staff, work teams, team leaders, supervisors, operational managers, and HR managers, etc. In these consultations, establish the role and functions of the persons to be assessed. Relate these to the units of competency involved.

- Identify the sources of local information that describe how performance and knowledge must be demonstrated in that workplace. This may include standard procedures, regulatory requirements, safety management strategies, operating manuals and pertinent key performance indicators.

- Ascertain the team of persons in the workplace who can assist in the gathering of evidence for assessment purposes (e.g. trainers, supervisors, qualified assessors, persons providing third party reports, etc.).

2  Develop the assessment resources and prepare assessment personnel

- From the analysis of the workplace setting, determine the activities that can be used as assessment tasks. Map these to all requirements of the units of competency.

- Design a workplace assessment strategy based on the identified assessment tasks, including the development of the assessment tools and related guidance materials. This would include, for example: performance checklists, question banks and sample responses, case study materials, assessment projects, workplace reference documents, etc.

- Prepare guidance material and conduct professional development for personnel involved in the gathering and judgement of evidence. This includes the principal assessor and other members of the assessment team and persons providing third-party reports.
3 Trial the resources and procedures for assessing in a specific workplace

- Plan the trial of the workplace assessment strategy, including the production of the assessment tools and scheduling of the assessment tasks. This will need to take into account the safety and operational requirements of the workplace and the availability of candidates and the members of the assessment team.

- Prepare a risk management matrix for the workplace assessment strategy, including a listing of the *Principles of Assessment* and *Rules of Evidence*, the potential risks to the achievement of these quality criteria and the risk management measures embedded in the assessment strategy to overcome or minimise these risks.

- Trial the planned workplace assessment strategy, carefully monitoring its successes and any weaknesses and initiating any required quality improvements.

Further information on assessing in workplace settings


- Definitions of the ‘Principles of Assessment’ and the ‘Rules of Evidence’ are in the Training Package Glossary downloadable from the DEEWR website: