



Role and responsibilities of the assessor

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The role of the assessor is to make an informed judgement about the range of evidence a learner may produce to demonstrate their competence to meet the assessment criteria.

To maintain objectivity, best practice is to ensure assessors should not also be the specific programme tutor. Where this is not possible, centres should discuss acceptable options with their External Quality Assurer

Responsibilities of assessor(s)

1. Carrying out assessments in accordance with YMCA Awards assessment specifications and correctly completing all compulsory assessment documentation
2. Ensuring evidence provided by learners is sufficient to meet YMCA Awards requirements
3. Providing objective feedback to the learner about performance and achievement
4. Devising and agreeing an assessment action plan with the learner as appropriate
5. Completing all relevant assessment forms and returning them to the internal quality assurer/Centre Contact
6. Providing feedback to the internal quality assurer
7. Upholding the standards of the unit/qualification

YMCA AWARDS requirements

It is a requirement that centres provide YMCA Awards with the following:

- list of named assessors with signatures (to be kept on site for sampling by the External Quality Assurer)
- details of all assessors' qualifications and experience (CVs)
- copies of all relevant certificates
- clear specification of the assessment roles and responsibilities
- a well-planned assessment process from induction to final assessment day plan (assessment materials are available from YMCA Awards)

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- a valid and reliable assessment of knowledge and skills that is appropriate to the YMCA AWARDS syllabus and aligned to the national standards
- evidence of assessor/internal quality assurer meetings to review and standardise assessment practice to meet national standards
- Please note: YMCA Awards provide assessment and internal quality assurance materials). YMCA Awards also offers standardisation of delivery and assessment practice training days.
- Please see YMCA Awards website for training day calendar and associated costs
- centre policy and practice in relation to fair assessment provision for any individual assessment needs of learners

Please note: For assessors working towards an assessing qualification, a timescale of 12 months will be allowed for achievement of this qualification after registration is validated.

Conflict of interest

Centres must ensure that any assessment of learners (including internal quality assurance sampling) is not undertaken by any person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment. Where an assessment by such a person cannot be avoided, YMCA Awards will make arrangements for the relevant part of the assessment to be subject to scrutiny by another person.



Model of assessment

In order to meet YMCA Awards requirements it is advisable that assessments are carried out using a logical sequence and the application of VARCS (valid, authentic, reliable, current and sufficient) throughout the process. The following four stage approach provides an example of such a sequence, the assessment paperwork to be used at each stage and the evidence that the learner presents.

Many learner appeals can be avoided if these stages are completed logically and thoroughly. They provide the centre with a standardised approach to assessments and the use of YMCA Awards assessment paperwork. All assessors should be familiar with these stages in order to guide the learner smoothly through the assessment process.

The stages of assessment

Stage 1 – planning, preparation and briefing

Planning

This stage is about giving advice to the learner. Information to be discussed should include:

- Date, time and place of assessment and feedback
- What will be assessed – i.e. award, unit, element, performance criteria
- The methods of assessment – e.g. observation, written, supplementary questions
- The evidence the learner should present – e.g. session overview, class plan/programme card, practical performance, session evaluation, worksheets/task sheets, case studies, evidence of exemption
- Reasonable assessment adjustments (NB any RAA will require advance planning and agreement with YMCA Awards – see website for more details) – e.g. injury, pregnancy, disability

Preparation

This stage is about ensuring that the learner understands the requirements of the assessment and should include:

- One to one briefing – PARQ, information gathering, health and safety checks, level of experience
- Use of appropriate clothing and equipment
- Setting up of equipment

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Briefing

The aim of this stage is to relax and reassure the learner. A general group briefing may take place, however it should be followed by a one-to-one briefing. It should take place as close to the assessment as possible, preferably immediately before. It should also be used to exchange the following information:

- The learner should fully understand the assessment process and what will happen at each stage of the assessment
- All documentation, equipment and participants should be accessible
- The learner should be made aware of when and where the assessment will take place, and who their assessor will be
- The learner should be made aware whether there will be an IQA or EQA present and their respective roles in the assessment
- The learner should understand what is to be assessed, the assessor should clarify this by asking for examples of how they will demonstrate competence against the assessment criteria
- The assessor should clarify any uncertainties
- There should be an opportunity for the learner to ask any questions
- There should be an opportunity to negotiate the plan
- All reasonable adjustments must be identified and recorded
- The assessment plan should be completed
- The learner should be informed of the appeals procedure

Relevant assessment paperwork	Purpose
assessment plan	to summarise the assessment – signed by the learner, assessor (IQA and EQA if present)
observation checklist	to identify the assessment criteria. To ask the learner how they will demonstrate competence
reasonable assessment adjustment form	to record any assessment adjustments



Stage 2 - Observation and supplementary questioning

Observation

The assessor observes the learner and assesses any evidence ensuring that:

- Full attention is given to all assessments
- Assessors should only watch 1 learner during a practical summative assessment to ensure no opportunity is missed to observe achievement of skills
- A ratio of 1 assessor to 4 learners over a day (1:4) is recommended when following this model of assessment, to avoid rushing the process due to time constraints
- Written evidence is assessed separately from performance evidence
- Observation checklists are used with the assessor being familiar with the criteria
- A position is assumed that is unobtrusive as well as providing effective observation

Relevant assessment paperwork	Purpose
observation checklist	to judge the candidates performance against the assessment criteria
assessor feedback sheet	to record assessor feedback mapped to the performance criteria

Supplementary questioning

Supplementary questioning should only take place once all of the evidence has been assessed i.e. written and practical and prior to feedback. Questions may not be necessary. Questions should only be asked to clarify or support evidence, and should not replace evidence.

The main reasons for asking questions are:

- To check authenticity
- To clarify ambiguities
- To increase sufficiency of evidence
- To facilitate effective feedback and action planning

Please remember:

- Questioning should not take place until all evidence has been assessed
- Asking a question cannot turn a referral into a pass
- All questions and candidate answers should be recorded

Relevant assessment paperwork	Purpose
supplementary questions record	to record all assessors questions and candidate responses
* evidence from questioning or other forms of supplementary evidence cannot be used to infer practical competence	

Stage 3 – Feedback and action planning

Feedback

The learner should be given the assessment result first, and then given supporting written feedback. Written feedback should be mapped to the performance criteria and be clear enough for the learner to understand once they have left the assessor and the assessment environment.

- Tell the learner whether they have passed or referred using clear language, e.g. `you have not achieved all of the criteria to pass today`.
- Do not ask the learner `how do you think you have done?` as you may then face telling a learner who thought they have done well that they have referred
- Written feedback should relate to the performance criteria and clearly reflect the decision with reasons
- Feedback should be given in a quiet area
- Sensitivity should be shown to a referred learner

Relevant assessment paperwork	Purpose
observation checklist	To show how the assessment judgment was made. To highlight performance criteria that have been passed and referred
assessor feedback sheet	To give the learner feedback related to specific performance criteria
*The above two documents should clearly correlate so that the learner can clearly identify any areas of referral, pass with comment or question	



Action planning

Once the assessment is complete, including assessment of the learner's evaluation, the action plan should be negotiated between the learner and assessor and recorded on the learner assessment summary sheet.

The following should be discussed:

- The referred learner may require further training prior to being re-assessed
- The successful learner may want to take further training or gain work experience in the industry
- Assessors should be able to provide advice on re-assessment or further development

Relevant assessment paperwork	Purpose
learner summary of achievement	to record the outcome of the assessment and what the learner will do next – signed by the learner, assessor (IQA and EQA if present)

Stage 4 – Paperwork and quality assurance

This stage ensures that all paperwork is signed and agreed by the assessor and the learner once the assessment is complete.

- All assessment paperwork should be accurately completed, signed and dated where indicated
- If an IQA or EQA is present they will also need to sign the evidence that they have sampled where indicated
- Original copies should be given to the learner and copies of the relevant documents should be kept by the centre (see website for Record keeping Guidance)

Relevant assessment paperwork	Purpose
copy of learner assessment record/learner portfolios	external quality assurance and auditing