



Assessment Policy

Version 1 (drafted May 2008)
Revision Date : March 2015

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This is the policy and procedures for assessment of Footprint Media Academy
- 1.2. This policy and procedures are applicable to all assessments conducted based on the learning material provided by Footprint Media Academy, and to all assessments conducted by service providers that are registered with Footprint Media Academy, referred to as preferential service providers.
- 1.3. The preferred provider will have the ultimate responsibility to ensure that assessment of learners is conducted in terms of this policy and procedures.

2. Competence

- 2.1. For the purposes of this policy and procedure the following definition for competence is applicable:
The ability to consistently deliver the relevant desired performance in a specified situation whilst demonstrating an understanding of the performance, knowledge base and system in which the performance is carried out, and also the ability to deliver in other related contexts.
- 2.2. In the above definition “desired performance” represents the performance as it is described in the relevant unit standards on the NOF, the outcomes and the assessment criteria.
- 2.3. This broad and comprehensive definition of competence requires a broad and comprehensive concept and application of assessment as well. Assessment is designed to be a phased process that builds learner competence towards the summative evaluation.

3. Assessment

- 3.1. Assessment refers to “the process of collecting sufficient evidence about the performance and the related understanding of a person and making a judgement about whether it conforms to the outcomes as described in the relevant NOF registered qualifications and unit standards documentation, whereby a learner is declared competent or not yet competent against the said unit standard or qualification.”
- 3.2. The judgement of the learner is aimed at establishing whether the learner is:
 - Competent, or
 - Not yet competentAny judgement should be supported by sufficient evidence as prescribed in this guide.

4. Assessors

- 4.1. The registration of assessors is a means of promoting consistency of assessment practices across all economic sectors. Therefore only registered assessors will be used for assessments conducted according to the prescriptions of these policy and procedures.
- 4.2. The use of registered assessors will ensure that all NOF registered unit standards and qualifications are assessed consistently, even though assessors may be registered with different ETQAs and the context of assessment may vary greatly according to the level and field of the qualification.

- 4.3. The rationale for using only registered assessors is to ensure the credibility of assessments in the NQF system, being the fairness, validity, reliability and practicality of assessment.
- 4.4. It is also intended to ensure that individuals who make decisions about the competence of learners have the required knowledge, skills and experience for the specified NQF registered standards and qualifications to make such assessments.
- 4.5. It will ensure the universal assessment principles of fairness, validity and reliability form the foundation for assessment policy and evaluation for accreditation processes and procedures.
- 4.6. The assessment may be performed by the following categories of assessors:
 - Registered and suitably expert ETD Practitioners, such as trainers, teachers and lecturers.
 - Subject matter experts with a qualification or level of competence higher than the unit standard being assessed.
 - Supervisors in the relevant field of expertise.
 - Managers in the relevant field of expertise.
 - Designated workplace assessors with a qualification or level of competence higher than the unit standard being assessed.
 - Designated extension officers specialising in the field of expertise.
 - Assessors external to the learning site, be it the workplace or provider of learning, but with a qualification or level of competence higher than the unit standard being assessed.

5. Registration of Assessors

- 5.1. In summary, all registered assessors must have met the requirements of the generic assessor unit standard registered on the NQF, and should be certified by the ETD SETA or by the relevant ETQA in agreement with the ETD SETA in this regard. The status of certified assessors must be verifiable on the National Learner Records Database (NLRD).
- 5.2. All registered assessors are registered to assess against specified standards and / or qualifications. The registered assessor must be able to demonstrate competence in relation to these specified standards and qualifications, at or above, the level of the qualifications in question. All registered assessors must have met any additional requirements laid down by their constituent ETQA. The status of registered assessors can be checked on the appropriate ETQA database or web site.

5.3. In the short and medium term, Footprint Media Academy recommends the following criteria for registration of assessors:

Assessor Expertise	Occupational Expertise	Contextual Expertise
SHORT TERM		
A portfolio of evidence to demonstrate competence in planning, preparing for and conducting an assessment; as well as providing feedback, recording and evaluating the assessment	At least three years experience in the context in which the assessment is being conducted, as well as in the occupation or learning field being assessed.	
OR	OR	
Achievement of an assessor unit standard which is registered on the NQF.	A nationally recognised qualification in the occupation or learning field being assessed.	
MEDIUM TERM		
Any recognised assessor unit standard	The unit standards or qualification that is being assessed.	Any unit standard which demonstrates an appropriate contextual expertise.
Any qualification which demonstrates an integration of the relevant assessment, occupational or contextual expertise.		

6. Expertise of Assessors

6.1. Subject Matter Expertise

The assessors must have proficiency in the subject matter of the discipline or learning area relevant to the standards and qualifications they are responsible for. The assessor should either have the same or higher qualification than the one being assessed. In terms of levels, The SETA will recommend that an assessor must have the qualification of at least one level above the one being assessed.

6.2. Contextual Expertise

The assessor must demonstrate the ability to:

- Understand what forms of assessment are appropriate to the discipline or field and to the NQF level being assessed;
- Understand the language of the field they are assessing, being both the technical terminology and the ways of thinking and doing that are required of them to be competent as assessors;
- Regularly ask learners for feedback on assessment in order to constantly monitor and improve the assessment practices;
- Know the curriculum and trainers through regular contact and provide trainers with detailed feedback;
- Take language factors into consideration when conducting assessments by using interpreters where required;
- Ensure that learners are clear about what is expected of them;
- Treat learners with respect and sensitivity;
- Demonstrate a broad understanding of outcomes-based forms of assessment and the NQF.

6.3. Interpersonal Skills

It is important for assessors to have appropriate interpersonal skills and to communicate effectively with learners. The assessor needs to establish a trusting relationship with learners, not only to perform optimally during assessment, but also to assure the learners that the assessor has their interests at heart, being that:

- The assessment is fair
- The assessor acts with integrity
- The assessor maintains confidentiality
- The assessment is conducted according to the principles of a good assessment and the requirements of the standard and qualification.

6.4. Competencies Applicable Assessments

A competent assessor will be able to plan and conduct assessment whilst demonstrating an understanding of:

- What the outcome of assessment is;
- The different methods of assessment and where they apply;
- The principles of assessment and how to ensure that they are adhered to;
- The different methods of gathering evidence and what influences the quality of the evidence gathered;
- The methods to be used in gathering evidence and when is a specific method most suitable;
- The procedures to follow when conducting an assessment, including the provision of feedback; and
- The requirements regarding recordkeeping, registration of achievements and certification.

7. Best Assessment Practices

7.1. Assessment is not a single event, such as a final test, but a process of collecting sufficient evidence. The assessor therefore has to apply discretion as to when evidence of different kinds will be gathered. Costly repetition of performances can be minimised if the assessor establishes close liaison with the relevant learning facilitator and the learners in order to gather evidence throughout the training process.

7.2. The competence, as defined above, of the learner must be assessed covering the following aspects:

- The performance of the learner, being practical competence as prescribed by the specific outcomes.
- The understanding of the learner, being foundational and embedded knowledge as prescribed.
- The ability of the learner to innovate, think critically and adapt their performance, reflexive competence as prescribed.

7.3. The assessment should at all times be guided by the information available in the NQF registered qualifications and unit standards.

7.4. Assessment for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) should ideally be supplemented with the necessary training according to the needs identified during the RPL process.

8. Assessment Conditions

8.1. Assessment may be conducted under different circumstances. It may be conducted:

- Under simulated conditions, either at the venue of the provider or institutional training centre, or in a workplace area where temporary simulated projects are erected.
- On the job in a workplace. Such an assessment could, however, be limited to the activities which are prevalent on a specific site at a specific time.

8.2. In both the abovementioned cases an effort should be made to ensure that the assessment covers integration of knowledge and skills as far as possible. Additional assessment in the form of theoretical tests might be necessary to assess knowledge, understanding and innovation.

9. Assessment Methods

9.1. During assessment the assessor should encourage learners to take control of their own learning. The nature and types of assessment should be:

- Diagnostic
- Formative
- Summative

9.2. The most appropriate method of assessment must be applied depending on the competencies or learning that is to be assessed. The method of assessment should not require additional competencies, such as communication, applicable to a higher level than the competency or skill being assessed, for instance the use of a high level of language to communicate instructions to a learner who has to perform a very elementary physical task or activity. The assessor should use simple, understandable and appropriate language.

9.3. Learners with special needs must be accommodated. Examples of such special include language problems or physical handicaps and limitations.

10. Assessment Criteria

10.1. Assessment must be:

- Valid
- Fair
- Reliable
- Flexible
- Cost effective
- Transparent
- Supportive to the learning process

10.2. The process of assessment must include:

- Planning the assessment
- Preparing and informing the learner
- Conducting the assessment
- Providing feedback to the learner and to the relevant SETA, on pro-forma documentation as supplied in the relevant assessment guides.
- Recording the results
- Evaluating and reviewing the process of assessment, in order to improve it

11. Appeals against Assessment

11.1. A learner can appeal against an assessment declaration of competence if he or she is not satisfied with the declaration by the assessor. The learner may appeal either to the practitioner or assessor and, if still unsatisfied, to the SETA ETQA. The flow chart below outlines the process:



12. Benchmarking for Competence

12.1. It is recommended that all activities are benchmarked with a minimum competence of:

- 50% for summative knowledge questionnaires and assignments, and reflexive competence questionnaires.
- 3:5 for rating scales for CCFO's.
- 100% practical competence in every specific outcome as prescribed by the range statements and recorded in observation checklists.

13. Re-Assessment

13.1. In line with the objective of cost effectiveness prescribed by the NQF, it is recommended that learners be given no more than one summative assessment and two re-assessment opportunities to reflect competence, without first completing the development plans as set by the learner, facilitator and assessor together, and incurring additional financial costs for the learner (or employer, at their discretion) to pay for additional re-assessments.