

What is Recognition?

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Sometimes Recognition is called Recognition of Prior Learning or RPL. Many people develop skills through their working life that are not always formally recognised. The recognition assessment tool is a practical way of enabling employees in the community services sector to have these skills officially recognised and gain national qualifications.

Recognition assessment is based on the new national competency standards. These standards set out the knowledge and skills needed for the job role and specific job functions (tasks) performed within these job roles.

The recognition assessment tool is a practical set of tools that enables employees in the community services sector to demonstrate their knowledge and skills as part of their everyday work through observations and practical questions rather than written tests and exams.

What's in it for me?

By taking part in the recognition process, you will be able to:

- Be officially recognised for what you already know and do
- Make any relevant training you have already done count towards a qualification
- Undertake an assessment process for the current knowledge and skills you possess
- Qualify for a national qualification or work out your next steps to complete one.

The qualification you gain is nationally recognised. This official recognition of your skills improves your work and promotion prospects.

Assessment – how it works

As far as possible, recognition assessment will take place as part of your work, and make use of any evidence you already have to demonstrate your knowledge and skills. For example, this evidence could be references or training records from another employer and / or workplace documents that you complete as part of your normal job role such as:

- Case notes
- Incident reports
- Program plans
- Activity plans/ programs

Typically, the best way of working out if someone can perform these activities to the required standard is often a combination of:

- Working out what you already know
- Observing you doing the work
- Asking you some questions about it
- Asking someone familiar with your work, such as a team leader/coordinator/manager, to verify your ability to apply these skills in a real work situation over time.

The idea is about showing, through a variety of ways or 'evidence types', that you are competent in the area of work, rather than about how well you do in an artificial test situation. You can have a say in how you are assessed so that the process is valid, fair, flexible and reliable.

The national assessment guidelines require that the evidence gathered is:

- **Valid:** It must do what it sets out to do, that is, it must be directly related to the requirements set out in the competency standard.
- **Current:** It should reflect current rather than out-of-date knowledge and skills.
- **Authentic:** There must be no doubt that the evidence is genuine and refers to the person being assessed.
- **Sufficient:** It should be enough to cover the range of skills and knowledge set out in the competency standards.

The person assisting you must be nationally qualified and competent as an assessor, and be in the technical area of work for which they are assessing. In some situations, the assessor may work as part of a partnership or an assessment team to make sure he or she has the right combination of skills and qualifications.