

The role and responsibilities of an assessor essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The roles of an assessor are many; from assessor to administrator to interviewer, communicator, mentor, teacher and even trouble shooter. An assessor has a responsibility to be approachable and be able to build a rapport & healthy working relationship with a learner in order to indentify needs correctly such as whether the learner needs support with literacy or numeracy or whether they are on the correct programme for their progress. Assessor's responsibilities can also cover many different aspects; To be able to record accurately all learning and complete paperwork correctly and within deadlines.

This includes IALP, LLWR paperwork, assessment evidence & reviews To establish relationships with employers and to recruit new learners that are appropriate to the route that the assessor works in and to support any leaner's with additional needs. To have excellent knowledge of the relevant standards to their route and be able to monitor & assess learners against these standards. To be aware of changes within their route both from a qualification aspect to a professional one and to make sure their occupational competency remains high. To write & deliver workshops and teaching sessions.

To ensure that those learners who wish to learn in another language e. g. Welsh have to opportunity to do so. To work closely with colleagues to ensure that assessment decisions are standardised throughout the route To deal with any appeals against their decision in an appropriate & professional way in accordance with company guidelines Once more experience to guide & mentor new assessors and to countersign their work and give appropriate

& critical feedback when necessary To provide statistics to route manager & ensure retention of learners where at all possible.

What is Assessment? Define key principles and concepts on which effective assessment is based - why are these important and how are they used to judge validity and sufficiency during assessment? Assessment is a systematic process to gather information & evidence to determine when learning has occurred. This is done by judging a learner's knowledge & skills against the standards set by the awarding body relevant to the learners chosen programme route.

Assessing allows the assessor to determine competence & thereby make a valid informed decision as to whether the learner has met the required standard. Good assessment requires an assessor to use a variety of techniques such as observation, projects or assignments in order to validate that decision Concepts and principles of assessment are closely related as the principles are directly based on the concepts. The concepts include such aspects as accountability, benchmarking, evaluation, progression & achievement.

Accountability - The assessor should ensure that they are carrying out their role correctly and accountable not only to the learner but also their employer, your own organisation, awarding body and funding organisations.

Benchmarking - involves comparing everything the learner does & work they produce against route specifications & standards and the work of other learners. This is done ensure learners competency, consistency in learning &

standardisation throughout the route Evaluation – evaluation should be an ongoing process throughout all aspect of assessment.

It is critical to the continued success of both learners and organisations and can promote progress and ensure competence by continually obtaining feedback from all interested parties and acting on this where appropriate Progression – the progression of the learner should always be taken into account i. e. what are they going to do in the future and what are they capable of achieving? It is an assessor & training organisations responsibility to ensure that, where appropriate, the learner is encouraged to continue with their education should they wish to do so.

Achievement – achievement is the crux of a course, the learner successfully completing their programme of learning and achieving the qualification.

Assesor are required to use achievement data to compare and analyse data with organisational targets that are often linked to funding received.

Achievement records are an important evaluation tool that assessors can use to evaluate the their own assessing abilities by looking at how many learners start, complete and then progress onto other courses.

Types of assessment – there are different types of assessment starting from initial assessment to formative assessment which is ongoing through the course to summative which occurs at the completion. The Key principle of assessment is based on the mnemonic VASCR; Valid, Authentic, Current, Sufficient & Reliable Valid – assessments should be appropriate & relevant to the learner & route Authentic – the work produced must be solely that of the learner & not been plagiarised.

Current - the work assessed is just late, current & up to date (prior learning can be taken into account if it has occurred within the last 3 years) Sufficient - the assessments must cover all aspects & areas of the relevant standards Reliable - there must be a consistency in the standards & understanding of evidence across a route through course standardisation Other key principles include communication, CPD, Equality & Diversity, fairness, quality assurance, standardisation, and SMART assessing.

Regular clear communication is paramount to the assessment process in maintaining a good relationship with the learner & employer so both know how the learner is doing on the course, in planning visits that are convenient to all and helps keeps the learner motivated. Assessors should also regularly communicate with other assessors, IQA's and potential employers. Fairness & Ethics go hand in hand in assessing, making sure that the assessment process is done honestly and with integrity and that all assessments are appropriate, fit for purpose and decisions are made fairly.

Carrying on from this Quality Assurance & Standardisation also work closely to each other with both being processes that all assessment decisions are meeting the required standards across a route against the correct criteria by all assessor involved in delivering that route. SMART assessing should be evident in all aspects of assessing in particularly the planning stage, where all activities are targets should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic & Time bound.

Explain regulations, legal issues, policies and procedures relevant to assessment, including those for confidentiality, health, safety and welfare.

How can they affect the assessment process? Assessment is guided by many regulations, from the NVQ code of practice & assessment strategies to legal requirements such as the Health & Safety Act 1974 & national legislation like Data Protection Act, Equality Act & Safeguarding requirements to organisation's own policies & procedures.

The NVQ Code of Practice (2006) is the principles and practices set out by the regulatory authority from which qualifications are designed and evaluated against by the appropriate awarding body. The Code of Practice is not used by training providers or centres but by the awarding bodies themselves. It is however imperative that the former know of and are completely aware of the regulations and their purpose. The Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) The main point of this Act puts the duty of care on the employer to ensure the safety of it's employees & anyone on the premises e. g. , customers or contractors.

It requires the employer to produce a Health & safety policy if the business had more than 5 employees and also requires that all employees follow the organisation's Health & Safety policy thereby ensuring the safety & well being of themselves and others. As assessors, Health & Safety encompasses all aspects of your job role, assessors may be required to carry out risk assessments, health & safety monitoring of potential employers and ensure the well being of their learners under their care.

This can also include the emotional welfare of learner and taking into consideration any stress, pressure or personal issues the learner may have and finding ways to minimising these so that the learner still has a coherent

and enjoyable learning experience. This leads into safeguarding issues and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 which all assessors are bound too if they deal with children under the age of 18 or vulnerable adults.

Assessors have a duty of care & responsibility to all their learners to treat them with respect and confidentiality.

Where children and vulnerable adults are concerned, particular attention should be shown with safeguarding as assessors can often be seen as a person in which to confide and therefore be privy to personal information. Organisations often have social media policies where you can't have social contact with your learners, this is as much for the assessors safety as the learners. The same applies for giving learners lifts, accepting gifts etc. Whilst a rapport & good working relationship is the mark of a good assessor a professional relationship must be maintained at all times in order to safeguard all persons involved.

Any concerns about learners should be immediately raised with the Safeguarding officer for your organisation, under no circumstances should an assessor offer to keep secrets or promise not to tell any information divulged to them. An assessment strategy is the guidance laid down by the awarding body which states what experience and knowledge an assessor should have before assessing or teaching a particular qualification. Its purpose is to ensure qualifications are assessed correctly and that the quality of learning and service to the learner is upheld.

An assessment strategy also maintains the training providers reputation by ensuring a quality & standardisation of assessment across all learners and

makes sure that assessor who are occupationally competent in a subject delivers the qualification. Data Protection and Confidentiality come under similar headings, and are regulated by the Data Protection Act 1998.

They require the assessor and organisation to follow strict guidelines called 'data protection principles' and to ensure that all personal information either of learners or fellow assessors is; used fairly and lawfully used for the intended purpose and only kept for a limited time and not longer than necessary all information should only be used in a way that is relevant and is kept safe & secure at all times Confidentiality should be maintained for all learners records, which along with any evidence, should also be stored safely particularly in regards to personal details, records from learner's work place that is being used as evidence and digital or audio recordings. The freedom of information Act 2000 gives all learners the right to request to see any information being held about them.

Evaluate Equality & Diversity (including bilingualism) requirements and their importance in the assessment process Equality and diversity in the broadest terms encompasses the rights of all people not to be discriminated against with regards to race, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation or age as set down in the Equality Act 2010. When working as an assessor equality & diversity should be applied from the start when recruiting a learner by ensuring any learning needs are indentified and supported, and by making sure that the correct programme of learning is selected dependant on those needs.

There is little to gain by signing up learners for a programme merely to fulfil organisational procedures if the learner will struggle or fail on the chosen route. As an assessor all activities, interactions and assessments should be geared towards the learner or group's needs and should always reflect the diversity of the group. All reasonable adjustments should be made to accommodate learners with any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act.

It is of paramount importance that discrimination does not take place by any involved parties of the assessment process and that where feasible no learner is prevented from learning due to a specific need. It is also important that as assessors own views or opinions don't adversely influence any decisions regarding a learner's progress or education. There are occasions where it is learning cannot take place due to assessors own limitations, for example if a learner specifically asked to learn in a language other than English e. g. Welsh.

If the assessor assigned is not fluent in the language and therefore not able to deliver the qualification so efforts must be made to provide the qualification in the language requested. This can sometimes be extremely difficult if the award body doesn't offer standards in the language requested. What contribution can technology make to the assessment process? With technology becoming more ever present in everyday life it can play an important role in the learning & assessment process.

From using iPads to make teaching sessions more interactive and therefore more engaging for the some learners to using Skype for meetings,

technology has a firm place in the overall process. Using video clips or interactive apps to break up a teaching session can re engage a group whose concentration maybe wandering. The reverse of this is understanding the learner dynamic within the teaching session as whilst technology may work for some groups of learners, other groups dependant of age and skill may find technology off putting and be unsure of how to use it.

Encouraging the use of technology can also improve a learner's knowledge & IT skills; this could be done as easily as asking for a written statement to be word processed or an assignment to be emailed to the assessor to promote these skills particularly if a learner wouldn't normally use these as part of their job role. Digital voice recordings (DVR) can be used as an appropriate and more efficient method of assessment than traditional written observations, where photos and video (whilst shouldn't be used as primary evidence) can be used to support and enrich an observation.

E-portfolios are becoming more popular than paper ones, due to ease of accessibility both from learner & assessor as well as the employer. Evidence can be uploaded and accessed at any time and there is little danger of losing work through misplacement as there is with a paper based folder. A learner cannot forget to bring an e-portfolio making assessment more efficient and less time is wasted which is a benefit to all parties concerned with the learners progress.

Online forms Social media such as twitter & forums can be used to impart knowledge to the learner and be used to help maintain CPD. Although most organisations have strict social media policies regarding learners and

personal contact, Facebook pages or groups for example can be used as learning tools and guidance for learners questions and skills. Many organisations have their own moodle or blackboard online sites in order to readily share information with each other as well as online file sharing such as Dropbox.

Explain why occupational competence and continual professional development is important. What value does this have to the assessment process? How can peer & self assessment be used to effectively promote personal responsibility? As an assessor you should continually reflect upon and improve your assessment practice & methods to ensure it meets the requirements set by your organisation, the awarding bodies for your sector & route and any legal requirements.

To assess a particular subject an assessor must be occupationally competent in their specified route, in order to maintain this competency an assessor should make sure they keep up to date with developments both in their field and their route and keep a CPD log (continued professional development). A log is a useful tool for managers to monitor to highlight any areas that an assessor may need support or extra training in, as well as a personal account of any CPD that has occurred, either formal or informal.

This could be achieved through attending events, standardisation meetings and training programmes, taking on board and acting upon feedback wither from learners or other assessors, work experience placements or voluntary work, reading industry magazines, forums & journals or visiting other organisations that specialize in the appropriate field. Shadowing colleagues,

one to one's and appraisals can all be used to question and reflect on your assessment abilities and allow you to improve on your practices and methods by evaluating others methods and using these to expand and enhance your own knowledge and practices.