

Assessment Principles

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Assessment	3
2.1 Assessment of Skills Based Learning.....	3
2.2 Assessment of Knowledge Based Learning	3
2.3 Simulation	4
2.4 Expert Witnesses	4
2.5 Assessor Requirements.....	4
3. Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)	5
3.1 Internal Quality Assurer Requirements.....	5
4. External Quality Assurance (EQA)	6
5. Definitions.....	6
5.1 Occupationally competent:	6
5.2 Occupationally knowledgeable:	6
5.3 Expert witness:	6
5.4 Realistic Working Environment (RWE).....	6



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1. Introduction

This document sets out the principles and approaches to unit/qualification assessment required by ABBE. The information contained within this document is intended to support the quality assurance processes of ABBE centres and should be read alongside individual qualification handbooks.

Centres should be aware that for certain groups of qualifications there are Assessment Principles that are sector specific. The Assessment Principles for these qualifications is mandated by authorities that are expert in the sector and have the remit to define how these specific qualifications are assessed, internally quality assured and externally quality assured. Qualification handbooks will detail the appropriate assessment principles to refer to when assessing a qualification. Any specific requirements or exemptions will be detailed in the qualification handbook.

2. Assessment

To achieve the full unit/qualification, learners must meet all of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria identified in each unit of the qualification. Evidence should be developed over a period of time and may be assessed using different assessment methods. Where a particular assessment method is required for the qualification, this will be highlighted in the qualification handbook.

2.1 Assessment of Skills Based Learning

Assessment of skills-based Learning Outcomes (e.g. those beginning with 'Be able to') and qualifications should ideally be carried out within the workplace, this should include direct observation where possible. However, where this is not possible learners can be assessed within an approved Realistic Working Environment (RWE) that replicates a real work setting. The criteria for RWE can be found in the **Definitions** section of this document.

Learner evidence of skills should be generated and collected through performance under workplace conditions. These conditions would be those typical to the learner's normal place of work. The evidence collected under these conditions should also be as naturally occurring as possible. It is accepted that not all learners have identical workplace conditions and therefore assessment conditions will not be identical for all learners. However, Assessors must ensure that, as far as possible, the conditions for assessment should be those under which the learner usually works.

2.2 Assessment of Knowledge Based Learning

Assessment of knowledge-based learning outcomes (e.g. those beginning with 'know' or 'understand') may take place in or outside of a real work environment.

Where an examination is the **ONLY** method used to assess knowledge-based learning, the examination **MUST** cover all assessment criteria (AC).

Assessment of knowledge-based learning via examination must use one of the following four examination methodologies:



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The following methods MUST be utilised where an examination is the only form of assessment for a qualification

- PearsonVUE

This system allows learners to undertake the examination under controlled conditions in a physical test centre or from their own home via the OnVUE system.

- EDExams

This system allows learners to undertake the examination under controlled conditions by accessing an online eProctored system.

The following methods may ONLY be utilised where an examination forms a part of a wider portfolio of evidence

- Classroom Based Examinations under Invigilated Conditions

ABBE has produced a document 'Guide for Invigilating Examinations' which sets out the requirements for the conduct of examinations based in a classroom environment.

- Centre Delivered Electronic Examinations

Centres can upload and deliver examinations from their own systems, e.g. Moodle. Centres are required to ensure the security and validity of evidence gathered in this format.

2.3 Simulation

Simulation may only be utilised as an assessment method for skills-based (Be able to...) learning outcomes where this is specified in the assessment methods of individual units. This will be detailed clearly in each unit within the qualification handbook. Where simulation is not specified as an assessment method in a unit, it may **NOT** be used as an assessment method for skills-based learning outcomes.

Simulation is allowed without restriction for knowledge-based (Know... OR Understand...) learning outcomes. It is always allowed where the evidence gathered from the simulation effectively addresses the assessment criteria (AC) for which it is being utilised. For example, a case study to address an evaluate AC.

2.4 Expert Witnesses

Expert witnesses can be used for direct observation where they have occupational expertise for specialist areas or the observation is of a particularly sensitive nature. The use of expert witnesses should be determined by the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) and agreed with the ABBE External Quality Assurer (EQA) prior to use.

2.5 Assessor Requirements

Assessment decisions for knowledge-based learning outcomes (e.g. those beginning with 'Know' or Understand') must be made by an occupationally knowledgeable Assessor, with current industry knowledge. Evidence of current knowledge will be assessed by a review of CPD records, CV, relevant qualification certificates and any other indicative evidence.

Assessment decisions for skills-based learning outcomes, (e.g. those beginning with 'Be able to') must be made by an occupationally knowledgeable **and** occupationally competent Assessor. They will need to be knowledgeable **and** competent at (or above) the level in the vocational area that they are assessing. Evidence of current knowledge and competence will be assessed by a review of CPD records, CV, relevant qualification certificates and any other indicative evidence.



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ABBE requires that **all** assessors operate to the standards of assessment practice as set out in the [Learning and Development National Occupational Standard 09 Assess Learner Achievement](#).

In most circumstances, ABBE requires that an assessor holds, or is working towards, a current, recognised Assessor qualification (e.g. L3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement, A1/A2 or D32/33, etc.).

In some circumstances ABBE does not require the Assessor to hold a formal assessor qualification. Where this is the case, this will be clearly detailed in the qualification handbook.

ABBE may require an assessor to achieve an assessor qualification by a set deadline where we are not satisfied that the standards of assessment practice, as set out in the [Learning and Development National Occupational Standard 09 Assess Learner Achievement](#), are being met.

Assessors **must not** assess learners where they have a potential conflict of interest, for example a family member or close friend. If this cannot be avoided, the centre should notify ABBE prior to any assessment taking place and agree the additional quality assurance checks to be put in place.

3. Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Internal quality assurance is key to ensuring that the assessment of evidence for units and qualifications is of a consistent and appropriate quality. Centres will need to demonstrate that assessment is being monitored for consistency, reliability, transparency and validity over time. Those carrying out internal quality assurance must be currently, occupationally knowledgeable, have relevant occupational expertise at the level (or above) in the vocational area they are assuring and be competent to make quality assurance decisions.

3.1 Internal Quality Assurer Requirements

ABBE requires that **all** IQAs operate to the standards of internal quality assurance practice as set out in the [Learning and Development National Occupational Standard 11 Internally Monitor and Maintain the Quality of Assessment](#).

In most circumstances, ABBE requires that an IQA holds, or is working towards, a current, recognised internal quality assurance qualification (e.g. L4 Award in Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice or L4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice, V1 or D34 etc.).

In some circumstances ABBE does not require the IQA to hold a formal internal quality assurance qualification. Where this is the case, this will be clearly detailed in the qualification handbook.

The IQA is responsible for the integrity of the unit/qualification that is being claimed for the learner. They will also ensure that there is no conflict of interest in assessment at the centre or where it cannot be avoided, that ABBE has been notified and additional quality assurance measures put in place.

Where a qualification is based on knowledge and understanding only, and is assessed by means of an ABBE administered examination only, the role of the Internal Quality Assurer **is not required**.



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4. External Quality Assurance (EQA)

ABBE External Quality Assurers are appointed against rigorous criteria and have responsibility for ensuring the integrity and quality of units and qualifications awarded by ABBE. The External Quality Assurer will work with centres to ensure that all ABBE and regulatory requirements are met.

ABBE appoints the External Quality Assurers to centres.

5. Definitions

5.1 Occupationally competent:

This means that each Assessor must be capable of carrying out the requirements within the skills unit(s) they are assessing. Occupational skills must be at unit level which might mean different Assessors are needed across a whole qualification. Being occupationally competent means they are also occupationally knowledgeable. Their occupational skills should be maintained through clearly demonstrable continuing learning and professional development.

5.2 Occupationally knowledgeable:

This means that each Assessor should possess relevant knowledge and understanding, and be able to assess this in units designed to test specific knowledge and understanding, or in units where knowledge and understanding are components of a skill. This occupational knowledge should be maintained through clearly demonstrable continuing learning and professional development.

5.3 Expert witness:

This is where an expert witness, such as a qualified professional, observes the learner working in their workplace and records their findings when it would not be possible for an Assessor to observe the learner's practice.

An expert witness must have a working knowledge of the units on which their expertise is based **and** be occupationally competent in their area of expertise. The centre will have to approve the expert witness but a centre Assessor will judge the evidence provided by the expert witness against the assessment criteria.

5.4 Realistic Working Environment (RWE)

A Realistic Working Environment gives the learner the opportunity to be assessed in an environment which reflects a real work setting. This will ensure that any skills achieved in this way will be sustained in real employment.

To undertake the assessment in a RWE the following guidelines **must** be met:

- the RWE is managed as a real work situation
- assessment must be carried out under realistic business pressures
- all services that are carried out should be completed in a way, and to a timescale, that is acceptable in business organisations
- learners must be expected to achieve a volume of work comparable to normal business practices
- the range of services, products, tools, materials and equipment that the learner uses must be up to date and available
- account must be taken of any legislation or regulations in relation to the type of work that is being carried out
- learners must be given workplace responsibilities to enable them to meet the requirements of the units
- any customer perceptions of the RWE are similar to that found in the work situation being represented



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