



ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES FOR RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Assessment

Assessment means collecting evidence about your skills and knowledge so that judgements can be made against national competence standards. Assessment can take place before during or after training. The result of an assessment can be competent or not competent. Being competent means:

- knowing how to do a job consistently within a workplace; and
- understanding why it should be done that way.

Competency for any unit or cluster of units will be determined by considering evidence against the performance criteria listed in the national package and provided later in this document. Further information about the context and guidelines used by instructors can be found on the National Training Information Service website: <http://www.ntis.gov.au>.

If you are assessed as 'not competent' this does not mean you have failed. Your instructor will discuss additional training or gaining more experience before being assessed again.

Distance Learning Australia is required to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities. This means making sure that you have a workplace and equipment that helps you to do your job properly. This applies to the assessment process - so if you need support to undertake assessment for example a scribe to assist with writing within tests please notify your instructor.

Forms of Recognition

There are two ways your current knowledge and skills described by a unit of competence can be recognised:

- Credit Transfer
- Recognition of Prior Learning Assessment

Credit Transfer

Clients who are enrolling in a qualification or accredited course at Distance Learning Australia should check if they have already completed any of the units of competence with either Distance Learning Australia or other training organisation. If you have previously completed any of the Units of Competence in the course, you will not have to complete them again.



Where a client has completed a unit of competence or equivalent unit of competence in a previous course with Distance Learning Australia or any other Registered Training Provider, then Distance Learning Australia will Credit Transfer that result into the current or proposed enrolment. Clients are encouraged to talk to instructors to discuss possible credit transfer opportunities. You will need to provide a certified copy or original of your Statement of Attainment or Statement of Results, to your instructor.

The successful Credit Transfer application replaces enrolment in the units. It is not possible for the overall assessment of the qualification to be adversely affected by any credit transfer. The Distance Learning Australia statement or certificate for your qualification will have 'Credit Transfer' listed against the Unit/s of Competency.

Recognised Prior Learning Assessment

There may be parts of the training you can already do. You may have, through varied life experiences, previous work, or previous study, already achieved competency for particular units. In this case an instructor may be able to assess a client on specific units of competency prior to studying the unit. The recognition of prior learning process is an assessment process like any other except that you will provide the evidence on which the assessment is made from your previous experience rather than from the training activity.

All students who have developed existing skills through work, life experiences or other study, have the opportunity to obtain recognition for all or part of the related nationally recognized Units of Competency. Each Unit of Competency (UOC) has a set of elements which are assessed against performance criteria specified in the National Training Package. The Recognition of Prior Learning process involves assessing what you already know and can do, against these performance criteria. If you can show that you have already meet the performance criteria in all the elements you can be assessed as competent in the unit.

You should apply for recognition as soon after enrolment as possible. If you think you may be eligible please contact your instructor. The instructor will need sufficient time to review your collected evidence - ideally before the training activity begins but certainly before the training activity has begun in earnest. By getting recognition for the skills and knowledge you already have, you can put more effort into the units of competency you actually need to learn.

Once the instructor has all the information they need to make a decision, your application will be assessed and you will be notified of the outcome. If your Recognition of Prior Learning application is successful, your Distance Learning Australia statement of attainment or certificate for you qualification will have 'Competent' listed against the Unit/s of Competency.



Assessment evidence

The evidence gathered by you will assist the instructor to answer the following questions to determine competency:

- Does the evidence relate directly to the units of competency that are being assessed?
- Is there enough evidence to cover all aspects of the competency standard?
- Does the combined evidence show a consistent picture of your competence? In other words, do all the pieces of evidence 'agree'?
- Does the evidence show that you have the knowledge and skills right now?
- Can the instructor be sure that the evidence actually shows your work, and not someone else's?

Active Involvement in the Assessment Process

We encourage you to take an active part in the planning process so you have a chance to contribute important information. If you are currently employed it is also important to involve the employer or work supervisor in the process e.g. your employer will know:

- What evidence might be available from your workplace?
- What opportunities there are for you to demonstrate particular skills?
- Who in the workplace would be best to discuss your work?

After an assessment ask your instructor for clear and detailed feedback about how you performed. The questions that you could ask include:

- Where did I do well and where could I have done better?
- Where can I get extra help or advice?
- Which parts of the unit of competency need to be reassessed (if necessary)?
- What other evidence do I need?

Work supervisors and employers can also assist by verifying that the evidence you have provides is authentic by witnessing your work, e.g. if you regularly take photos of your work get your supervisor to write a brief comment with a signature and date next to each one.

The evidence you gather should allow you to answer the following:

- Can I do the tasks set out in the unit of competency?
- Have I done the tasks under different conditions?
- Can I explain the reasons why things have to be done in a certain way?
- Have I read any necessary workplace documents (eg Standards and Procedures)?
- Are the records and evidence I need ready?



Matching evidence to Units of Competency

It is important that your instructor match each piece of evidence you provide to the elements of unit of competency being assessed. You can assist the instructor by writing down the elements you think it relates to. Because there are overlaps between units of competency, one piece of evidence may be relevant to more than one unit of competency.

Collecting and Presenting Evidence in a Portfolio

A portfolio contains evidence gathered over a period of time (usually no longer than five years). The portfolio should be organized to make assessment of the contents against the competency standard straight forward for the instructor.

Evidence included must be valid i.e. relate to the elements, performance criteria, range statement and evidence guide for each unit assessed. There are generally four categories of evidence:

- records of previous training or training conducted within the workplace e.g. statements of attendances, licenses;
- self reports e.g. a work history, a resume or a report on how you do the tasks described in the competency;
- reports from other people e.g. a report by your current or past work supervisor
- work product samples e.g. a policy or procedure you have developed.

The next section provides examples relevant to this unit and forms you might find useful are contained in the following section.

As you collect your evidence, remember you can use the same piece of evidence to show competency in a number of units. Develop a matrix or table to show which Unit of Competency is covered by the piece of evidence.



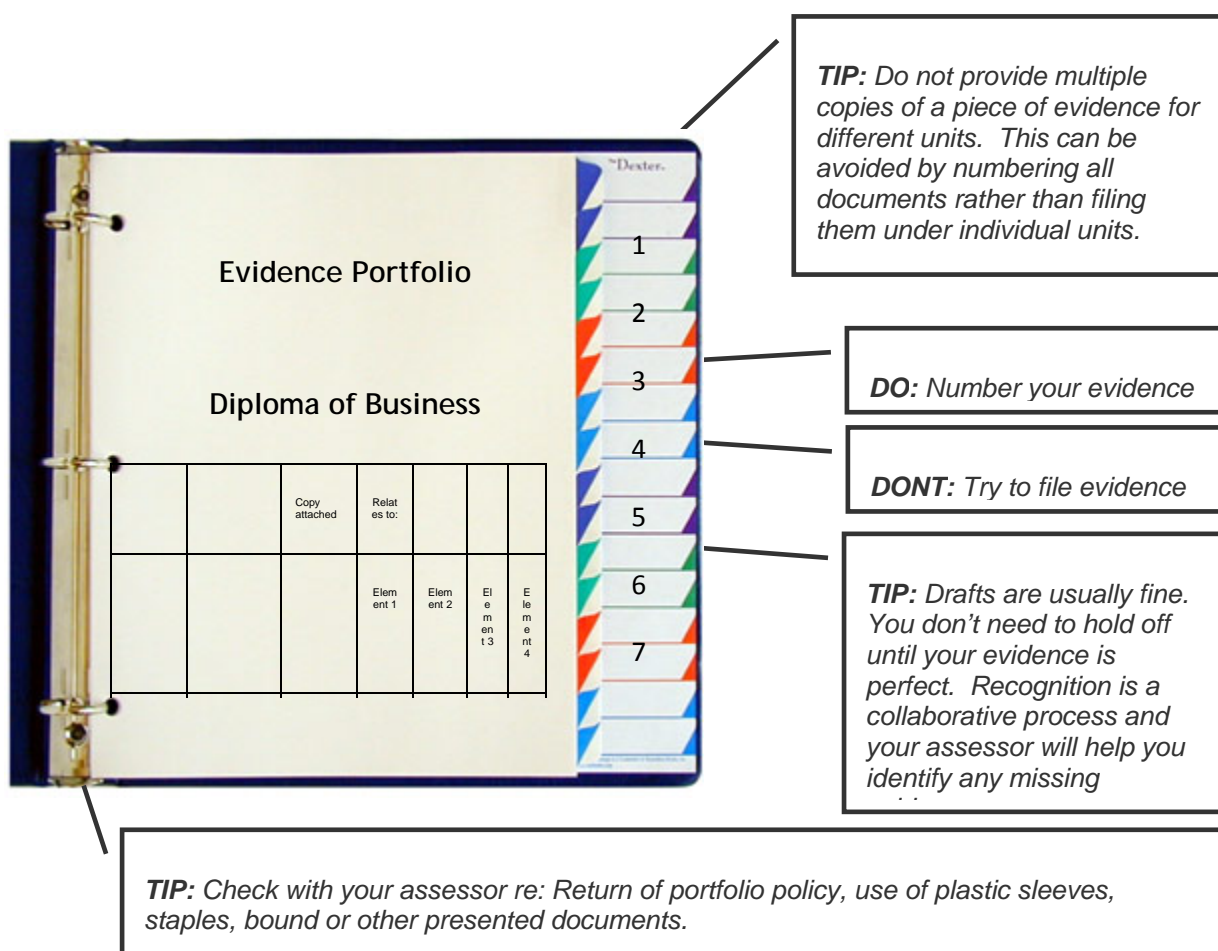
MATRIX

Evidence provided			Relates to:			
			Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
1	Resume	Attached	✓			
2	Duty Statement	Attached	✓	✓		✓
3	Professional Development courses undertaken	Attached	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Client Proposal prepared	Available to view on site	✓		✓	✓
5	Use Word to develop documents.	I can demonstrate this skill.			✓	



Folder Structure

If you have enrolled in a course specifically designed for recognition offered by Distance Learning Australia you will have an electronic tool for presenting your evidence. If, however, you are providing evidence for recognition of individual units within a course you are studying on-line or within a traineeship you may find it convenient to place your evidence in a folder. The next section provides examples relevant to this unit.



TIP: Do not provide multiple copies of a piece of evidence for different units. This can be avoided by numbering all documents rather than filing them under individual units.

DO: Number your evidence

DONT: Try to file evidence

TIP: Drafts are usually fine. You don't need to hold off until your evidence is perfect. Recognition is a collaborative process and your assessor will help you identify any missing

TIP: Check with your assessor re: Return of portfolio policy, use of plastic sleeves, staples, bound or other presented documents.

Copy attached	Relates to:	Element 1	Element 2	Element 3	Element 4



Examples of Evidence

The following provides some examples of evidence you may present to be considered for recognition.

Questionnaires or Forms you can complete

Examples include:

- Work History (see next section); and
- Task Description indicating how you learnt on the job and how you normally complete tasks requiring competence in the unit.

Personal Documents

Examples include:

- Resume;
- Current and/or previous Job Descriptions;
- Performance Review/Evaluation Reports; and
- Employer/Supervisor third party report (see next section).

Work Product Samples

Records include any information that shows what work you did and when you did it.

Remember to ask your work supervisor to comment on each and attest this was your work (signed and dated) you will need to:

- show what part of the work is yours;
- explain the process behind the product; and
- show that it was efficient and that it followed any relevant rules.

Distance Learning Australia is required to treat your assessment records and other details as confidential.

Attendance Seminars and Conferences Short Courses

Your employer may provide short courses that contribute to the competences in this course. If they are nationally recognised they may be directly credited to your course within the packaging rules. But other training you have done may also be useful evidence. Examples of such evidence include:

- certificates and relevant licences;
- course outlines and brochures;
- conference programs;



- attendance certificates;
- employment records of inductions and/or on the job training.

Work assessments

Many work tasks may be assessable under the standards. In this case your employer or host employer may be willing to gather evidence against the performance criteria, knowledge and skill requirements. It is important to note that in this case unless the employer has competences in work-place assessment the evidence will need to be reviewed by your instructor or Distance Learning Australia instructor who will make judgments about validity and completeness. A form is supplied in a later section for a work supervisor.