

National Training Materials

for the
Community Services
and Health Industry



Contribute to positive learning SD1

Learning Resource

National Competency Standards for Disability Workers

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Queensland

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**Contribute to
positive learning
SD1**

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These learning materials will need to be revisited when the National ITAB has finalised the training package for the industry and it has been endorsed by the National Training Frameworks Committee.

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Introduction

Welcome to this Learning Resource called Contribute to positive learning for the disability sector of Community Services and Health.

This Learning Resource has been developed in line with the national competency standards called Draft National Competency Standards, as at 28th June 1995, for Disability Services and the unit of competency called Contribute to positive learning.

Before you begin the learning resource

Registration

To be formally assessed and receive a credential or qualification, you will need to be registered with a licensed training provider. If your workplace already has this organised, you can discuss registration with your supervisor, trainer or mentor.

If you wish to study this Learning Resource independently of your workplace, you can contact a registered training provider or TAFE to organise registration. You will need to do this before you begin your studies.

Additional support

If you think you might need help with language, reading and writing or using numbers, then talk with someone who can help you work out what help you need and the best way to get it.

You could talk with:

- your mentor, supervisor or trainer
- a co-worker or friend
- a person at your local library, TAFE college or community centre.

The above people may also be helpful if you need help and support with special requirements because of limited mobility, hearing impairment or visual impairment.

Study groups

This type of training does not involve having to attend school or college or following a set timetable.

This Learning Resource is designed for you to work through at your own pace either at work or at home.

Groups of learners can also use this Learning Resource in a number of learning settings.

Often learning in groups can provide exciting ways to understand the content. By talking and sharing ideas with others, you will be able to hear different opinions, offer assistance and advice to others and gain a better understanding of the experiences of people in a range of settings.

You can form a group:

- at your workplace
- with people from other workplaces completing the same learning materials.

If you are separated by distance, consider meeting by:

- telephone
- teleconference
- video conference
- e-mail.

What you need to know about competency standards

Competency standards

Competency standards describe all the units of competency required to do different kinds of jobs. They contain the knowledge, skills and other attributes that people need to work effectively in their jobs.

Competency standards are defined by interviewing a large number of workers and employers. Many experts in the industry give advice on the development of competency standards to make them as accurate as possible.

Each unit of competency is made up of several elements. These elements describe what you need to be able to do.

Each element has performance criteria which describe the knowledge, skills, attitudes and other attributes that you need to demonstrate in order to be competent. An assessor uses the performance criteria to judge competency. The diagram that follows shows the way a unit of competency is put together.

Unit of competency		
↓	↓	↓
Element 1	Element 2	Element 3 or more
↓	↓	↓
1.1 Performance criteria	2.1 Performance criteria	3.1 Performance criteria
1.2 Performance criteria	2.2 Performance criteria	3.2 Performance criteria
1.3 Performance criteria	2.3 Performance criteria	3.3 Performance criteria
1.4 etc	2.4 etc	3.4 etc

How competency standards relate to this Learning Resource

This Learning Resource is based on one unit of competency from a set of competency standards. The Learning Resource is designed to help you achieve competency in the associated unit of competency.

Because the Learning Resource and the unit of competency are closely associated, you will find some similarities. In particular, the Learning Resource and the unit of competency have the same name.

The following table gives you a snapshot of how the associated unit of competency relates to the competency standards.

TABLE OF COMPETENCY STANDARDS					
NATIONAL COMPETENCY STANDARDS FOR DISABILITY SERVICES					
Functional Areas	Level A	Level B	Level C	Level D	Level E
Empowering	EMP1	EMP2	EMP3	EMP3	
			EMP4	EMP4	
Communicating	COM1	COM2	COM2	COM2	
Daily living support	DL1	DL1	DL2	DL3	
	DL2	DL2			
Skill development	SD1 - Contribute to positive learning	SD2	SD2	SD5	
		SD3	SD3		
			SD4		
Organisation and management	OM1	OM2	OM3	OM5	OM7
			OM4	OM6	OM8

				OM10	OM9
					OM10
					OM11
Administration	AD1	AD2	AD3		
Community or recreational support	CS1	CS1	CS2	CS3	
Employment support	ES1	ES2	ES3	ES3	

A full description of the unit of competency that this Learning Resource relates to can be found under the heading Record of Evidence in Additional Resources.

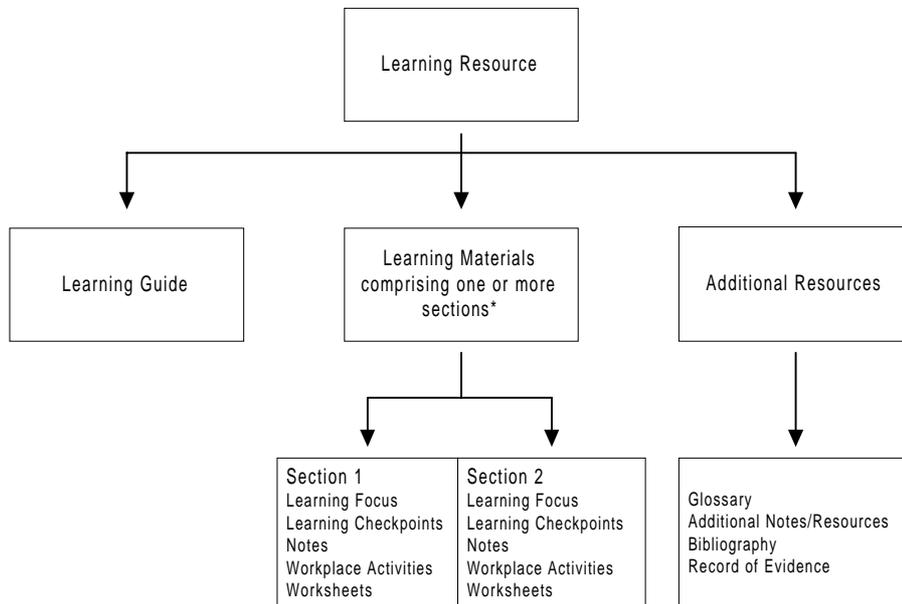
The Learning Resource

This Learning Resource is made up of the:

- Learning Guide
- Learning Materials and
- Additional Resources.

Content layout

Here is the layout of a typical Learning Resource.



*This Learning Resource has 2 sections.

As you can see from the diagram, the Learning Materials contain the:

- Learning Focus
- Learning Checkpoints
- Notes
- Workplace Activities and
- Worksheets.

The Additional Resources contain:

- a Glossary
- a Bibliography
- Additional Notes/Resources and
- a Record of Evidence.

A full description of these terms is found in the Glossary at the end of this Learning Guide.

Pathways through the Learning Resource

Learning Guide

It is important that you read this Learning Guide and understand its contents before you start the Learning Materials.

In the Learning Guide you will find:

- information on how to use this Learning Resource
- advice on how to be assessed
- advice on how to approach your studies
- a glossary of key terms found throughout the Learning Resource.

What you need to know to begin

You might find it useful to look through the Learning Resource to become familiar with the way it is set out.

Throughout the Learning Resource you will come across four symbols or icons that will help guide you through the material. They appear in the left margin of the page. Here is an explanation of their meaning:

Who can use this Learning Resource?

This Learning Resource was developed for participants who might be studying in a number of different situations. You might be working through the material:

- alone, with little or no support
- with a group of learners
- with another person at work such as a co-worker or supervisor
- with a trainer based in the workplace or based at another training site.

If you are studying alone, you might already be working in the community services and health industry or want to work in a different type of job in the industry. Or perhaps you would like to work in the

community services and health industry and you are studying this material to help you gain employment.

If you are studying alone, a registered training organisation may be able to help you find support for your learning and assessment or assist you to access workplaces.

The material is designed so that some of the learning is carried out in the workplace. You may use your own workplace or visit other workplaces to complete some of the activities.

Prerequisites

There are no formal prerequisites for this unit of competency.

The competency standards for disability services state that SD1 must be assessed in conjunction with Unit OM1.

How to use the Learning Resource

Here are some suggestions you may find useful to help you work through the resource.

Step 1

Read through this Learning Guide carefully.

Step 2

Read and complete the following self-assessment exercise which will help you check your skills and knowledge against the performance criteria of the unit of competency.

Sometimes the performance criteria are written in a way that is difficult to understand. In developing the Learning Resource we have tried to make it easier by turning the performance criteria into discussion questions.

A table, with all the elements and performance criteria for the unit of competency associated with this Learning Resource, can be found under the heading Record of Evidence in Additional Resources.

The following self-assessment exercise lists all the Learning Checkpoint discussion questions from the sections in this Learning Resource. When you check your skills and knowledge against the Learning Checkpoint discussion questions you will also be checking them against the performance criteria.

Self assessment exercise

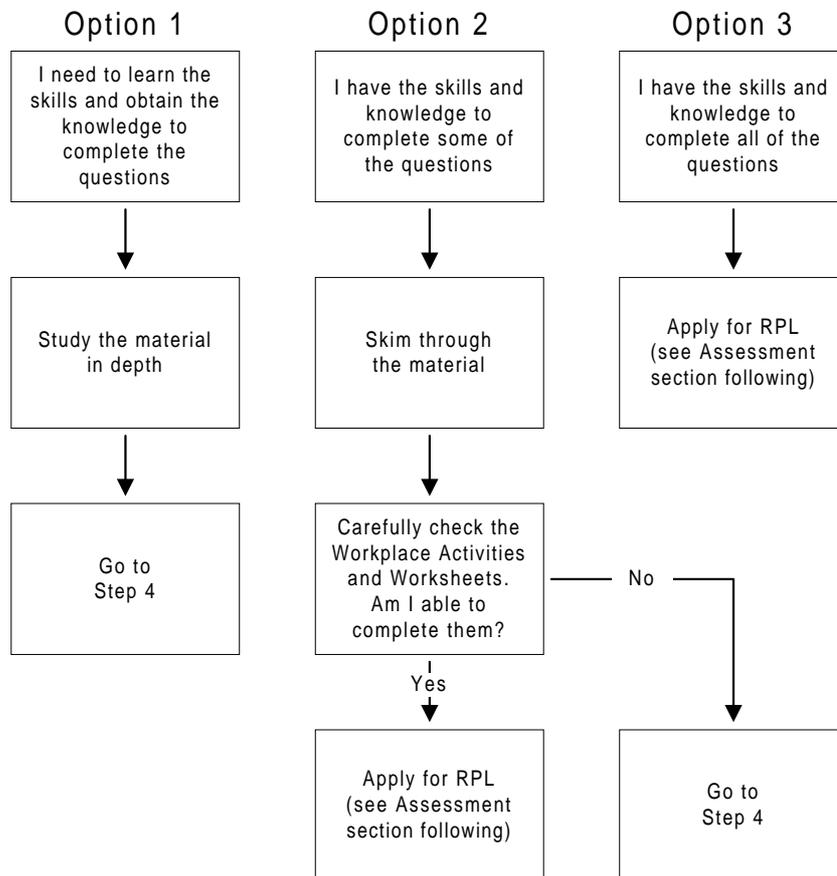
Section 1 [Element name]	Discussion questions	Check ✓
Enhance people with disabilities' development or maintenance of abilities through incidental learning opportunities (SD1.1)	Why is it important for a worker to identify and acknowledge a person's existing skills?	
	How can a person's abilities be identified?	
	Why is it important for a worker to provide opportunities for the person with a disability to use the skills they have?	
	What are the most useful things that the person with a disability can do or learn?	
	In what skill areas are learning opportunities most relevant for people with disabilities in an organisation?	

	What is the worker's capacity in their organisation to provide learning opportunities?	
	What sort of assistance can a worker give to encourage a person with a disability to use or learn a skill?	
	What level of assistance should a worker provide?	
	When should a worker withdraw support?	
	What is constructive feedback?	

Section 2 [Element name]	Discussion questions	Check ✓
Implement skill development or maintenance plan (SD1.2)	How should skill development or maintenance plans for people with disabilities be developed and written?	
	What types of methods are likely to be specified in these skill development or maintenance plans?	
	How can a worker implement these training methods?	
	How are resources for the skill development or maintenance plans organised?	
	Why is feedback important during skill development or maintenance programs?	
	How is feedback given?	
	When could changes to the skill development or maintenance plan be needed?	
	How are changes made to the plan?	
	How can learning outcomes be monitored and recorded?	

Step 3

Decide from your assessment what you will do next and choose one of the following options:



Step 4

To complete the Learning Resource, it is best to work your way through the resource gradually, one section at a time.

- Read the Learning Focus and the Learning Checkpoint discussion questions carefully.
- Study the Notes thoroughly. When you come across unfamiliar words in the Notes check their meaning by looking in the Glossary in the Additional Resources.
- As you study the Notes, complete the Workplace Activities and Worksheets. To do the Workplace Activities you might have to make arrangements to visit other organisations and/or make appointments to interview workers in your own

organisation. You might want to arrange to complete all your activities at once or spread them out, during your study of the Notes.

- Place completed Workplace Activities and answers to Worksheets in the Record of Evidence found in Additional Resources.

Step 5

When you are ready to be assessed in the associated unit of competency, you will need to discuss with your supervisor, trainer or registered training organisation how you can be assessed. Read the information about assessment that follows to help you collect evidence of your skills, knowledge and attributes in the workplace.

Assessment

What is assessment?

Assessment is showing that you have the skills, knowledge and attributes to do your job.

When you are assessed, your skills, knowledge and attributes are looked at by an assessor. An assessor is a person who is trained to do the assessment and may be different to the trainer, if you have one.

The assessor will:

- credit you with the unit of competency when you show you have the required skills, knowledge and attributes or
- advise you on how to practise or develop these skills, knowledge and attributes if you are not quite ready for assessment.

Before you begin assessment

Just as you can get help with the Learning Resource, you can also get help with the assessment process.

If you think you might need help with language, reading and writing or using numbers, then talk with someone who can help you work out what help you need and the best way to get it.

You may need help because of limited mobility, a hearing impairment or visual impairment.

People who can assist you may be:

- your mentor, supervisor or trainer
- a fellow worker or friend
- a person at your local library, TAFE college or community centre.

Recognition of Prior Learning

When you look at what you have to do to achieve this unit of competency, you may realise that you already have the necessary knowledge or skills.

This may be because you:

- have experience in the workplace and you have already done work which requires the same knowledge, skills and attributes
- have completed other training courses which covered the same knowledge and skills, or
- have had other life experiences where you learned the same knowledge and skills.

If you fit into any of these situations then you can apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). In some states, RPL is known as Recognition of Current Competence or Skills Recognition.

This means that your previous experience and learning is formally recognised and you may be assessed as competent without having to do the training.

Recognition of Prior Learning can help you to:

- improve your opportunities at work, and
- reduce the amount of time you spend studying for a qualification by giving you credit for the things you have learned which relate to skill levels required in the workplace.

There are many national publications which may assist you to learn more about RPL and to prepare your application.

You will need to contact an RPL assessor or facilitator to assist you to apply for RPL. You will find these assessors through your registered training organisation where you can find further information and application forms. RPL processes may vary from state to state.

The following publications offer assistance to women and people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

- DEET, 1992, *RPL - A Practical Guide for Women*
- DEET/OMA, 1994, *New Place - Same Skills, RPL for People from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds.*

You can find these in TAFE Institute libraries, learning resource centres or some career guidance centres, or perhaps find a copy through inter-library loans.

These booklets are also available to purchase at a small cost from the Recognition and Assessment Centre, Kangan Institute of TAFE, Melbourne, Victoria, telephone (03) 9254 3035.

When will I be assessed?

You may be assessed when you believe you have the skills, knowledge and understanding required to perform a task. This is also after steps one, two, three and four (in How to Use the Learning Resource) have been completed. The next step is to discuss the assessment process with your supervisor, mentor, trainer or your contact person at the place where you have registered your training.

The assessment process may include an assessor:

- watching you completing a job
- asking you questions
- looking at work records, and
- talking to your supervisor or mentor.

You may be assessed on or off-the-job. The unit of competency will state if there are special assessment requirements and this will be indicated under the heading Record of Evidence in Additional Resources.

There are three results of an assessment:

- competent
- needs further evidence, and
- not yet competent.

If you were assessed as not yet competent, you can be assessed again when you have developed your knowledge, skills or attributes further.

Your assessors will guide you in the areas that require further development to reach competency.

Evidence of skill, knowledge and understanding

There are many ways of showing you have the skills, knowledge and attributes to satisfy the assessor that you have achieved the unit of competency. This becomes your evidence.

In many cases you will be able to discuss the kind of evidence you can use to:

- support your claim for Recognition of Prior Learning

- help you to complete your assessment to gain a unit of competency.

You may be able to provide actual evidence or samples of what you have completed, e.g. Workplace Activities and Worksheets from this resource. Or you may have secondary evidence, e.g. a reference from an employer which states your duties in your job, performance appraisal results or reports.

Your assessor can advise you about which form of evidence is acceptable.

Validation

Generally, if you are claiming something you have already done or produced as evidence of your skills, you will need to get someone to validate or support your evidence. This means that your supervisor or another person needs to sign a short validation statement to say that you did the work, e.g. wrote the report, chaired a meeting, worked with a client to help him or her access services in the community.

Types of evidence

Evidence must be linked closely to the performance criteria which you will be assessed against.

Written evidence

This could be a report you have written; a business letter; an agenda for a meeting; an article in a newsletter; a pamphlet about your organisation; minutes of a meeting you attended and contributed to.

Oral evidence

This could be an audio tape of an interview (the other people involved need to give permission for this), a video or audio tape of a meeting you have run or been involved in.

Demonstrated evidence

This could be observation by a mentor, supervisor or assessor of an activity, e.g. chairing a meeting; interviewing a client; operating some equipment or performing personal care tasks.

Study Advice

The following study advice has been developed to help you work effectively through the Learning Resource.

Whether you are working through the Learning Resource alone, with another person at work, in a group, or with a trainer, the information below is of value.

To study effectively you must have space, resources and time.

Space

For anyone to study effectively they must have an appropriate study area. You need to set up a space at work and/or at home that is always ready for you to study.

Think about your workplace. Is there somewhere you can do your study? If you are studying this material at work, you may need to negotiate with your supervisor or mentor about a space to keep your resources.

Think about your house. Is there somewhere you can set aside for study? You may need to negotiate with other people in your household for this space.

This space needs to be available for you to study whenever you like. It needs to be set up in such a way that it will not be disturbed by others when you are not there.

The kitchen table at home may not be an appropriate space if this is shared with others for different purposes.

The space also needs to be somewhere quiet so that you can concentrate. It also needs to be well lit. Poor lighting strains eyesight and makes it difficult to concentrate.

Remember, the place where you study needs to be convenient, quiet, well lit, and able to store your resources when not in use.

Resources

The most basic resources you will need are a chair, table or desk, a reading lamp and a folder to place this Learning Resource in.

Other resources that you will also find helpful:

- material to record information on - this could be pen and paper, a computer and a printer, tape and tape recorder
- reference materials such as a dictionary, reference books or copies of legislation.

An important resource often overlooked is other people. Your co-workers, mentor, supervisor or trainer are all people who can help you work through this Learning Resource. Other people like librarians and workers in similar organisations can also provide assistance.

Time

Planning the time to study is very important.

You will need to work out a time that suits you and plan around it. Doing your study in small, concentrated blocks of time, about two hours in length, is one effective way to study.

When you study, allow time for reading and completing activities. It is a good idea to make up a timetable and follow it. Use small amounts of time to do little chores like photocopying, finding references and telephoning organisations.

Remember it is the quality of the time doing the work that is more important than the amount of time doing it.

Plan your time to include recreation time, as it is important not to overload yourself.

Some hints to help you learn

Making notes often helps you to remember new ideas and instructions. Do not worry about spelling or neatness, as your notes are for your own use. Store your notes with this Learning Resource.

Underline new words or ideas. You can add new words to the Glossary if it helps you to remember them.

Talking with your co-workers, supervisor, mentor, trainer or others about what you have learnt also helps you to understand and remember new ideas. They may also be able to refer you to other relevant information. Collect other relevant information and store it with this Learning Resource. For example, lists of people and organisations who may provide assistance, sample forms, documents or other print material.

Guiding Principles to Working in the Industry

Workers in the Community Services and Health sector provide services to a wide variety of people. Clients and consumers of services come from a variety of cultures and upbringings, speak different languages and have different abilities.

When working with clients and consumers of services, a significant part of the worker's role will be to develop appropriate working relationships. This means being open and respectful to the specific cultural, personal and physical needs of each person, group or organisation.

Not all people in the community have the same opportunities or abilities to find and use services to help themselves.

Many workers and organisations follow certain principles to ensure access to their services is fair and to make sure that they are not excluding anyone unintentionally.

Some of these principles are:

- Access and Equity - establishing processes that make services available to all people on a fair and equal basis
- Equal Opportunity - providing all people with the same chances as each other regardless of culture, gender or abilities
- Affirmative Action - giving preference to certain groups or cultures to make up for past discrimination, and
- Community Participation/Representation - seeking involvement from various cultural and community groups in decision making processes.

As you read through the Notes, complete the Worksheets and the Workplace Activities, you will need to remember these principles and apply them to your work. It will be important to discuss these principles with your co-workers; mentor; supervisor and/or trainer as they relate to your everyday work.

Training, Education and Career Pathways

This Learning Resource has been designed so that it provides you with training, education and career pathways.

When you are formally assessed for this study you will be receiving recognition from a nationally recognised training authority.

In the past, many short courses or in-house training were not recognised towards a qualification.

When you do training that is nationally recognised or accredited, pathways to other qualifications are easier and your career pathways are improved.

Glossary

There are some key terms that you will see in the Learning Guide and these are explained below.

<i>Additional Notes/Resources</i>	Further information about the issues discussed in the Learning Materials
<i>Additional Resources</i>	Additional Resources is the last section of this Learning Resource and contains the Glossary, Additional Notes/Resources, Bibliography and Record of Evidence
<i>Assessment</i>	Assessment is showing an assessor that you have the knowledge, skills or attributes stated in the unit of competency
<i>Assessor</i>	An assessor is a person who is qualified to carry out assessments
<i>Competency Standards</i>	Competency standards describe all the units of competency required to carry out different types of jobs
<i>Element</i>	Each unit of competency is made up of elements which describe what a worker needs to be able to do. A copy of the unit of competency associated with this Learning Resource, together with the elements and the performance criteria, can be found under the heading Record of Evidence in Additional Resources
<i>Evidence</i>	Evidence is the way you display your skills, knowledge and attributes to satisfy the assessor that you are competent in a unit of competency. This may be in the form of written, oral or demonstrated evidence
<i>Glossary</i>	The Glossary is like a dictionary and explains the meaning of important words or terms. There is an additional Glossary for the Learning Materials in Additional Resources

<i>Learning Checkpoint Discussion Questions</i>	The Learning Checkpoint discussion questions allow you to match your current skills, knowledge and attributes against the material covered in the Learning Resource. The Learning Checkpoint discussion questions are simplified versions of the performance criteria and cover all the material contained in this Learning Resource. Each Learning Checkpoint discussion question is answered in the Notes
<i>Learning Focus</i>	The Learning Focus is a brief summary of the material covered in each section of the Learning Materials.
<i>Learning Guide</i>	The Learning Guide contains information on how to use this Learning Resource. It also gives advice on how to approach your studies and the assessment process on completion of your studies
<i>Learning Materials</i>	The Learning Materials include the Learning Focus, Learning Checkpoints, Notes, Workplace Activities and Worksheets
<i>Learning Resource</i>	The Learning Resource is the whole package and contains the Learning Guide, the Learning Materials and Additional Resources. Some Learning Resources also have an audiotape included
<i>Mentor</i>	A mentor is a person who agrees to support you in your learning by answering questions and discussing issues. This person could be an experienced co-worker, a supervisor, coordinator or other appropriate person
<i>Notes</i>	The Notes contain information to help you become competent in the unit of competency. There is usually a set of Notes for each element

Off-the-job

Off-the-job is when an activity is undertaken as a separate activity from your normal work duties. The activity might be completed at home, in a classroom, in your workplace or a training room

On-the-job

On-the-job is when an activity is carried out in the workplace as part of your normal work duties. The activity might include learning on-the-job, completing a Workplace Activity or doing an assessment task for an assessor

Performance Criteria

The performance criteria are statements that describe the required standard of performance in which a worker needs to be competent. Each element of a unit of competency is divided into performance criteria. An assessor uses the performance criteria to judge competency. A copy of the unit of competency, the elements and the performance criteria that are associated with this Learning Resource can be found under the heading Record of Evidence in Additional Resources

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning means that your previous experience and learning may be formally recognised. It is a process where you may be assessed as competent without having to do the training. RPL is also known as Recognition of Current Competence or Skills Recognition

Record of Evidence

In the Record of Evidence, you will find a full description of the unit of competency associated with this Learning Resource. You may also keep your completed Workplace Activities and Worksheets and any other relevant information in the Record of Evidence. This information may be used as evidence of skills, knowledge and understanding

<i>Registered Training Organisation</i>	A registered training organisation provides accredited training. It may be a TAFE college, union, workplace or other training provider
<i>Supervisor</i>	A supervisor is the person to whom you report in the workplace. Other titles might be coordinator, manager, foreman or head nurse
<i>Trainer</i>	A trainer is a person qualified to run training courses. Trainers may work in the workplace or in a registered training organisation
<i>Unit of Competency</i>	The unit of competency describes a combination of the knowledge, skills and attributes required to perform a particular aspect of a job to a certain standard. The unit of competency is written in a format that is made up of elements and performance criteria. Each Learning Resource is based on a specific unit of competency. A full description of the unit of competency can be found under the heading Record of Evidence in Additional Resources
<i>Workplace Activity</i>	Workplace Activities are activities for you to practise knowledge obtained from studying the Notes in the workplace. The Workplace Activities can be used as evidence for assessment. Keep all information and work completed for your Workplace Activities in the Record of Evidence
<i>Worksheet</i>	Worksheets are exercises that allow you to reflect on the material covered in the Notes. The Worksheets may be suitable as evidence for assessment. Answers need to be stored in the Record of Evidence in Additional Resources

Learning Materials

Section 1

Enhance people with disabilities' development or maintenance of abilities through incidental learning opportunities (SD1.1)

• Learning Focus	1
• Learning Checkpoints	2
• Notes	3
• Workplace Activity	15
• Worksheet	18

Learning Focus

Enhance people with disabilities’ development or maintenance of abilities through incidental learning opportunities

This Learning Focus will provide the opportunity for you to learn how to enhance the skill development and maintenance of the skills of people with disabilities.

You will focus on:

- situations that can be used as possible informal learning opportunities
- when it is appropriate to withdraw support
- when to provide constructive advice and feedback.

This Learning Focus relates to Element SD1.1 and Performance Criteria 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3 and 1.1.4.

Throughout this Section you may come across terms and concepts that are unfamiliar. These are described in the Glossary in the Additional Resources Section.

Learning Checkpoints

Enhance people with disabilities' development or maintenance of abilities through incidental learning opportunities

The Learning Checkpoints provide the basis of the Notes.

The Learning Checkpoints may also be used to identify your prior knowledge and skill relevant to this Learning Focus. This process could be undertaken in conjunction with a trainer, mentor or workplace supervisor.

It may not be necessary for you to study all of the Notes.

Learning Checkpoint discussion questions

- Why is it important for a worker to identify and acknowledge a person's existing skills?
- How can a person's abilities be identified?
- Why is it important for a worker to provide opportunities for the person with a disability to use the skills they have?
- What are the most useful things that the person with a disability can do or learn?
- In what skill areas are learning opportunities most relevant for people with disabilities in an organisation?
- What is the worker's capacity in their organisation to provide learning opportunities?
- What sort of assistance can a worker give to encourage a person with a disability to use or learn a skill?
- What level of assistance should a worker provide?
- When should a worker withdraw support?
- What is constructive feedback?

Notes

Why is it important for a worker to identify and acknowledge a person's existing skills?

People with disabilities are often thought about in terms of what they *cannot* do. This can lead to lower expectations about the sorts of activities that people with disabilities can participate in, and the types of skills they can learn.

Low expectations equals low skill development

If a person with a disability's existing skills are not identified or acknowledged, fewer opportunities may be given to the person to try new things or participate in different activities. Fewer opportunities to learn and practise new skills results in less skill development and a continuing focus on the person's *disability* rather than their *ability*.

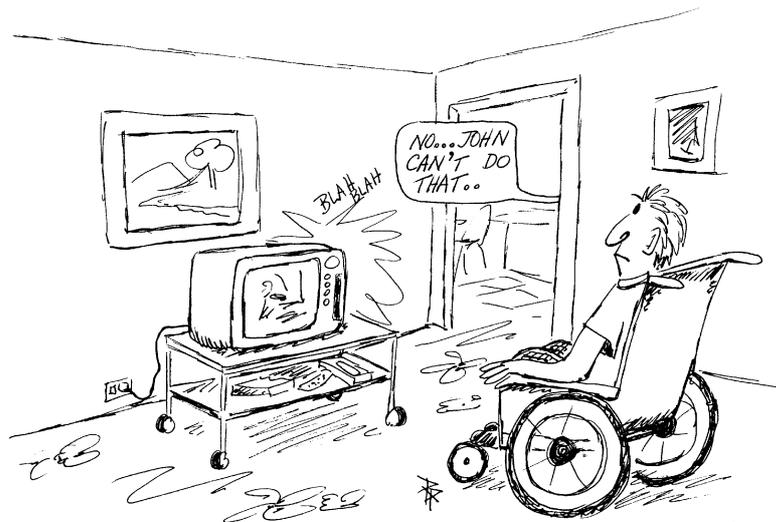


Figure 1. Low expectations

High expectations leads to increased skill development

If a person with a disability's existing abilities and skills are recognised and acknowledged, there is a greater likelihood that opportunities will be provided for the person to use them. The more practice a person has, the more skilled they will become. It is also likely that the person's existing skills and abilities may be related to activities that the person enjoys. This may be a good starting point for workers to identify further opportunities to encourage skill development.



Figure 2. Acknowledging an existing skill

How can a person's abilities be identified?

To identify a person's strengths or skills, it is useful to think of the tasks involved in their everyday life. These include:

Self-care

- e.g. dressing, mealtime skills, bathing, personal hygiene and grooming

Domestic

- e.g. laundering clothes, washing dishes, sweeping and cooking

Communication

- e.g. speaking, signing or gesturing, reading and writing skills

Social

- e.g. the ability to relate to others, to initiate interactions and to understand social rules

Leisure

- e.g. home activities such as watching videos and completing puzzles, or out of home activities such as bushwalking or watching football

Decision making

- e.g. day-to-day decisions such as what clothes to put on, or what to eat for lunch, or longer-term decisions such as where to live

Time concept

- e.g. the ability to read a clock or watch or to associate times of day with particular activities, or understanding the concept of days, weekends, weeks, and possibly months, can give a person more control and understanding of their life

Money concept

- e.g. understanding money values or the concept of exchanging money for products

Vocational

- e.g. work attendance, workplace-specific skills, ability to cooperate with supervisors and co-workers.

Not all of these areas will be relevant at all times for all people with disabilities. It would be useful for a worker to identify the areas that are important for the person and that are related to the organisation.

For example:

Vocational and social skills will be a focus in a supported employment setting, while self-help and domestic skills may be a focus within a residential setting.

One person with a disability may demonstrate many skills and be capable or independent in many areas of their life. However, another person may not demonstrate many skills at all. If this is the case, it will be important for a worker to look for more basic or less obvious skills to develop.

For example:

A person may be unable to dress themselves, but may be cooperative when a worker is dressing them. The person may then be encouraged to make body movements that make it easier for the worker to dress them, e.g. pushing their arms through the sleeves.

The important thing is to identify and acknowledge the skills a person has, no matter how basic, and to use these skills to identify opportunities for further development.

Why is it important for a worker to provide opportunities for the person with a disability to use the skills they have?

Most skills become “rusty” or are forgotten if they are not used or practised regularly. This is true for all people. Maintaining and enhancing a person’s skills will only happen if the person receives encouragement and regular opportunities to use their skills.

People with disabilities are often in a position where they rely on others to structure their routine and their activities. They may have little control or choice about the things they do each day.

It is therefore important that the worker:

- actively looks for opportunities for the person to practise and develop skills
- structures situations to make it possible for the person to use their skills.

For example:

A person may be able to wash dishes but may be unable to regulate water temperature or judge the correct amount of detergent. It is important that the worker recognises that the person can wash dishes and so provide the opportunity to do it. In this case, the worker would regulate the water temperature for them.

What are the most useful things that the person with a disability can do or learn?

In general, the most useful things for a person with a disability to do or learn are those that are practical and important for the environments in which they live and/or work. When identifying the most useful skills a person needs or uses, workers should ask themselves, “If the person did not have this skill, would anybody else have to do it for them?”

For example:

Dressing is a useful and important skill. If a person is unable to dress themselves, somebody else will have to do it for them. On the other hand, cutting out magazine pictures is not an essential skill. This would not need to be done for them if they could not do it independently.

Other questions that a worker should consider are:

- Is this skill generally useful for, or associated with, people of this age group?
- Is this something the person would like to do?
- Will the person be able to learn this skill in a reasonable time?
- Will the person be able to practise and use this skill in the future?

In what skill areas are learning opportunities most relevant for people with disabilities in an organisation?

Different organisations will have a different focus in their work with people with disabilities.

Accommodation services support people in their homes and will be interested in developing self-care and domestic skills.

Vocational services will be primarily concerned about teaching the person good work skills.

Other day activity services may have a focus on academic skills, recreation or community access.

All services will also need to consider the person's communication and social skills as an important part of how well the person participates in that setting.

What is the worker's capacity in their organisation to provide learning opportunities?

Workers within different organisations will be primarily interested in identifying learning opportunities that relate to the function of that organisation.

For example:

Accommodation support workers will look for opportunities to encourage and develop skills that are most useful in a home

setting, while workers in other organisations will focus on different skills.

It is important that workers know what the expectations of their organisations are in this regard and that they stay within any formal or informal guidelines. These guidelines should specify the:

- support to be provided to people with disabilities by the organisation
- limits or boundaries.

In most cases, informal teaching through the identification of naturally occurring learning opportunities is something that is able to be done in a low-key and non-intrusive way. It should become part of the way workers interact with the people they support. It will not take away the need for more structured teaching programs for particular skills, but will maximise opportunities for informal learning on a day-to-day basis.

What sort of assistance can a worker give to encourage a person with a disability to use or learn a skill?

Giving a person with a disability an opportunity to participate in an activity may not be enough. The person may need assistance to be able to make use of the opportunity. There are a number of ways that a worker can do this, but two of the critical components are:

- enhancing natural cues
- providing individualised assistance.

Natural cues

Natural cues are those things or activities in our environment which cause people to behave in certain ways. People respond to:

- times of the day, e.g. by getting up or eating
- things that they see around them, e.g. they reach for the television remote control to change TV channels, stop at the kerb before crossing a road or take a dirty cup to the sink to wash it
- sensations and feelings, e.g. they eat when they are hungry or clean their teeth when they feel unclean
- written words or symbols, e.g. they know which public toilet to use when they recognise the symbols

- verbal cues, e.g. a spoken instruction tells them what is expected
- non verbal cues, e.g. a shake of the head or a frown may tell them their behaviour is unacceptable.

People with disabilities may be less aware of the naturally occurring cues in their environment and therefore may miss out on valuable learning opportunities. When the person is made aware of the cue, i.e. when the cue is *enhanced*, a learning opportunity is provided.

Making a person aware of a naturally occurring cue can be done *indirectly* or *directly*.



Figure 3. An indirect cue

Indirect cues

An indirect cue tells the person that something needs to be done without them being given a direct verbal instruction.

For example:

Telling a person that dinner is on the table may be an indirect way of telling them to come and sit down at the table. Pointing to a dirty plate and then to the sink indicates that the person needs to take the plate to the sink.

Indirect cues may be all that is needed to get the person to do what is required. Eventually the person learns to respond to the naturally occurring cue rather than relying on a prompt or direct instruction from another person.

Direct cues

Sometimes it may be necessary to give a direct instruction so that the person knows what to do. Direct verbal cues work best when they include:

- the name of the person
- a clear statement of what needs to be done (rather than a question)
- the word “please”.

For example:

“Ben, pick up the cloth and wipe down the bench, please”, is better than “Hey, will you clean up that mess?”

Individualised assistance

If the direct or indirect cues are clear, this is often enough to prompt the person to do a particular activity. However, sometimes it may be necessary for a worker to provide extra assistance.

Individual assistance gives the person with a disability more information about how to do a particular activity. For example, if a worker wanted to assist in the activity of cutting a sandwich, they could do it by:

Modelling

- Performing the activity or task to show the person how it is done and then getting them to copy, e.g. cutting a sandwich.

Additional verbal prompts

- Giving extra spoken prompts for parts of the activity, e.g. saying “Suzie, hold the sandwich while you cut it.”

Gesturing

- Using gestures to emphasise part of the task, e.g. pointing to the knife or making a cutting motion.

Modifying the task

- Paying attention to the types of material which may be easier for the person to use, e.g. using a knife with a big handle which is easier to grip or having a small amount of filling in the sandwich so that it is easier to cut.

Physical assistance

- Giving physical assistance for only those parts of the task which the person finds difficult, e.g. holding the knife until the person positions it correctly on the sandwich and starts cutting.

What level of assistance should a worker provide?

The level of assistance which is provided to the person with a disability should only be enough to help them successfully complete the task. Over-assistance restricts the person's opportunity to learn. Under-assistance can result in the task being too hard or too complex for the person. This may result in frustration and unwillingness to continue.

When should a worker withdraw support?

When assisting with a task, a worker should take note of the type and level of assistance which was needed for the person to successfully complete the task. Care should then be taken to consistently offer that type and level of assistance for the task in the future. As the person becomes more skilled or competent in the task, assistance should be gradually reduced.

For example:

A verbal prompt may eventually be replaced by a gestural prompt, or a direct verbal cue may become an indirect verbal cue as the person becomes more skilled.

What is constructive feedback?

People need feedback so that they have the opportunity to learn more effectively from their experiences. This feedback should be constructive.

For feedback to be constructive, it should:

- highlight consequences
- be immediate
- be enthusiastic

- be useful
- be positive.

Highlight consequences

In the same way that people with disabilities may be less aware of the naturally occurring cues in their environment, they may also be less aware of the consequences of their actions. A worker may need to highlight these consequences so that the person recognises them and learns from them.

We all learn to modify what we do as a result of the responses we get from people and events around us.

For example:

If a person says hello to someone and they ignore them, they may be less likely to say hello to that person the next time they see them. Or if a person buys a certain brand of jam and they like it, they are more likely to buy that brand next time. Or if a person does a good job in the workplace and their supervisor or workmates compliment them, they are more likely to feel valued and motivated to keep up the good work.

Be immediate

Five or ten minutes after a task has been completed may be too late for the person to connect the feedback with their actions. Therefore, a worker needs to give feedback immediately after the behaviour or task is completed.

Be enthusiastic

Feedback should be enthusiastic, but not exaggerated. The worker should use a tone of voice that is natural for them.

Be useful

Feedback should tell the person *what* was good about their actions and *why* it was good.

For example:

“Well done Katie; you’ve set the table. Now we can sit down for lunch.” This draws attention to *what* the person did, *why* it was useful or desirable and hopefully motivates them to repeat that action or task in the future. This is much more helpful than saying something vague and non-specific, such as “Good girl”.



Figure 4. Constructive feedback

Be positive

Praising effort is important, even if the person was unsuccessful in completing a task. It is important that the worker encourages any effort made by the person and in the future attempts to find a way to help them succeed by giving individual assistance.

This completes the Notes for this Section.

Workplace Activity

Workplace Activity

Below is an activity for you to undertake in your workplace.

This task will help you:

- to apply your understanding of incidental learning opportunities and enhance learning.

To ensure that the rights of people are upheld, it is essential that you inform the people you work with of your intentions and gain their permission, before completing the relevant Learning Activities.

Learning opportunities

Observe a person with a disability in your workplace and identify some of their skills.

Identify two opportunities during the course of a day where you can encourage the person to use and develop an existing skill.

Think about how to enhance the cue for this skill.

Identify the type of assistance that the person with a disability needs.

Record any feedback you gave to the person with the disability and evaluate its effectiveness.

If it is not possible for you to perform the above activity in your workplace, choose one of the following alternatives:

- During the next few weeks use opportunities you have identified to encourage a person with a disability to use or develop their skills. If the person appears to become more confident, try withdrawing or modifying your assistance so that they become more independent.
- Observe another worker in your workplace and notice the feedback that they are giving to people with a disability. Assess the effectiveness of this feedback and make suggestions in your notes on how it could have been given differently.
- After reading the Notes in this Section and then working at your workplace for a week, notice how your work practice has changed. Record these observations.
- Observe and talk with a person with a disability and decide what sort of assistance you need to give them to enhance a particular skill.

Will you need to show them how to do it?

Will they need the task modified, so that it is easier for them?

Will you need to provide a verbal prompt for each step?

- Identify a learning opportunity for a person with a disability that you are currently working with. The skill you choose should be simple and may even be part of a more complicated skill. The next time you have a learning opportunity with this person, try to vary the cue you use to enhance their skill development. What could you say or do differently to encourage the person to use or develop a skill?

Keep a record of the work you do for this Workplace Activity. You can use this record as evidence of your skills and knowledge for assessment purposes.

Worksheet

Worksheet

This worksheet reflects the Notes and your answers need to be recorded. Your answers can be used as evidence of assessment.

Learning opportunities

1. What types of situations can be used as informal learning opportunities?
2. What are natural cues?
3. What are some examples of support that can be given to a person with a disability to enable them to use their skills?
4. How can feedback enhance learning?
Give some examples of effective feedback.
5. Why is it important for assistance to be withdrawn or reduced when a person with a disability is learning or developing a skill?

Section 2

Implement skill development or maintenance plan (SD1.2)

• Learning Focus	1
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Learning Focus

Implement skill development or maintenance plan

The Learning Focus will provide the opportunity for you to learn the requirements for implementing skill development and maintenance plans.

You will focus on:

- how skill development and maintenance plans are developed and written
- common training methods
- strategies for organising resources to support the learning
- appropriate methods of giving feedback
- suggestions for changing the skill development or maintenance plans
- techniques for monitoring and recording learning outcomes against skill development and maintenance plans.

This Learning Focus relates to Element SD1.2 and Performance Criteria 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3 and 1.2.4.

Throughout this Section you may come across terms and concepts that are unfamiliar. These are described in the Glossary in the Additional Resources Section.

Learning Checkpoints

Implement skill development or maintenance plan

The Learning Checkpoints provide the basis of the Notes.

The Learning Checkpoints may also be used to identify your prior knowledge and skill relevant to this Learning Focus. This process could be undertaken in conjunction with a trainer, mentor or workplace supervisor.

It may not be necessary for you to study all of the Notes.

Learning Checkpoint discussion questions

- How should skill development or maintenance plans for people with disabilities be developed and written?
- What types of methods are likely to be specified in these skill development or maintenance plans?
- How can a worker implement these training methods?
- How are resources for the skill development or maintenance plans organised?
- Why is feedback important during skill development or maintenance programs?
- How is feedback given?
- When could changes to the skill development or maintenance plan be needed?
- How are changes made to the plan?
- How can learning outcomes be monitored and recorded?

Notes

How should skill development or maintenance plans for people with disabilities be developed and written?

Many organisations use formal processes which are planned and documented to assist people with disabilities to develop and maintain skills.

Most organisations do not rely solely on incidental or naturally occurring teaching.

Individual skill development or maintenance plans may vary from State to State and organisation to organisation. Some formats may be dictated by legislation and others may be chosen by the organisation.

All plans should:

- focus on enabling the person with the disability to access a range of opportunities
- provide support to fully develop the skills and interests of the person
- be based on the person's interests and strengths
- encourage participation in day-to-day settings
- specify objectives
- identify strategies to meet the objectives
- identify individuals responsible for implementation.

Plans are best developed in consultation with the person with the disability, their carers, and support staff.

What types of methods are likely to be specified in these skill development or maintenance plans?

Maintenance plans

Maintenance plans have objectives that are set to give people the opportunity to use skills they have already developed, rather than to teach them new skills.

They usually specify what opportunities should be given to the person, e.g. the opportunity to walk to the local shop to make a simple purchase when the person has developed the skills to do this.

Skill development plans

Skill development plans have objectives that relate to specific skills that the person is to learn.

More formal training methods are often required if the person needs to learn a complex or new skill.

There are four common types of training methods:

- degrees and types of assistance
- chaining
- shaping
- discrimination learning.

Before a training method is implemented, the skill may need to be broken down into a smaller number of components. This is most often referred to as a task analysis.

For example:

A person would like to learn how to make a cup of coffee, so a task analysis for making a cup of coffee in their setting would be done. Likely components would include:

- locating the cup, the jar of coffee, and milk and sugar if required
- filling the jug with water and turning it on
- opening the jar and placing a teaspoon of coffee in the cup
- turning the jug off when it boils
- pouring water into the cup to a particular level, and so on.

Once a task analysis has been done, the next decision is how to teach the components of the skill. To do this effectively, the worker needs to identify the person's preferred mode of learning by asking:

- Does the person learn best by being shown how to do something or by being told?
- How much practice does the person need to consolidate part of the skill before moving on to the next step?

The key is to individualise the program according to the person's specific interests and learning needs.

Degrees and type of assistance

This type of training method is used when teaching the person with a disability a new action or to combine known actions in a new way.

The *type* of assistance to be given to the person, i.e. physical, verbal, gestured or modelled, and the *degree* of assistance to be given at any point are specified in the plan.

The plan will outline:

- steps for training, starting with the maximum assistance needed for the person to successfully complete the task
- how to reduce assistance until the person is either doing the skill independently or is doing the skill to the best of their ability.

For example:

Objective: To teach Jack how to push the button at a pedestrian crossing so that he can safely cross the road.

Training strategy:

Phase 1 The worker provides full physical assistance to Jack by placing their hand over his and assisting him to push the button while giving a verbal cue at the same time.

Phase 2 The worker reduces the amount of physical assistance by holding Jack's wrist.

Phase 3 The worker guides Jack by his elbow, and so on, until he can push the button on his own.

Chaining

Chaining is used when a skill is made up of a number of steps which need to be taught and linked together so that the person can complete the whole task.

Many skills involve a number of parts which might be too difficult for the person to learn all at once, so they are taught sequentially.

Sometimes the person might be taught the task components in the order they occur. This is called a forward chain. When the last part of the skill is taught first, it is called a backward chain.

Forward chains

An example of a forward chain is teaching a person how to clean their teeth.

- Phase 1* Take the top off the toothpaste dispenser and push the dispenser so that the required amount of paste is applied to the toothbrush.
- Phase 2* Turn the water on to wet the brush.
- Phase 3* Brush in an up and down or circular motion over the teeth.
- Phase 4* Turn the tap on and pour some water into a cup to rinse their mouth.
- Phase 5* Turn the tap off.
- Phase 6* Put the toothbrush back in the holder.

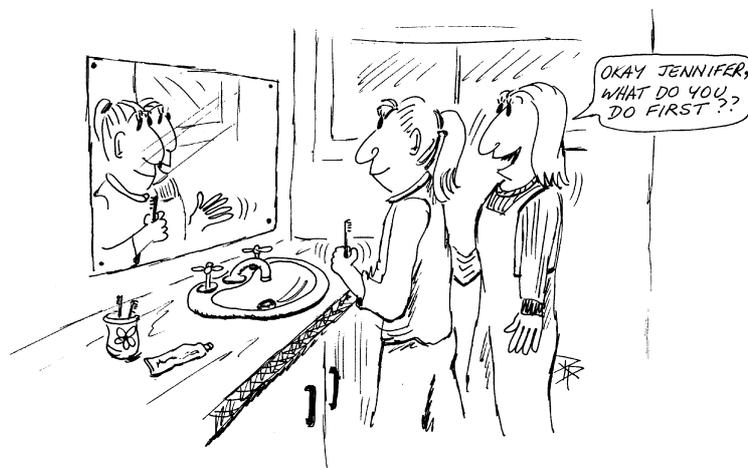


Figure 5. Chaining

At each stage, the steps are completed for the person until they have learnt all the components and can do the whole task independently.

Backward chains

A backward chain is similar, but it teaches the last step first as this is sometimes the easiest.

An example of a backward chain might be teaching a person how to put on a windcheater. The steps involved in putting on a windsheater are as follows.

- Phase 1* Locate the front and back of the windcheater, this is usually the hardest part.
- Phase 2* Pull the windcheater over the head and find the armholes.
- Phase 3* Push the hands out of the end of the sleeves.

The last part of this task is the easiest, so assistance with all steps up to that stage may be required and the person would then be encouraged to complete the task themselves. Gradually they would be taught to do more and more of the chain until they can do the whole sequence.

Shaping

Shaping is used when direct assistance is inappropriate or not possible. Using this strategy requires reinforcement and encouragement of behaviours that are closest to the behaviour which is required.

For example:

Jamie needs to sit in his seat in the classroom for five minutes at a time. At first he may only be able to sit for a minute, so a worker's strategy would be to reinforce and encourage Jamie whenever the time he sits in his chair increases.

Discrimination learning

This training method can be specified when a person needs to learn how to match or choose between a number of objects.

For example:

Melanie wants to identify her cup for morning or afternoon tea. This could be done by teaching Melanie to select her cup when it is the only one present. She would then be given the choice of two cups, then three, and so on, until she can reliably discriminate between her cup and others in the same location.



Figure 6. Discrimination learning

How can the worker implement these training methods?

Training methods may be implemented either formally or informally. As a general rule, they are best carried out in the setting where the skill is to be used. The skill development and maintenance plans will specify what sort of method or strategy is to be used and what sort of assistance is required.

How are resources for the skill development or maintenance plans organised?

A skill development or maintenance plan should identify the required resources.

The worker implementing the plan needs to ensure they are familiar with:

- the objectives of the plan
- the reasons for the selection of objectives
- the method of training being used
- the resources required.

Often resources will be objects which are already in the setting where the training will occur, e.g. toothbrush in the bathroom, clothes in the bedroom, etc. Even in this situation, it is best to check that the required items are where they should be before the training session begins.

Other items may also need to be used during the session, e.g. a pen, record sheet, compic signs or photographs.

All resources needed for training are best kept together with the actual plan in a designated place, so that future training sessions can be carried out consistently and smoothly.

Why is feedback important during skill development or maintenance programs?

Most people learn better, and maintain their motivation to continue learning, when they receive positive feedback about their attempts and feel that their effort has been appreciated. If people receive little or no feedback, or if they are criticised for what they get wrong rather than

praised for what they get right, they may become dispirited and unwilling to continue. People with disabilities are not different in this respect, and will benefit from positive encouragement.

How is feedback given?

It is important that the feedback given is specific and regular. Feedback should identify to the person the good things they have done and why these were good. This can assist the person to learn by highlighting the consequences or significance of their actions. If the person has been unable to successfully complete a task independently, the worker should provide whatever assistance they require, such as verbal prompts, physical assistance, etc., so they can experience success rather than failure.

Many formal skill development or maintenance plans will specify what type of feedback should be given and how. Often this involves:

- specific task feedback
- general positive comments
- any assistance necessary to complete the task.

It is important that all feedback is immediate, enthusiastic, specific and useful.

Note: More information on aspects of constructive feedback is given in Section One of this package.

When could changes to the skill development or maintenance plan be needed?

Sometimes, the skill development or maintenance plan is not appropriate to the needs of the person at a particular time. That could be because:

- the plan is too difficult - the skill is not achievable for the person at the time, or the steps identified are too complex
- the plan is too easy - the person already has the skill, or the steps are too small for the person's level of progress
- the training methods or strategies specified in the plan do not suit the person's preferred learning style.

If any of these occur, it is important that the plan is changed to suit the person's current abilities, learning pace and style.

How are changes made to the plan?

Although a number of workers may be implementing a development plan, often the workplace selects a particular worker to take overall responsibility for the implementation of the plan. It is important that any suggestions for changes are noted and brought to the attention of the responsible worker, either verbally or in writing.

How can learning outcomes be monitored and recorded?

Workplaces which develop and implement formal skill development or maintenance plans usually have a requirement that learning outcomes related to these plans are recorded and monitored. This is important, as it ensures that plans are implemented and monitored for their effectiveness.

Often, the plan will require the outcome of each training session to be recorded on forms located with the training instructions. These vary in format and may be as simple as placing a cross in a table for a successfully completed training trial, or may be more complex and require written comments. In each case, the outcome should relate to the specific step or steps of the skill being taught so that it is clear when the person can move on to the next step as identified in the plan.

In most cases, criteria will have been specified to make this judgement more objective.

Plans are often monitored through regular reviews of the information provided by workers implementing the plan, and through discussion with those people. Usually the person nominated as responsible for the overall implementation of the plan will also be responsible for its monitoring. Decisions about future implementation of the current plan and decisions about future skills for training are based on the monitoring process.

This completes the Notes for this Section.

Workplace Activity

Workplace Activity

Below is an activity for you to undertake in your workplace.

This task will help you:

- to apply your knowledge of skill development and maintenance plans.

To ensure that the rights of people are upheld, it is essential that you inform the people you work with of your intentions and gain their permission before completing the relevant Learning Activities.

Skill development and maintenance plans

Obtain a skill development or maintenance plan.

Identify the recommended training methods.

Perform some of the skill development plan while under supervision.

Ask for feedback on your delivery of training.

Monitor and record the learning outcomes achieved by the person with a disability and note any amendments to the plan.

If it is not possible for you to perform the above activity in your workplace, choose one of the following alternatives:

- Discuss this topic with another worker who has had experience working with plans. Find out:
 - How plans are written
 - Where they are kept
 - Who carries them out
 - How learning outcomes are recorded
 - How learning outcomes are monitored.
- Observe another worker implementing a plan and make appropriate notes.
- Use an existing plan to perform a role play or to provide the basis of a discussion.

Keep a record of the work you do for this Workplace Activity. You can use this record as evidence of your skills and knowledge for assessment purposes.

Worksheet

Worksheet

This worksheet reflects the Notes and your answers need to be recorded. Your answers can be used as evidence of assessment.

Skill development and maintenance plans

1. When might you use a formal skill development or maintenance plan as opposed to an informal learning opportunity to teach a skill?
2. What are some of the differences between teaching a skill, or using a skill development plan or an informal learning opportunity?
3. What are the four main types of training methods which might be used in skill development plans?
4. Why is feedback important when you are teaching someone a skill?
5. What are the most important things to remember when you are giving a person feedback?
6. What might be some of the reasons why a skill development plan is not working?
7. What would you do if you thought that a skill development plan you had been asked to carry out with someone needed changing?
8. Why is it important to monitor and record learning outcomes?

Additional Resources

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Glossary

<i>Chaining</i>	method used when a skill is made up of a number of steps which need to be taught and linked together so that the person can complete the whole task
<i>Constructive feedback</i>	comments which highlight the consequences of actions, are immediate, useful and positive, and are delivered with enthusiasm
<i>Direct cues</i>	a direct instruction, usually verbal
<i>Discrimination learning</i>	a training method that can be used when a person needs to learn how to match or choose between a number of objects
<i>Formal learning</i>	learning that is more structured and assists the person to acquire particular skills
<i>Gesturing</i>	hand or other body movements to emphasise or encourage
<i>Indirect cues</i>	an indirect cue tells a person that there is something to do, without giving, a direct verbal instruction
<i>Individualised assistance</i>	a form of assistance which gives a person more information about how to do a particular activity
<i>Informal learning</i>	learning through the identification of naturally occurring learning opportunities
<i>Maintenance plan</i>	a plan which aims to maintain a person's skill level
<i>Modelling</i>	performing an activity, task or behaviour to show a person how something is done and then getting the person to copy
<i>Natural cues</i>	things or activities in the environment which cause people to behave in certain ways

<i>Personal hygiene</i>	looking after an individual person's cleanliness and preserving their health
<i>Shaping</i>	method used when direct assistance is inappropriate or not possible. Using this strategy requires reinforcement and encouragement of behaviours that are closest to the behaviour which is required
<i>Skills</i>	a person's ability to do something well that comes from knowledge and practice
<i>Skill development plan</i>	a plan which aims to enable a person to access a range of opportunities in order to develop their level of skill
<i>Task analysis</i>	breaking a skill down into small parts to assist a person to learn the skill
<i>Verbal prompts</i>	spoken prompts that encourage a person to complete a task

Additional Notes/Resources

Issues concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Each Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is unique. Just as you cannot presume that all non-English speaking communities have the same needs, cultural requirements and community expectations, you cannot assume that you know how to work with all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or communities just because you may have worked in one community.

As a worker you need to be *sensitive to Aboriginal culture and alert to cross-cultural differences* in attitudes and approaches between your clients and yourself.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are usually part of an *extended family*, with complex family responsibilities, many of which may impinge on what you see your role as a worker to be.

Language may be *Aboriginal English*, rather than standard Australian English. As a worker you need to recognise this as a legitimate but different form of English and know when it is suitable to use each.

You should also be aware of Community Protocols, Codes of Ethics and Guides to Consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. These guides are essential if you are working in Aboriginal communities or with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Community protocols

Community protocols are the understandings established between agencies and communities to allow on-going communication and visits. They are essential to ensure that communities are treated with respect and dignity.

The formality of these protocols will vary depending on the expectations of the community.

For example:

Traditional Aboriginal communities may have very formal arrangements for dealing with non-Aboriginal service providers, involving strict adherence to traditional customs determined by

Traditional Owners or Elders; Aboriginal people living in cities may not necessarily expect the same level of formality.

In the case of traditional communities, you would need to familiarise yourself with the processes expected by each tribal grouping.

Protocols require you to:

- identify all relevant groups and individuals to be contacted prior to arranging visits
- clarify the notice expected by the community and the means by which the community expects to be contacted
- consider how best to provide reliable information on your work program, potential discussions and accommodation needs
- negotiate an acceptable two way communication process to allow on-going feedback
- negotiate the means by ensure the community is fully involved in decisions about it, including using community suggestions and interpreters (if necessary).

Code of ethics

The following Code of Ethics applies to workers dealing with all Aboriginal communities. It was developed for the Certificate in Remote Area Field Work (Northern Territory Local Government Industry Training Advisory Board, 1994).

While carrying out your duties as a field worker you must:

- respect the rights of others
- promote two way communication across cultures
- be aware of and abide by any rules, regulations or traditional laws which may apply to the community
- recognise and have knowledge of social and cultural differences
- act professionally in an accurate, unbiased and accountable manner
- act with honesty and flexibility
- refer any problems that are outside your areas of expertise to an appropriate person or organisation for resolution
- share knowledge and expertise as a resource
- not use your position for personal gain

- not be intoxicated or under the influence of any drug.

Consultation procedures

In addition to this Code of Ethics, you should also take into consideration the need to implement appropriate consultation procedures, including:

- respecting and consulting traditional owners, elders and custodians
- allowing sufficient time for formal responses from communities and agreements for consultations to take place
- engaging the services of a local Aboriginal interpreter/ 'minder'
- providing adequate opportunities for feedback about the successes and shortcomings of programs
- ensuring any communication is consistent with local languages and culture
- ensuring that any work does not conflict with any social or cultural activities or community obligations.

Aboriginal cultures have different concepts of knowledge and rules about who has access to that knowledge.

Within communities, cultural knowledge is protected and only passed on to those who are considered ready and having the right to receive it. Some information can be shared, but there are types of information that cannot be shared and should not be requested.

Sensitivity should be exercised at all times. Direct questioning is not always culturally appropriate.

Guiding principles to working in the industry

In relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, you should:

- be aware of the diversity of communities
- respect cultural and spiritual differences
- respect the knowledge of Elders and community leaders
- be aware of local Protocols and Codes of Ethics when working with or visiting communities
- respect Aboriginal methods of consultation and means of communication.

Bibliography

Community Services Victoria 1991, *Disability Services Individual Program Planning: Guidelines and Examples*, Melbourne.

Falby, M.A. 1989, *Community Based Curriculum: Instructional Strategies for Students with Severe Handicaps*, 2nd edn, Brookes Publishing Co., Baltimore.

Gardner, J.F. and Chapman. M.S. 1993, *Developing Staff Competencies for Supporting People with Developmental Disabilities: An orientation Handbook*, 2nd edn, Brookes Publishing Co., Baltimore.

Rader, G., Cull, A. and Cook, R. 1986, *Everyday Interactions: Training Manual*, Kew Cottages Information Services, Melbourne.

Record of Evidence

In the Record of Evidence, you will find a full description of the unit of competency associated with this Learning Resource. You may also keep your completed Workplace Activities and Worksheets and any other relevant information in the Record of Evidence. This information may be used as evidence of skills, knowledge and understanding. Included for you are examples of several types of evidence.

Unit of Competency

SD1		<i>Contribute to positive learning</i>	
<i>This unit describes the competencies needed by workers to support people with disabilities in maintaining and enhancing their skills and abilities with the aim of maximising independence.</i>			
	Element	Performance Criteria	
SD1.1	Enhance people with disabilities' development or maintenance of abilities through incidental learning opportunities	1.1.1	Situations that can be used as possible informal learning opportunities are identified and learning encouraged
		1.1.2	A range of informal learning opportunities are identified and described in the context of organisational policies and procedures
		1.1.3	The appropriate level of support is withdrawn when directed in order to encourage learning
		1.1.4	Appropriate constructive advice and feedback is provided to people with disabilities as soon as possible
SD1.2	Implement skill development or maintenance plan	1.2.1	Recommended training methods are identified from plan and implemented
		1.2.2	The required tools, equipment and other resources are organised to support the learning process
		1.2.3	Opportunities are provided for feedback to the trainee and any suggestions for changing the skill development or maintenance plan are noted and passed on to the nominated person
		1.2.4	Learning outcomes are monitored and recorded against the skill development or maintenance plan

Range of Variables

Examples of situations involved include residential, adult day training, or vocational settings.

Skill development may be in:

- life
- vocational
- social
- personal support skills.

Examples of an appropriate range of learning opportunities include:

- taking risks in the context of self determination and dignity of risk
- using action learning.

Examples of trainees include:

- people with disabilities
- families
- significant others
- volunteers
- other staff.

Examples of nominated people include:

- supervisor
- other staff.

Evidence Guide

Relationship to other units

This must be assessed in association with Unit OM1.

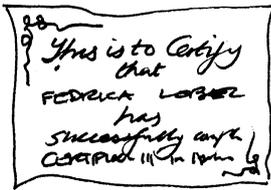
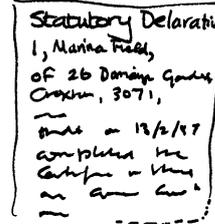
Knowledge and other supporting evidence

Evidence of knowledge and understanding related to skill development may be required of:

- the individual's disability/ies and its/their interaction with the individual's personality.

Examples of Evidence

There are several types of evidence you can collect to show your skills, experience and attributes for assessment against the Unit of Competency.

<p>Diary/journal</p>  <p>You can use this to record what you do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at home • in paid and unpaid work • in your spare time. 	<p>Certificates</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • certificates • diplomas • statements of results from courses in Australia and overseas. 	<p>Telephone references</p>  <p>You can ask someone if they could be contacted by phone to give a reference to your assessor.</p>
<p>Letters of evidence</p>  <p>You can get letters of reference from</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employers • people you have worked with (paid and unpaid work) • community groups you have been involved with. 	<p>Documents</p>  <p>You can collect documents, photos and other relevant paperwork to show what you have done in your life.</p>	<p>If you have lost documents</p>  <p>If you have lost old documents or lost contact with previous employers, you can write details of your experience on a Statutory Declaration form. You can get this from the newsagent. As it is a legal document, what you write must be true and correct.</p>
<p>Records of workplace activities and worksheets</p>  <p>You can use notes or reports you have made about workplace activities and completed worksheets.</p>	<p>Marie's story</p> <p>When I spoke to my supervisor about assessment, I realised that I needed to collect evidence about my relevant experience. For the short courses I'd done in first aid and word processing, I only had to produce my certificates.</p> <p>For the voluntary work I'd done, I asked people I'd worked with to write letters saying how long I'd worked with them and describing the sort of work. They were very helpful and I soon had four letters as evidence of my unpaid work. I even got some of the parents at the kindergarten to be telephone referees to talk about my role on the management committee. But one group I was involved with no longer existed so I wrote a Statutory Declaration giving details of my work.</p> 	