

EE-Oz Training Standards



POLICY GUIDELINE

ESI¹

NATIONAL TRAINING PACKAGE TRAINING & ASSESSMENT MODEL



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ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Qualifications Standards Body of Australia trading
as **EE-Oz Training Standards**

¹ ESI – Electricity Supply Industry

1.0 Overview

The standard of performance of a competent worker is described in Competency Standards. This is the standard required by industry for certifying relevant technical, productive and safe work practices.

Units of Competency, Assessment Guidelines and Qualifications for vocational training in the electrical, electronic and associated industry areas are found in various National Training Packages. Training Packages show how individual Units of Competency are to be grouped to form National Qualifications. The Assessment Guidelines provide general information mostly related to broad processes, which informs and guides Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) about their own policy arrangements for managing assessment activities.

National Training Packages provide no specific advice regarding the delivery of training to aid the achievement of competence. Therefore, to assist RTOs with the management of Vocational Education and Training a guideline Training and Assessment Model has been developed.

The model that best accommodates a learner who has had no prior experiences (new entrant) in the industry is one that recognises that learning occurs:

- from directed workplace learning activities followed by recurring practice of these activities, together with
- a structured educational program.

That is, the model is based on a combination of on-the-job and off-the-job learning experiences. It recognises that learning occurs in an active way and involves appropriate learning strategies. The model provides coherence between respective components. It also represents:

- a most effective and efficient means of delivering quality education and training, and
- a means of assessing if learning has occurred and competence has been attained.

The model is shown in a diagram at the end of this document. Specific information associated with each component part of the model is outlined below.

2.0 Units of Competency

Units of Competency are specifications of work performance and do not provide information about the provision of training or detailed ways about how assessment activities are carried out. Hence, given the nature of the information (content and its interrelationship) contained within the Units of Competence there is the potential for a variety of interpretations to occur when RTOs are designing training programs.

Consequently there is the likelihood for considerable variation and inconsistency in delivery and assessment outcomes among RTOs; that is, the outcomes are different, even if the *process*² for assessing competence against individual Units is similarly applied.

Using agreed learning strategies (see below) that are commonly adopted by all RTOs can significantly reduce the likelihood of variation and increase the consistency of assessment outcomes among RTOs, as they provide:

- clarification of the relationship of the underpinning knowledge and skills in different sections of the Unit of Competence, for the purpose of learning efficacy and delivery efficiency: that is, a modular approach for training delivery is derived
- clear and specific details of the breadth and depth of the information required for delivery and achievement of competency
- more information regarding what constitutes sufficient and appropriate evidence for attributing competence
- a means of delivering education and training in manageable lots that can be assessed, reported and administered in ways that suit learners and RTOs

Note: The modular approach encompasses the term module³ or module descriptors. Modules are based on subject matter and are used to describe a detailed learning strategy. A module or module descriptor is generally a document of approximately five pages that has been derived from the Units of Competency within the Competency Standards part of a National Training Package. The quantum, breadth, and depth of individual modules associated with each Unit of Competency, depends largely on the technical nature of the Unit and the educational efficacy considerations.

Additional support materials including delivery materials and assessment instruments based on agreed learning strategies further improve quality and consistency in outcomes.

3.0 On-the-Job Development

A learner's on-the-job development involves the application of the knowledge and skills generally learned/acquired off-the-job at technical college. This knowledge and these skills are then more fully developed by repetitive reinforcement on-the-job. This is a process that involves directed workplace activities that are closely supervised as well as routine events that are more generally supervised. Furthermore, it will involve gradual exposure of the learner to more complex activities with increasing autonomy in on-the-job activities.

² Process relates to gathering data, analysing the data, making a decision about what is analysed and reporting the outcome

³ Module refers to and includes underpinning Knowledge and Skills Module (K&SM) related to off-the-job training and Work Performance Module (WPM) related to the on-the-job training

3.1 Learning Strategies – Work Performance Modules

The purpose of a Work Performance Module (WPM) is to bring together information from relevant parts of a Unit of Competence that relate to routine day-to-day work activities as well as providing clarification regarding the type and quantity of evidence needed for training and assessment purposes.

In the workplace activities are planned for, then undertaken on a range of apparatus and equipment, using a variety of tools, procedures, tests and so forth, normally found and/or used in the workplace. The work is completed when the appropriate and necessary ancillary strategies and processes such as housekeeping, documentation, return to service permits, are finalised. Consequently the most effective way of confirming that both the knowledge and skills are being applied is one that captures information relating to routine day-to-day work.

3.2 Experiences – On-the-Job

Both the equipment within the normal work environment and the learner's immediate supervisor⁴ are readily available resources for the development and reporting of workplace experiences.

Learners need to keep a record of their work experiences and have them regularly checked for accuracy and clarity by their supervisor. These records can be used to verify that the learner has undertaken the full range of experiences outlined in a Unit of Competency, which in turn provide management information to the learner's supervisor regarding how work is allocated.

3.3 Assessment - On-the-Job

The record of on-the-job experiences (3.2 above) can also be used for submitting evidence for making judgments about the learner's on-the-job performance. For assessment purposes, evidence provided by a learner needs to be compared to the requirements outlined in the WPMs. The evidence needs to be accurate and gathered in a logical way so it can be easily analysed. Additionally, the evidence must be sufficient, current and authentic and should be gathered regularly and submitted for analysis in a timely manner.

4.0 Off-the-Job Development

To be effective, workers require knowledge and skills that are developed through vocational education experiences, relevant to each Unit of Competency. Knowledge and skills are reinforced and further developed through their on-the-job application learnt through integration with the off-the-job environment.

⁴ Supervisor – refers to a person/mentor who is competent in the same field of work as the learner and is responsible for the learner's workplace skill and competency development

4.1 Learning Strategies - Knowledge and Skills Modules

The purpose of a Knowledge and Skills Module (K&SM) is to expand on the brief content statement in the 'Evidence Guide' of each Unit of Competence. K&SMs are specifically designed to:

- provide a clear purpose statement about their relationship to the overall educational program,
- ensure they support the needs of the workplace,
- support a variety of delivery modes (eg; face to face, distance, computer assisted learning or other),
- provide content and structure that facilitate learning retention,
- provide clarification regarding the type and quantity of evidence needed for assessment purposes.

4.2 Delivery – Off-the-Job

Off-the-job learning is based on the K&SMs and occurs in a location that is not directly related to the enterprise's core business activities. The location might be in a specialist-learning environment or at the learner's place of work.

The off-the-job learning environment must provide best educational practice, be staffed with appropriately qualified personnel and equipped with the necessary physical resources and learning materials to ensure that this component of the learner's vocational experience is effective and efficient.

4.3 Assessment - Off-the-job

The off-the-job assessment occurs against the stated educational criteria of the K&SMs. The process assesses the knowledge and skills that underpin workplace performance, ensuring that the learner knows why something is done as well as knowing how to do it, ensuring competent work performance in new contexts. Typically, these modules will allow for the assessment of the integration of knowledge and skills and promote better problem solving and diagnostic skills and provide a foundation for further knowledge and skill development, when required.

5.0 Final Decision

The final decision about attributing competence is based on an evaluation of all acquired evidence relevant to each Unit of Competence. This is always a complex process made simpler when records of previous assessment events are accumulated on a per Unit of Competence basis and cover a WPM and K&SMs.

Typically, no further assessment activities are required unless doubt exists about the sufficiency; currency or authenticity of all previous assessment evidence. In some cases, additional evidence may be required to satisfy the needs of authorities⁵ who align their processes to the decisions of RTOs. In some cases there may be a need for a final test with the result being included with previously assessed evidence as part of the overall assessment decision.

A final test is an holistic event that:

- encompasses the critical components within the competency standards
- is relative to what is required by the group of units that make up the qualification
- assesses the currency and integration of the on and off-the-job learning

The composition of the final test, if required, depends on the quality and extent of the data initially gathered and the ongoing judgment processes adopted during the program.

6.0 Qualification

A qualification is awarded once the Units of Competency for that Qualification are successfully completed. A transcript of a learner's success in individual modules is also issued as part of the academic record.

7.0 Relationship between Learning Strategies (Modules) and Units of Competency

For training administration and information dissemination purposes, developing a matrix showing the relationship between Modules and Units of Competency is a useful tool for administering delivery arrangements. In some cases some National Training Packages already have matrices (module maps) developed to assist RTOs.

Training system administrators require the matrix to be fully developed identifying all modules (K&SM and WPM) associated with each individual Unit of Competency. For the purpose of information dissemination, the matrix only needs to show the unique modules as they relate to the group of Units of Competency within a qualification; that is, common modules relating to more than one Unit of Competence in a qualification need only to be shown once.

⁵ Electrical Licensing Authorities and like bodies

8.0 Training and Assessment Model

