

Activity 1.2: From broad skill areas to observable behaviours

Materials needed

Video/DVD Activities for learners ring binder.

Handout 1.1: 'A possible skills framework' (see Activity 1.1).

Handout 1.2: 'Translating the framework into observation checklists'.

Handout 1.3: 'From broad skill areas to possible assessments'.

Handout 1.4: 'From possible assessments to observable behaviour'.

Handout: 'Proforma' chosen from an activity in the Activities for learners ring binder.

Use of video



Preparation: unpacking personal and social skills: use for **stimulus**

Participants in the video try to unpack broad skill areas. The footage shows them grappling with 'body language'. You may like to show this in your CPD workshop as a way of reassuring participants that breaking down broad concepts doesn't necessarily lead directly to observable behaviours.

Instructions

1. Explain how the activity aims to help tutors record observations of learners.
2. Explain how to get from broad skill areas, such as the items in a framework, to recording observations on an observation checklist. Distribute

Handout 1.2: 'Translating the framework into observation checklists'.

3. Discuss the Handout 1.3 example of one broad skill area – self-awareness. Explain that such expressions are too broad to be useful for making observations and giving feedback. The purpose is to break down such concepts into 'broad skill areas', and then into possible assessments that can become part of an observation checklist.

Optional:

Preparation: unpacking personal and social skills: use for **stimulus**

4. Ask participants to split into groups of three to five.

5. Give out Handout 1.3: 'From broad skill areas to possible assessments'.

6. The task is to take each broad skill area and write three to four possible assessment items for it.

If you want to extend the activity, offer participants additional broad skill areas, or else invite them to add and work with their own additional items.

7. Monitor groups' progress. After a few minutes, check that they're on the right track by asking each group to contribute an example of one set of assessment items in relation to a broad skill area. Discuss and clarify the task if necessary.

8. When you sense the groups are coming to the end of their activity, reconvene the whole group and discuss the outputs.

If you want to offer more examples, choose a proforma from one of the activities in the Activities for learners ring binder and offer copies to participants.

9. Distribute Handout 1.4: 'From possible assessments to observable behaviour'. For each possible assessment, ask participants to write down examples of behaviour that they might observe in learners.

10. Use the items to draw up new observation sheets for use in the workplace.

Emphasise to participants that a checklist is an aid, not a straightjacket.

The areas you identify are only there as a guide. What's most important is that tutors record specific behaviours. You need these to give helpful and accurate feedback to learners.

The possible assessments are also a guide. They help you think in advance about how you'll interpret what you see. When you actually use the checklist, you may find that you collect more useful information if you note the behaviour first, and relate it to a possible assessment afterwards.

Self-study suggestions: activity 1.2

1. Watch Preparation: what are personal and social skills? and Preparation: unpacking personal and social skills.

2. Follow the instructions for the facilitated activity.

3. Discuss your ideas with a colleague.

4. Draw up observation checklists with columns for skills, possible assessments and examples of actual observed behaviour.