

Making use of the framework in a vocational context

Words **Graham Herbert**

A core aim of the Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors is to improve the quality of educational assessment by developing the skills, capability and knowledge of those involved in assessment. We look at how an internal verifier like Brian uses the framework in a vocational setting

Since its inception, the Institute has worked with teachers, lecturers and representatives from local authorities as well as tertiary colleges and training institutions to identify those activities that lead to good vocational assessment practices. An outline framework of competencies has been developed based upon the activities of assessors at all levels.

The CIEA website (details below) features the framework in full. It describes the different roles in assessment, ranging from those that help to set assessment strategies and procedures, to those involved in carrying out the assessments.

It enables individuals to identify their role in assessment and to check which activities they are delivering as well as those which are needed to work at a higher level.

Within the framework these roles are matched to their relevant activities. The framework explains the processes involved, the self-development activities required and how to manage and work with others effectively.

To show how the framework will work in practice, we will look at Brian, who is head of the engineering faculty in a training institution, as well as the internal verifier (IV).

INSIDE THE FRAMEWORK

The Professional Framework describes the process of assessment, which comprises three stages; that of preparing for assessment, conducting assessment and then feeding back afterwards. These stages are underpinned by two sets of personal skills, necessary to ensure assessment is effective. These are: performing effectively as an individual, and working with others.

As well as describing a process of assessment and the supporting skills necessary to ensure good practice, the framework also identifies different sets of tasks carried out by different individuals. There are four distinct groups involved in vocational assessment: learners, tutors, subject leaders or heads of department/faculty, often called internal verifiers (IV), as well as heads of assessment or external verifiers. Some consortia also have lead assessors who quality assure the assessment processes across the consortium.

Assessment in the vocational context can also involve employers and industry bodies. We show how it applies to an IV.

Weblink

To find out how this framework can help you to become an effective assessor, visit the IEA website at www.ciea.org.uk

AN OUTLINE PROFESSIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSESSORS

PURPOSE		A PREPARE FOR ASSESSMENT					B CONDUCT AND QUALITY ASSURE ASSESSMENTS				
SCOPE		Designing assessment strategy and assessments					Conducting assessments, assessing outcomes and quality assuring assessments				
ASSESSMENT FUNCTIONS		A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5
ROLE		Review the readiness of the assessment teams and systems	Design the qualification specification and assessment criteria	Interpret assessment requirements of the specification	Design the assessment instrument and criteria	Confirm readiness for assessment	Agree application of the assessment tasks and criteria	Assess learners' outcomes	Ensure consistency of assessment decisions	Select samples of work for verification	Collect assessment data
FOR ASSESSING A GROUP OF LEARNERS OR A BATCH OF LEARNERS' WORK	Set assessment tasks Assess coach/train/mentor	Demonstrate understanding of what to assess, when to assess and how to assess using a variety of assessment techniques	Interpret the assessment requirements of the specification for learners and validate the assessment techniques	Identify opportunities for assessment and set appropriate assessment tasks for learners	Collaborate with colleagues on task setting	Demonstrate understanding of the assessment tasks and criteria	Assess work or evidence of allocated learners in accordance with the assessment criteria and procedures	Standardise own assessments		Collate and record data on learners' performance and provide feedback from learners	

The framework in action: an internal verifier's story

1 Designing an assessment strategy and assessments

At the start of the academic year, Brian, the internal verifier (IV) reminds everyone of their obligations to the assessment policy. He also reminds the team of its combined goals (A1) by pointing them in the direction of the findings of the audit.

He asks engineering tutor, Aisha, to design a new assessment for the engineering specification. This piece of work should be appropriate to unit 2 for this particular line of learning for the new diploma. He ensures that the principles of assessment are applied to the tasks she has in mind (A1) and checks that these are fit not only for her own learners, but also for the learners of her fellow team members (A5). He checks the requirement of the specification and suggests an appropriate range of valid tasks (A3).

Brian also identifies appropriate opportunities for these tasks to be carried out by agreeing with his team an appropriate scheduling of the assessments (A4).

2 Conducting and quality assuring assessments

Brian asks Aisha to lead the team through the assessment tasks, as part of her on-going CPD. He checks her understanding of the criteria and ensures that the rest of the team also understand how to apply it (B1). The team then assess a quota of their learners' work in accordance with the assessment criteria that they have agreed (B2). Following this, each team member will standardise their own work and offer a quota

of the assessments to Brian for moderation (B3). Once this has been agreed by him, he will record the details of the assessments and collate all the results. Each team member then feeds back to the learners using the faculty's agreed procedures and pro forma (B5).

3 Evaluating and using evidence to improve learning

The IV now evaluates the evidence from the learners. (C1) He analyses the data carefully, checking for trends or any unsuspected outcomes. He uses this data to add to the team's evidence of reliability and validity of the assessment (C2).

Brian develops an agreed set of action plans to improve the quality of the assessment, if needed. He determines if any team members are lenient or harsh markers, or inconsistent (C3). He will expect team members to develop learning goals for their learners and suggest ways to improve (C4 & C6).

The wealth of data also allows the rest of the team to manage their own development needs (C5). He can give feedback to the external verifier on the trends identified as well as the indicative grades or marks for that unit. He can also give information to the exams officer, who may need to update spreadsheets required by the awarding body (C6).

4 Managing personal learning and development

The IV can use this feedback to determine each team member's learning goals, as well as those of the learners (D1). He is in a

position to plan a series of learning outcomes that will improve performance across the team and can ask for the monies to deliver training and release his team from timetable duties if necessary (D2).

He shares his action plan with the lead assessor and the external verifier (EV), both of whom may add to the list of goals following the team's development of the assessment (D3). He will also be in a strong position to evaluate any further training the team embarks upon because the criteria have been agreed with the Lead Assessor and external verifier and the objectives of the training are clearly set and based upon evidence (D4).

5 Perform effectively as a member of a team

This process contributed to Aisha's personal development, and to team goals that were discussed at the start of the academic year (E1). In developing the assessment and encouraging close co-operation, Brian has contributed to the setting and achievement of goals for the team as well as himself (E2).

The practices put in place and discussed with other members of the team, the Lead Assessor and the EV and amended in the light of their comments, allowed him to fulfil his commitments to the team and to his line manager (E3). The process will have encouraged him to support others through the changes brought about by this new form of assessment (E4). He will also have a clear record of all actions as well as their completion dates to share with both the lead assessor and the EV.

C GIVE AND ACT ON FEEDBACK

Evaluate and use assessment information to improve learning

C1

Evaluate evidence of learners' progress

C2

Evaluate performance of the assessment

C3

Provide feedback to assessment teams and centres

C4

Provide feedback and guidance to learners

C5

Implement improvements in learning and quality

C6

Report on the impact of assessment

D LEARN AND APPLY LEARNING EFFECTIVELY

Managing personal learning and developing performance

D1

Reflect on performance and use feedback

D2

Plan personal learning and development

D3

Undertake, monitor and apply learning

D4

Evaluate learning and its impact

E WORK WITH OTHERS

Performing effectively as a member of a team

E1

Plan and organise self

E2

Develop and manage teams

E3

Co-operate with others

E4

Develop the learning of others

Evaluate the performance of a group of learners

Assist in evaluating and providing evidence of the validity and reliability of assessments

Receive and act on feedback on the subject's performance

Provide feedback and agree goals and actions with learners for the next stage of learning

Contribute to the plan for centre/team to achieve identified development needs

Discuss learner progress and needs with learners, employers, managers and other stakeholders

Reflect on performance and seek and use feedback to identify areas for learning and development

Develop a clear focus, set learning outcomes and plan for own learning that will result in an improvement in performance

Undertake, apply, monitor and share learning, engaging with relevant knowledge and practice

Evaluate the impact of outcomes and breakthroughs from learning on own practice

Plan and undertake assessment activities to meet all quality requirements and deadlines

Contribute to the setting and achievement of the goals of an assessment team

Share information and practice and agree and fulfil commitments to others

Encourage, coach/mentor and support others to develop their competence and to adapt to change