forestworks
LEARNING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT
FOREST, WOOD, PAPER & TIMBER PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

GROWING SKILLS

A GUIDE FOR TRAINERS
to address foundation skills in the forest, wood, paper and timber products industry

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Foreword

More than seven million Australian adults don't have the literacy and numeracy skills needed to participate fully in today's workforce[1]. That's a serious issue and we all need to increase our efforts to improve these skills in as many ways as we can. If nothing is done, Australia will struggle to meet the workforce needs of the future, and many workers will not have the skills to access changing work roles and benefit from employment opportunities.

The importance of literacy and numeracy skills in the forest, wood, paper and timber products industry is well recognised. Workers need to be able to read signs and interpret key information in standard operating procedures to be able to carry out work effectively and to stay safe at work. Workers may also be required to operate high speed computer-based equipment, operate heavy machinery, follow manuals, work in teams, use chemicals, use GPS-based equipment, interpret computer-generated instructions, record carbon outputs, produce complex reports – all tasks that include a component of language, literacy and numeracy. And expectations of workers grow as workplaces become increasingly complex and as technology advances.

Many employers say that their businesses are affected by insufficient levels of language, literacy and numeracy. Inadequate skills can result in all sorts of issues in the workplace, including accidents and incidents, lower levels of productivity, excessive wastage, poor completion of workplace documents and issues with compliance.[2]

It's essential that workers have the language, literacy and numeracy skills to be able to work effectively and productively, and the training sector has an important role to play in developing those skills. There is no quick fix and no one source that will solve everything, but the situation will be improved if we all contribute.

Take some time to look through this resource and think about how you can contribute to building higher skills.

Michael Hartman
Chief Executive Officer
ForestWorks

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey: Summary Results*, 2006.

2 Australian Industry Group, *National Workforce Literacy Project Report*, May 2010.

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1 Introduction

How can trainers use this guide?

This guide has been written for vocational trainers who deliver training in the forest, wood, paper and timber products industry. It has been developed to provide information about language, literacy and numeracy skills, and to offer tips and strategies to address low skills in training programs.

The guide will prompt you to think about whether learners have the language, literacy and numeracy skills to undertake a training program. When you meet new learners you start to think about whether they have the skills to be able to cope with a program of study. Some do and some don't. How can you assist those who don't? Perhaps they may need to develop some language, literacy and numeracy skills before the vocational training starts? Or perhaps some targeted assistance from you, the vocational trainer, will help them to build the skills required?

Think about these questions as you read through the resource and think about how you can adapt your delivery methods to support the language, literacy and numeracy skills of your learners.

What's in this guide?

The guide has four main parts:

- *The Australian Core Skills Framework* – this is the benchmarking document that defines levels of language, literacy and numeracy for the vocational training and education sector
- *How to develop core skills* – this section offers case studies, tips and sample activities to support the development of language, literacy and numeracy skills in vocational training
- *Foundation skills examples* – this is a list of typical foundation skills required of workers in the forest, wood, paper and timber products industry
- *Where to go for assistance* – lists resources and funding to help develop the skills required.

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The terms used

There are a number of terms that describe the underpinning communication skills required for participation in the workplace, the community and in adult education and training. These terms include:

- language, literacy and numeracy (or LLN), a term that has been around for some years and refers to English language (listening and speaking), reading, writing and numeracy
- core skills, which came with the development of the Australian Core Skills Framework and includes learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy
- foundation skills, defined by some as LLN skills together with employability skills[3], and defined by others as the core skills together with digital literacy[4].

These three terms: LLN, core skills and foundation skills are used interchangeably in this guide.

3 Employability skills, as defined by Australian Chamber of Commerce and Business Council of Australia in *Employability Skills for the Future*, 2002, funded by the Commonwealth of Australia. The Employability Skills include: communication, teamwork, problem-solving, initiative and enterprise, planning and organising, self-management, learning, and technology.

4 Draft Foundation Skills Training Package, developed by Innovation and Business Skills Australia (IBSA), viewed September 2012.

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2 The Australian Core Skills Framework

An overview

The ACSF is a framework that provides a detailed picture of performance against the five core skills of:

- Learning
- Reading
- Writing
- Oral communication
- Numeracy.

Each core skill is described in terms of five levels, ranging from level 1 (low level performance) to level 5 (high level performance).

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Skill indicators

Levels of performance are described using indicators. Learning, Reading, Writing, Oral Communication have two indicators and Numeracy has three, as shown in the following table.

ACSF Performance Indicators		
Core skill	**Indicator number**	**Description**
Learning	.01	Active awareness of self as a learner, planning and management of learning
	.02	Acquisition and application of practical strategies that facilitate learning
Reading	.03	Audience, purpose and meaning-making
	.04	Reading strategies
Writing	.05	Audience, purpose and meaning-making
	.06	The mechanics of writing
Oral Communication	.07	Speaking
	.08	Listening
Numeracy	.09	Identifying mathematical information and meaning in activities and texts
	.10	Using and applying mathematical knowledge and problem solving processes
	.11	Communicating and representing mathematics

The indicators are numbered according to the core skill using a decimal system, where the whole number refers to the level and the decimal component refers to the core skill. So, 4.04 represents level 4 Reading and a person who has demonstrated level 3 Learning skills has achieved both 3.01 and 3.02.

Skill levels and performance variables

The ACSF takes into account that language, literacy and numeracy skills are carried out in different contexts. Taking these varied contexts into account is important when considering a candidate's performance. The four variables described in the ACSF include:

- the nature and degree of **support** the person needs to complete a task (people operating at lower levels will need more support than those operating at higher levels, who can work with less assistance)
- the person's familiarity with the **context** in which the task is carried out (if the task is really familiar it will be easier than a task that is unfamiliar)
- the **complexity of the text** (short and simple texts are easier to deal with than specialised documents that have information embedded)
- the **complexity of the task** (or how many steps are involved to be able to complete a task – tasks with one or two steps are easier to complete than tasks that have several steps).

The following table is the performance variables grid from page 7 of the ACSF. It describes the appropriate variables for each level of skill. It's really important to take these variables into account when making judgements about a person's performance.

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5 LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE	ACSF Performance Variables Grid			
	SUPPORT	CONTEXT	TEXT COMPLEXITY	TASK COMPLEXITY
1	Works alongside an expert/ mentor where prompting and advice can be provided	Highly familiar contexts Concrete and immediate Very restricted range of contexts	Short and simple Highly explicit purpose Limited, highly familiar vocabulary	Concrete tasks of 1 or 2 steps Processes include locating, recognising
2	May work with an expert/ mentor where support is available if requested	Familiar and predictable contexts Limited range of contexts	Simple familiar texts with clear purpose Familiar vocabulary	Explicit tasks involving a limited number of familiar steps Processes include identifying, simple interpreting, simple sequencing
3	Works independently and uses own familiar support resources	Range of familiar contexts Some less familiar contexts Some specialisation in familiar/known contexts	Routine texts May include some unfamiliar elements, embedded information and abstraction Includes some specialised vocabulary	Tasks involving a number of steps Processes include sequencing, integrating, interpreting, simple extrapolating, simple inferencing, simple abstracting
4	Works independently and initiates and uses support from a range of established resources	Range of contexts, including some that are unfamiliar and/or unpredictable Some specialisation in less familiar/known contexts	Complex texts Embedded information Includes specialised vocabulary Includes abstraction and symbolism	Complex task organisation and analysis involving application of a number of steps Processes include extracting, extrapolating, inferencing, reflecting, abstracting
5	Autonomous learner who accesses and evaluates support from a broad range of sources	Broad range of contexts Adaptability within and across contexts Specialisation in one or more contexts	Highly complex texts Highly embedded information Includes highly specialised language and symbolism	Sophisticated task conceptualisation, organisation and analysis Processes include synthesising, critically reflecting, evaluating, recommending

For detail about the ACSF, or to order your own copy, go to www.innovation.gov.au/Skills/LiteracyAndNumeracy/AustralianCoreSkillsFramework.

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Domains of communication

The ACSF has three domains of communication in which people use core skills:

- personal and community
- workplace and employment
- education and training.

For each core skill, at each level, and in each domain of communication, sample activities are provided. The sample activities are really useful because they give actual examples of what the skill levels can look like. For example, at level 2 writing, the sample activities for the workplace and employment domain include:

- entering familiar information into a database using familiar software
- writing a brief message for a fellow worker, for example a shift change over note
- recording a routine phone message.

The table on the following page notes typical activities carried out by workers in the pulp and paper industry, for each of the five skills, at each level.

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Sample activities in pulp and paper industry

	Learning	Reading	Writing	Oral Communication	Numeracy
LEVEL 1	Identifies and approaches a more experienced worker for assistance	Recognises safety symbols Reads straight forward, uncomplicated diagrams	Writes using routine workplace specific words and abbreviations, for example: SOP	Expresses opinion in short dialogue about possible causes of machine failure	Identifies and compares familiar items, for example: checks weight or length of product against job ticket
LEVEL 2	Uses work instruction codes and abbreviations to find information	Reads dials and scales on equipment	Writes a brief message about shift changeover notes	Listens to short explicit instructions to learn new workplace procedure	Records numbers or quantities in logbook
LEVEL 3	Participates in quality assurance processes considering own and others priorities	Reads and follows information in manuals and work instructions	Writes clear sequenced instructions for routine tasks, for example: prepares workplace timetable for start up or shut down procedures	Gives clear sequenced instructions of several steps	Uses appropriate technology to measure and record data and report and act on results
LEVEL 4	Actively seeks feedback from others to improve	Reads a complex diagram and text to identify how to deal with a technical fault	Writes a SOP for a process involving several work stations	Presents issue/ agenda item at a tool box talk or workplace meeting	Uses job instructions to make up a mixture based on ratios and selects Measures and makes up mixture to any required amount correctly
LEVEL 5	Manages others to achieve learning outcomes using a systematic process. Manage own learning through use of appropriate software, for example: project management	Follows a complex flow chart in order to identify and distil relevant information, for example: tracks source of non-compliance through workplace Reads and evaluates a report from an OHS consultant recommending new safety practices that should be implemented Reads detailed manual for a new, complex machine and highlights key information to be included in operator manual	Adapts task instruction to suit changes in technology Writes a detailed procedural text	Leads and facilitates group discussion exploring solutions to specific problems with technology	Constructs tables and graphs to ascertain relationships between variables Investigates a logistical problem and explain in a mathematical solution

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Skills presentation

For each Skill indicator, at each level of the ACSF, there is a page that describes performance. The format is the same for each. The following table is from page 81 of the ACSF, which shows the typical format.

Skill and level (Writing at level 2)

Level and indicator number (2.06)

Skill indicator description

Performance variables (for level 2)

Focus area and performance features, which are specific to this skill (writing) indicator (.06) at this level (2)

Writing Level 2			
2.06	Produces familiar text types using simple vocabulary, grammatical structures and conventions		
Support	Context	Text complexity	Task Complexity
May work with an expert/mentor where support is available if requested	Familiar and predictable contexts Limited range of contexts	Simple familiar texts with clear purpose Familiar vocabulary	Explicit tasks involving a limited number of familiar steps Processess include identifying, simple interpreting, simple sequencing
Focus area	Performance features include:		
Vocabulary	• Extends key vocabulary to include personal details of self, family and relevant others, most aspects of everyday life and other vocabulary of personal significance		
Grammar	• Uses action words and simple verb tenses in sentences of one or two clauses • Uses adjectives, pronouns and prepositions to describe people, places, things and events • Uses simple cohesive devices such as and, but, then • Uses time/location markers such as first, then, yesterday, in, at		
Punctuation	Uses basic punctuation, e.g. capital letters, full stops and commas		
Spelling	• Attempts spelling by using familiar letter patterns, including phonetic letter patterns, common stems, suffixes and prefixes • Uses a spellchecker with support • Refers to a dictionary to check spelling and vocabulary choices • Shows some variation in spelling that does not interfere with the overall meaning		
Legibility	• Writes legible script • Consistently uses upper or lower case, and print or cursive script		

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Using the ACSF

The ACSF provides a benchmark to assess:

- the core skills required of the training program (units of competency)
- an individual's core skills
- the foundation skills required of the workplace.

Finding ACSF skills in units of competency

Before you can design an effective training program and support learners to develop the appropriate skills, you need to unpack (identify) the core skills from units of competency and work out what learners are required to know. One way of doing that is to use the 'trigger word' method.

Trigger words

The following table lists a number of trigger words for each foundation skill. The words can be used to help to identify where the learning, reading, writing, oral communication or numeracy skills exist in a unit. The list is not exhaustive and you can add your own words to it. Sometimes words will be repeated across two or more skills. For example, 'follow instructions' might apply to the ACSF skills of reading or oral communication. In this instance, you will need to consider the application of the skill in the context in which training is delivered to decide how learners are expected to 'follow instructions' – either by reading or listening, or a combination of both.

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Learning	Reading	Writing	Oral communication	Numeracy
apply planning and organising skills assess client enquiry build on prior knowledge and experience clarify meaning or advice coaching and mentoring coordinate determine and prioritise follow step by step instructions identify and assess implement solutions observational skills organise ideas organise and monitor progress plan and organise tasks problem-solve select from processes take follow up action	analyse apply legislative, organisation and site requirements and procedures appropriate documentation check following instructions and procedures follow written procedures identify interpret legislation provide in readily accessible manner understand source written reporting	complete reports communicate document/ documented enter information identify list maintain records monitor organise plan record data report response	address advise allocate clarify confirm contribute communicate coordinate deliver discuss encourage explain follow-up follow instructions or procedures listen identify make suggestions monitor negotiate participate provide question share information seek and receive feedback refer to report request resolve response sought suggest supervise	analyse budgetary guidelines calculate collate data collect data cost data analysis directions estimate measurements perform quantity scheduled

The trigger words have been highlighted in the following two units to identify where the core skills exist. Take a look over the examples and think about the use of core skills in relation to the job task specified in the unit.

The first unit is a core communication type unit, and the second has more of a technical focus.

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Sample units with trigger words highlighted

EXTRACT FROM: FPICOR2201B Work effectively in the forest and forest products industry	
Unit descriptor	This unit describes the outcomes required to work effectively in the forest and forest products industry. It requires the ability to identify and follow legal and procedural requirements, complete daily work activities, and identify opportunities for professional development. These work functions would be carried out under routine supervision within organisational guidelines.
ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. Identify and follow legal and procedural requirements	1.1 Applicable occupational health and safety (OHS), environmental, legislative and organisational requirements relevant to working effectively in the forest and forest products industry are identified and followed 1.2 Key legal and procedural principles relating to work order are checked with appropriate personnel in line with organisational requirements 1.3 Legal and procedural requirements are clarified with appropriate personnel as required to ensure consistency of interpretation and application 1.4 Procedures are followed to ensure applicable legislative and procedural requirements are ethically implemented and to required standards
2. Prioritise and complete daily work activities	2.1 Own role and responsibilities are checked with appropriate personnel in line with organisational requirements 2.2 Work tasks are identified, prioritised and completed within designated timeframes in line with work order 2.3 Factors affecting the achievement of work tasks are promptly reviewed and reported to appropriate personnel 2.4 Equipment is selected appropriate to work task requirements and is used in line with manufacturer recommendations 2.5 Work is consistent with organisational and legislative requirements related to cultural diversity, access and equity, and equal employment opportunity
3. Identify and access future learning opportunities	3.1 Feedback on performance is actively sought from appropriate personnel to confirm quality of performance and identify areas for improvement 3.2 Opportunities for professional development are established in consultation with appropriate personnel in line with organisational procedures 3.3 Appropriate support is sought to assist and improve own performance to achieve personal and organisational goals and objectives 3.4 Information regarding learning and competency development is recorded and reported in line with organisational requirements

Legislation and organisational documents (or a summary of key points from such documents) usually need to be read and interpreted so they can be applied to a job task.

The work order, or work instruction, is often a written document that needs to be read and interpreted.

Checking and clarifying is usually an oral process, but it could also be done via email

Scheduling work and working within timeframes is important

Planning work and anticipating problems is an ACSF Learning skill

Asking for feedback about your own work is a particular skill – usually done orally

Looking after your own professional development is about Learning.

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REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE
Required skills • Technical skills sufficient to use and maintain relevant equipment • Communication skills and interpersonal techniques sufficient to interact appropriately with colleagues and others in the workplace • Literacy skills sufficient to accurately locate, record and report workplace information • Numeracy skills sufficient to estimate, measure and calculate time required to complete a task • Problem solving skills sufficient to complete work tasks within designated timeframes; establish opportunities for personal professional development; review and accurately identify work requirements
Required knowledge • Applicable commonwealth, state or territory legislation, regulations, standards, codes of practice and established safe practices relevant to the full range of processes for working effectively in the forest and forest products industry • Environmental protection requirements, including the safe disposal of waste material • Organisational and site standards, requirements, policies and procedures relevant to working effectively in the forest and forest products industry • Workplace communication channels, protocols and procedures • Organisational structure and reporting channels • Workplace safety and emergency procedures • Role of forests, forestry and forest products in carbon capture and storage • Life cycle of forests and forest products • Terms and conditions of employment • Established communication channels and protocols • Problem identification and resolution strategies and common fault finding techniques • Types of tools and equipment and procedures for their safe use and maintenance • Appropriate mathematical procedures for estimating and measuring, including calculating time to complete tasks • Procedures for recording and reporting workplace information

EVIDENCE GUIDE	
Overview of assessment	A person who demonstrates competency in this unit must be able to provide evidence that they can safely and efficiently plan and supervise the implementation of seed collection activities within applicable environmental, legislative and organisational guidelines
Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit	The evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit must be relevant to, and satisfy, all of the requirements of the elements of this unit and include demonstration of: • following applicable Commonwealth, State or Territory legislative and regulatory requirements and codes of practice relevant to working effectively in the forest and forest products industry • following organisational policies and procedures relevant to working effectively in the forest and forest products industry • the safe use of relevant equipment to complete work tasks within designated timeframes • participation in processes to improve professional development

Interacting appropriately requires an understanding that there are different ways of talking to different people in different situations. This can take practise, especially when people are new to a workplace.

Terms and conditions of employment are not only a work contract, but also understanding payslips and leave requirements.

It's important to keep work to schedule – to break up work tasks into parts of the day or week. Many workplaces also require logs to be kept – another task that requires core skills.

This unit requires a competent learner to have the following core skill levels:

Learning	2
Reading	2
Writing	2
Oral Communication	3

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EXTRACT FROM: FPIFGM3201B Manage seed collection	
Unit descriptor	This unit describes the outcomes required to plan and monitor the implementation of seed collection or sowing programs. The unit includes collection of native and non-native species.
ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
Plan seed collection	1.1 Applicable occupational health and safety (OHS), environmental, legislative and organisational requirements relevant to managing seed collection are identified and followed 1.2 Site environmental protection measures are identified and adhered to in line with relevant legislation and regulations 1.3 Seeding and/or planting program is analysed and required seed characteristics and implementation issues are identified 1.4 Seed collection opportunities are identified and a suitable area for seed collection is determined and documented 1.5 Method of seed collection is selected and quantity, cost and impacts on provenances and species to be collected are determined and documented 1.6 Required approvals are identified, sought and obtained from relevant authorities 1.7 Measurable performance indicators, specifications and targets are determined and documented 1.8 Seed collection plan and its performance indicators are clearly documented and communicated to appropriate personnel
Implement and monitor seed collection	2.1 Resources required for seed collection are coordinated and scheduled and required documentation is completed clearly and accurately 2.2 Relevant individuals, bodies and groups are consulted as required using appropriate interpersonal techniques 2.3 Seed collection plan is implemented and monitored in line with quality standards for seed collection 2.4 Systematic checks are carried out to ensure compliance requirements relevant to seed collection activities are adhered to 2.5 Adjustments to seed collection activities are made as required and communicated to appropriate personnel 2.6 Communication with others is established and maintained in line with OHS requirements 2.7 Limitations are identified and assistance is sought as required in line with workplace procedures

Legislation and organisational documents (or a summary of key points from such documents) usually need to be read and interpreted so they can be applied to a job task.

Information about seed collecting opportunities may be identified on a map, or written into a report.

A plan needs to be written and communicated – the 'communication' could be written (e.g. Email or work instruction) or through a formal or informal oral presentation.

Consultation could be an oral or written process – sometimes both.

Data from seed collection includes various information about weights of seed, location, species, time, date, who it was collected by. Analysis of this information will require higher order skills.

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Review seed collection	3.1 Data and documentation from seed collection are assessed and evaluated to confirm techniques, methodologies and budgets are in line with plan 3.2 Issues and impediments to seed collection activities and program costs are identified and documented 3.3 Cost benefit analysis is prepared and recommendations are made, based on the analysis of data and identified issues 3.4 Results of seed collection are clearly communicated and disseminated to appropriate personnel 3.5 Seed collection process is recorded and reported to the appropriate personnel

Different personnel may require different types of communication and presentation styles.

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Required skills

- Technical skills sufficient to use and maintain relevant tools, machinery and equipment; collate and assess information against specified criteria; supervise operational staff and contractors to achieve specific outcomes; recognise common diseases, pests and nutritional deficiencies; efficiently and safely manage the extraction of collected material
- Communication skills sufficient to use appropriate communication and interpersonal techniques with colleagues and others, including landholders, and internal and external bodies and groups
- Literacy skills sufficient to record and report workplace information; maintain documentation; write reports and submissions in appropriate style and format
- Numeracy skills sufficient to interpret numerical data; identify quantities and costings
- Problem solving skills sufficient to identify problems and equipment faults; demonstrate appropriate response procedures

Problem solving is an aspect of the core skill of Learning

Required knowledge

- Applicable commonwealth, state or territory legislation, regulations, standards, codes of practice and established safe practices relevant to the full range of processes for managing seed collection
- Environmental protection requirements, including the safe disposal of waste material
- Organisational and site standards, requirements, policies and procedures for managing seed collection
- Environmental risks and hazards
- Flowering biology of the target
- Biological signs that indicate that the seed crop is ready to be collected
- Procedures to extract and handle seed from collected material, including handling procedures of the seed crop after picking
- Treatment and documentation requirements of extracted seed
- Seed collection methods
- Established communication channels and protocols
- Problem identification and resolution strategies, and common fault finding techniques
- Types of tools and equipment, and procedures for their safe use and maintenance
- Appropriate mathematical procedures for estimating and measuring, including calculating time to complete tasks
- Procedures for recording and reporting workplace information

Understanding 'biological signs' will probably require reading information and interpreting diagrams or graphics of flowers.

Understanding treatment requirements and documenting information about seed would require reading reference materials, possibly charts and tables, and also recording information in charts and tables.

Working within timeframes and scheduling tasks is an important part of most jobs and often incorporates digital literacy skills.

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EVIDENCE GUIDE	
Overview of assessment	A person who demonstrates competency in this unit must be able to provide evidence that they can safely and efficiently plan and supervise the implementation of seed collection activities within applicable environmental, legislative and organisational guidelines
Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit	The evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit must be relevant to, and satisfy, all of the requirements of the elements of this unit and include demonstration of: • following applicable commonwealth, state or territory legislative and regulatory requirements and codes of practice relevant to managing seed collection • following organisational policies and procedures relevant to managing seed collection • developing measurable performance indicators, specifications and targets and a seed collection plan within specified budgetary guidelines • coordinating and scheduling resources, and managing the work of others to achieve specific outcomes • monitoring seed collection operations, ensuring that relevant quality standards are followed • documenting results from seed collection activities and preparing a report for dissemination to relevant personnel

This unit requires a competent learner to have the following core skill levels:

Learning	3
Reading	3
Writing	4
Oral Communication	4
Numeracy	4

The core skills highlighted in the unit should become an integral part of the training program.

A qualification summary

Core skill summaries are available for many qualifications in the FPI11 Forest and Forest Products Training Package and the FPP10 Pulp and Paper Manufacturing Industry Training Package.

The summaries provide information about the ACSF levels of a competent learner – they are not entry requirements or prerequisites for training; they represent the level of core skills that learners should work towards in their training.

The following pages include a core skills summary for the FPI30111 Certificate III in Forest Growing and Management. Read through the notes on the right side of the page for an explanation of the information included.

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FPI30111 Certificate III in Forest Growing and Management												
Core units	**Learning**		**Reading**		**Writing**		**Oral Comm**		**Numeracy**			
FPICOR2201B Work effectively in the forest and forest products industry	2.01	2.02	2.03	2.04	2.05	2.06	3.07	3.08	–	–	–	
FPICOR2202B Communicate and interact effectively in the workplace	2.01	2.02	2.03	2.04	2.05	2.06	3.07	3.08	2.09	2.10	–	
FPICOR3201B Implement safety, health and environment policies and procedures	3.01	3.02	3.03	3.04	3.05	3.06	3.07	3.08	2.09	2.10	2.11	
FPICOR3203B Evaluate fire potential and prevention	3.01	3.02	2.03	2.04	3.05	3.06	2.07	2.08	2.09	2.10	2.11	

Performance Variables

Level 2: Simple familiar texts and vocabulary with clear purpose; with support available if requested; a limited range of contexts; and limited steps in the work process.

Level 3: Routine texts; working independently in a range of familiar contexts in tasks involving a number of steps in the work process.

A glance over the levels and indicators allows the vocational trainer to get a picture of the core skill levels of a competent learner.

The performance variables statements reinforce the appropriate variables for the level of skill.

Core Skill	Indicator	Indicator description	Summary of key core skills
Learning	2.01 3.01	Attempts new tasks/activities with an explicit purpose containing a limited number of steps OR may involve simple extrapolation and inferencing Identifies the main steps required to complete a familiar task OR draws on prior knowledge to identify the nature and scope of new tasks in routine situations	To identify and prioritise work tasks; select and use appropriate equipment; identify and establish opportunities for professional development; identify and follow correct procedures and processes; organise duties, equipment and materials according to SHE requirements; propose and provide changes to work processes; and. evaluate, monitor and control fire risks and hazards;
	2.02 3.02	Applies some prior knowledge and skills to a new task OR makes some explicit connections between new information/ideas and own prior knowledge and experience	

The summary written for each skill includes the types of tasks that should be incorporated into the training program for the core units of the qualification.

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Core Skill	Indicator	Indicator description	Summary of key core skills
Reading	2.03 3.03	Identifies texts in the immediate environment OR begins to reflect on the usefulness of a selected text for the purpose	To identify key OHS information in environmental, legislative and organisational requirements; interpret work instructions; access and interpret information from a range of sources, including signage, MSDS, company procedures, charts and plans, checklists, bulletins and weather condition reports.
	2.04 3.04	Begins to skim and scan familiar texts OR uses knowledge of text structures and features as an aid to skimming and scanning	
Writing	2.05 3.05	Writes factual or personal information using notes/ dot points OR produces a range of text types, both familiar and some unfamiliar Recognises that texts have a structure OR sequences writing to produce cohesive text	To record learning and competency development information; convey instructions using communication modes such as email and fax; complete incident reports, environmental reports, risk assessments, hazard checklists and SHE reports; note meetings goals and outcomes; use email, write notes and complete simple workplace proformas or documents.
	2.06 3.06	Extends key vocabulary to include most aspects of everyday life OR draws on a vocabulary which is sufficiently broad so that a relevant work is usually available	
Oral Communication	2.07 3.07	Demonstrates language use appropriate to some different interactional purposes OR uses structure and register appropriate for a range of purposes Relies on facial expression and gestures to clarify or confirm meaning OR uses interactional strategies to support effective communication	To clarify legal and procedural requirements, clarify own work role and responsibilities with appropriate personnel; seek feedback on performance and appropriate support and mentoring; receive, respond to and convey instructions accurately; conduct verbal reporting; participate in meeting processes; communicate with co-workers using language and mannerisms that are socially and culturally acceptable; and report potential fires, hazards and SHE issues.
	2.08 3.08	Comprehends language used in a limited range of contexts OR derives meaning from language used for a range of purposes Recognises vocabulary related to personal and everyday life OR comprehends both everyday vocabulary and vocabulary from more specific contexts	

This information is provided to help trainers to design training programs that incorporate tasks to develop appropriate core skills (or foundation skills) for the job.

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Numeracy	2.09	Identifies and interprets simple mathematical information in familiar and simple oral instructions and written texts	To access and interpret delivery dockets, graphic instructions, charts, MSDS, maps, diagrams, work schedules and job risk assessments; apply visual communications using electronic and mechanical signals; estimate, measure and calculate time required to complete tasks; and inspect weather reports for changing temperatures and conditions.
	2.10	Uses personal and informal methods or calculator/ technological processes to calculate	
	2.11	Measures and estimates length, mass, capacity/ volume, time and temperature using simple instruments and familiar unit measurements	

Skills assessment

It's very helpful for trainers and assessors to have information about learners' core skill levels before they undertake a training program. This information could be collected in different ways; such as through a pre-assessment, which could be either indicative or diagnostic.

Indicative skills assessment

Many organisations use indicative assessments as a quick way to determine whether a potential learner has the core skills required for a training program. It's a 'ballpark' approach to assessment to indicate whether a more in-depth assessment is required. It can take many forms.

It may include a short informal chat with the learner where an assessor can begin to develop a picture of the candidate's oral communication (speaking and listening), focussing on questions to explore the candidate's educational/work background, interests and approaches to learning. It could also include the completion of a candidate information form, self-assessment or an enrolment form.

This process often provides enough information to indicate whether the candidate has the core skills required to be able to complete a specific training program.

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SCENARIO **An indicative assessment**

Andrew works for a small RTO and has a lot of experience in indentifying whether a potential learner has the skills required to complete a training program.

'One of the simplest ways to get a feel for writing and comprehension skills is an enrolment form or other simple questionnaire that may be filled in at the start of a training session. This is common where people are only doing short courses outside of a qualification. I observe the learners' behaviours; are they fluid or hesitant and leaving gaps in paperwork? Then I pick up enrolment forms observe the quality of completion of each one, the standard of writing, spelling level, questions left blank... in some cases learners may not be able to spell their name or street address, says Andrew.

'If I observe someone stressing over the document, I get them to move on by saying something "Let's get on, I'll catch up with those who haven't completed their forms and we'll finish it later". Then I can have some one to one time with the learner.'

This type of process can indicate that a candidate has difficulties in completing simple core skills tasks, and there could be benefits in a deeper exploration of the candidate's skills to diagnose the skill performance against the ACSF, to determine where skills gaps exist.

Diagnostic skills assessment

Diagnostic assessment is more in-depth and takes more time. It is usually carried out on a one-to-one basis and should include consideration of the candidate's background (determined through conversation), to choose the activities or tasks that would be appropriate, for the particular skills to be diagnosed. This approach ensures that the variables that can affect performance are taken into account.

The following scenario provides an example of how a diagnostic ACSF assessment may be carried out.

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SCENARIO An ACSF assessment

Greyson was really keen to enrol in the Certificate III in Forest Growing and Management. He completed a preliminary student information form at XRX Training. Sarah, who dealt with enrolments and inductions at XRX, noticed that he had difficulty in both reading the terms included on the form and in writing the appropriate responses. Sarah was concerned by Greyson's core skill performance and thought he might struggle with the requirements of the training for the qualification he wanted to undertake, so she referred him to Christina for a diagnostic ACSF assessment, and made a time for the assessment to be carried out.

When they met, Christina put Greyson at ease and explained that the skills check she was about to carry out wasn't a test, it was a way of working out what Greyson's core skill levels were, to help work out the best training program for him. She chatted away asking about his background and his interests, gathering information about his oral communication skills. Then she asked him to complete a self-assessment task to identify where he thought his skills were at. Christina gleaned that he had quite low self-esteem and was very concerned that he couldn't complete the forms in the right way. She reassured him that was ok, and it was also ok to ask for help.

After identifying that Greyson really liked football, Christina located a low level reading and writing task from her bank of 45 assessment tasks that she thought he would be comfortable with. After he completed the task with a little support, she located another that included numeracy tasks based on the AFL ladder. Then she chose a task that included a procedural text about manual handling – Christina knew that the text would be quite unfamiliar, but she wanted to see if he had the skills to be able to access key information.

After Greyson had completed four tasks and had a lengthy chat, Christina had collected enough information to be able to complete a profile of Greyson's core skills. She explained that she'd write up a summary and forward it to both Greyson and his trainer.

The short report concluded that in comparison to the ACSF qualification summary (of a learner competent in the Certificate III in Forest Growing and Management) Greyson's performance identified a skills gap in writing and numeracy of one level. Christina concluded that Greyson would be able to manage the training program, but he would need some assistance to build his writing and numeracy skills.
Her report suggested various strategies that the vocational trainer could use to help build the appropriate skills, as well as identifying some specific learning activities.

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Christina's bank of 45 assessment tasks provides her with many activities to select from to suit the background of the candidate. The completion of four or five tasks out of her bank would usually provide her with enough information to be able to judge performance against the ACSF.

A bank of ACSF assessment tasks is available at www.precisionconsultancy.com.au/acs_framework.

Who carries out ACSF assessments?

While this guide demonstrates the usefulness of being aware of learners ACSF levels to provide appropriate training, there are currently no regulations or standards that specify that RTOs need to carry out LLN assessments based on the ACSF. Nor are there regulations about who can carry out the ACSF assessments, should an RTO choose to do so.

Ideally anyone who carries out assessments in the VET sector would have the Assessor Skill Set, as identified in Standard 15.4 of the *Standards for National VET Regulator Registered Training Organisations* (or Standard 1.4 of the *Australian Quality Training Framework*). People with little or no knowledge of the ACSF could carry out an indicative assessment, with some guidance about how to make a candidate comfortable and about good practice in assessment.

To carry out a diagnostic ACSF assessment, the assessor would need to have considerable knowledge of the ACSF. Again there are no standards that determine how that knowledge is defined, but being competent in the units TAELLN401A Address adult language, literacy and numeracy skills (which introduces the concepts of working with the ACSF) and TAELLN501B Support the development of adult language, literacy and numeracy skills (which advances skills in working with the ACSF) would be a recommended minimum.

The LLN focussed qualifications recently added to the TAE10 Training and Education Training Package would also provide suitable skills and knowledge to conduct diagnostic ACSF assessments. Those qualifications are:

- TAE70110 Vocational Graduate Certificate in Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice
- TAE80110 Vocational Graduate Diploma of Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Leadership.

Anyone involved with work that involves judgements against the ACSF should be involved in validation sessions to ensure that their assessment of levels matches the benchmark. It's very easy for practitioners who work with the ACSF to become isolated and end up misjudging levels without realising. Accurate professional judgements are validated through agreement with experienced practitioners, and even experienced practitioners need to participate in validation to ensure consistent judgement of levels.

At this stage there are no rules or standards identified for validation of work around the ACSF, but without validation, a practitioner's levels could move away from the benchmark and be of no use in a diagnostic process.

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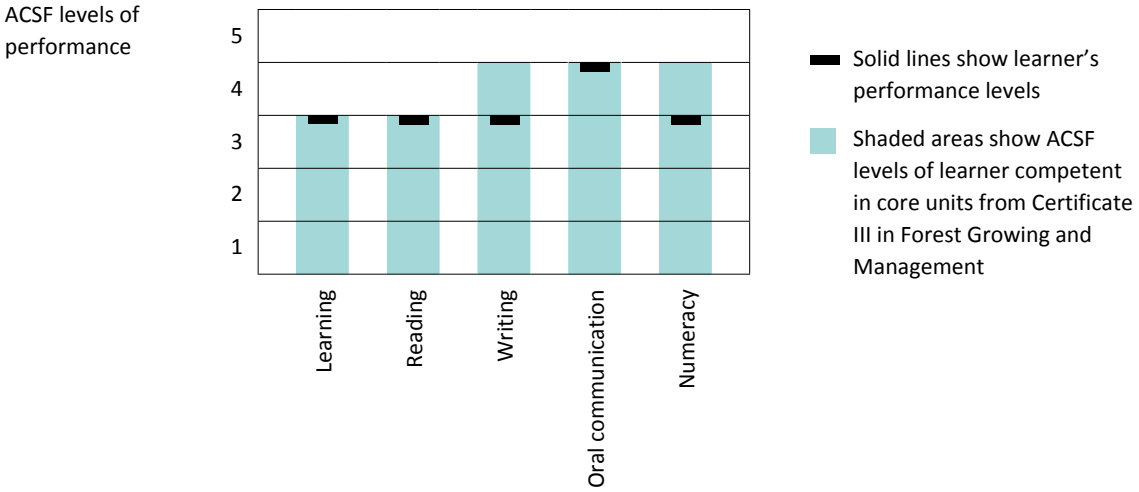
Identifying skill gaps

Summaries of core skill performance or core skill requirements of training can be presented in a 'spiky profile', or a graphic that summarises performance across skills.

In the following diagram, Greyson's spiky profile is compared to the requirements of a learner competent in the Certificate III in Forest Growing and Management.



This diagram allows a trainer to see the skills gap. In this case, Greyson has writing and numeracy skills a level lower than that of a competent learner. This gap would need to be addressed during the training program.

Addressing skill gaps

There are a few different ways to address foundation skills gaps for vocational training, including:

- bridging programs, where learners are enrolled in a pre-vocational training program to build foundation skills for a targeted job role or training program – usually delivered by a foundation skills expert
- supported vocational delivery, where the vocational training is supported by an enrolment in foundation skills units either from the Foundation Skills Training Package, or units from accredited courses, to address the particular foundation skills need – often delivered by a foundation skills expert
- supported vocational delivery, where the vocational trainer incorporates strategies to develop relevant foundation skills, within the vocational training program.

The method chosen to address the gap will usually depend on how big the gap is, and on the skills of trainers and assessors to address the need.

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The Foundation Skills Training Package

A bank of units

One way to address the gap is to enrol learners in units from the Foundation Skills Training Package. The Foundation Skills Training Package includes a large bank of units of competency that focus on different foundation skills. These units can be added to a vocational qualification by importing them through the qualification packaging rules, or adding them on top of the qualification.

The units in the package are aligned to the ACSF, so for example, there is a unit titled 'Write simple workplace information', which is mapped to ACSF Writing level 2, and another titled 'Write highly complex texts', which is mapped to ACSF Writing level 5. There are units developed for each of the core skill areas, at most levels, covering various tasks to support vocational tasks. If you can identify the particular foundation skill or core skill gap that a learner has, then there could be an option to choose a specific unit from the Foundation Skills package to suit the need.

Preparatory qualifications

The Foundation Skills Training Package also includes three preparatory qualifications that could provide a pathway into a vocational qualification.

- The Certificate I in Access to vocational pathways is intended to provide a vocational learning pathway at ACSF Level 1 for individuals with significant support needs.
- The Certificate I in Vocational preparation and pathways contains core units at ACSF Level 2 and is intended to prepare learners for vocational pathway qualifications or further foundation skills development.
- The Certificate II in Preparation for work and vocational pathways is intended to prepare individuals for workforce entry or vocational training pathways.

Each of these preparatory qualifications can be contextualised for a particular work context situation to ensure that the learner builds the specific foundation skills for the job role. Vocational units could be imported into these foundation skills qualifications.

For further information about the Foundation Skills Training Package, go to Innovation and Business Skills Australia (IBSA), who developed the package, at: www.ibsa.org.au, or to www.training.gov.au.

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Addressing skills gaps in vocational training

The Australian Government is keen for vocational trainers to develop specialised training skills to become LLN specialists[5] to be able to address the current and future needs of the Australian workforce. But when 46% of the workforce doesn't have the literacy skills to carry out their jobs effectively, and 53% of the workforce don't have the numeracy skills required [6], more needs to be done and the situation is too vast for LLN specialists alone. Vocational trainers have a role to play in doing what they can.

Many vocational trainers working in the forest, wood, paper and timber products industry already have sound strategies for addressing the core skills requirements of learners, but some don't.

The next section of this guide offers some tips and strategies that vocational trainers might use as part of their current practice.

5 See *National Foundation Skills Strategy for Adults* at www.scotese.natese.gov.au.

6 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006, *Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey Results*.

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3 How to develop core skills

This section provides case studies and activities for vocational trainers to help support the development of core skills, or foundation skills of those working in the forest, wood, paper and timber products industry. The short case studies, or scenarios, and activities are intended to provide ideas of how to develop core skills within a vocational training program.

The sample activities are available in Word® format on the ForestWorks website. You can download the activities and contextualise for the context in which you work. Go to www.forestworks.com.au.

The section is divided into five parts – one for each of the core skills: learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy. Keep in mind though, that core skills or foundation skills are not usually used one at a time – they are usually combined, for example you need to read a form to know how to fill it out, so the skills of reading and writing are combined. The activities and case studies in this guide are grouped under the main skill targeted for development.

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LEARNING

The skill of learning includes the focus areas that incorporate:

- how individuals see themselves as learners
- how motivated individuals are to learn
- the extent to which a person is aware of, and able to take control of the learning process
- how well a person can reflect what they have done and learn from feedback
- how effectively a person can use prior knowledge and skill in new situations
- being able to facilitate own learning
- ways in which people learn from other people, including mentoring, coaching and through working in teams[7].

The ACSF skill of learning underpins the acquisition of all skills and knowledge. At the lowest level it can be characterised by knowing where to be at the right time, or by asking a colleague for help. At the highest levels, learning incorporates developing processes for work and leading performance management activities.

7 From p20 of the ACSF.

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SCENARIO Broaching the topic

Paul is very conscious that quite a few people he encounters in training programs have low language, literacy and numeracy skills.

'I have quite a few people who are very reluctant to write things down or take notes – there are all sorts of excuses... "I can't spell" or "I don't write well" or "I've forgotten to bring my glasses". Those sorts of comments are indicators that there could be an issue with low LLN skills', says Paul.

'I always reinforce that it's ok to say you need some help and I make a few spelling mistakes on the whiteboard, just to reinforce that we're not all perfect. But if struggling participants don't self-identify, I try and catch them in a break and initiate a conversation. I'll say something like... "I noticed you haven't read or written much" or "how are you handling the documents" or "what are you like at taking notes?". If the participant confirms that they have some literacy difficulties, then I give some reassurance and I start to work with them to plan a way for them to build skills. That plan might be me giving that person some specialised activities, or it could be finding some funding for some specialised training – it just depends.

'If the participant doesn't admit to difficulties, then I take this at face value, but closely observe his/her performance during the training. If the assertion appears false, then I'd pass the information on to the supervisor and make some suggestions for how the supervisor could support that person. It's really about setting up an environment where the worker can be comfortable about saying that they have some issues, so that strategies can be put in place to address the need.

'We need to reinforce that we all have to learn new literacy skills at some stage in our working life – developing literacy skills is not just the domain of people with low level skills. We're all in this together.'

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A buddy system can also work well to support employees with low level foundation skills.

SCENARIO Buddy up

'We know that some our employees have some issues with the reading and writing tasks that they need to, to do their jobs. When people start work for us we team them up with a more experienced worker as buddy to give assistance wherever it's required. We talk to the buddies about recognising low level literacy skills, and we also talk to them about the things that they can do to assist someone that they're buddied up with – simple things like explaining how to enter data into the vehicle management system, or helping out with using the menu on the intranet. It works well for us... most people manage to get up to a level to function effectively.

'We try not to make a big deal about low literacy skills – just try and create an environment where people support each other here it's needed. Some times that leads onto people wanting to do something about improving their reading and writing, so that's good.'

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It's important for trainers to think about the strategies used to support people to learn. Not everything needs to be written down in a training manual, and the LLN requirements of training should not exceed the requirements that workers need to carry out their jobs effectively. So if writing short essays or reports is not a part of the job role, then it shouldn't be a requirement of the training and assessment program for that worker.

▶ SCENARIO Not everything has to be written down!

'It's really important that workers can read and write well enough to be able to do their jobs effectively, but jeez, not everything has to be written down. I've seen trainers send learners home to read photocopied information in text books and complex diagrams – there's just no way that they're going to do it. I don't like text books much myself', says Mike, who trains in usage of heavy plant and equipment.

'I use a lot of videos in my training. You know that saying "a picture says a thousand words" well; I have to say it does! I use my phone to take short videos of things like, how to hold equipment, how to use equipment safely, how to change the settings. And then I pop the videos up on YouTube. So I can show learners when I've got them in a classroom, and then they can go home and replay the video over and over. I tell you, it's worked really well for me and the people that I train.

'There's always some follow up around how to read the gauges and where to go to look up tolerances and all that, but by the time I get to that they're interested in the big picture of why they're doing what they're doing.'

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SCENARIO Problem-solving

'I do quite a bit of training at a ply mill in the east and I've done a lot of work in getting the operational staff to develop problem-solving skills. The site has a lot of large machinery and having it out of action is really costly', says Ghazal who has been the lead trainer for five years.

'When a worker starts on a new machine I buddy them up with an experienced operator. They work with that experienced worker for a week and then they're on their own, but with someone to go to, to ask for help.

'We also have regular preventative maintenance sessions and talk about what could possibly go wrong. As a starting point, I get them to use their senses – you know, sight, sound, smell, touch. It sounds a bit basic, but as a place to start, it's really useful to think through "what sounds different to normal", or "what's the smell and where's it coming from".

'We talk about what those smells and noises could possibly mean, and then try and work out why that might be happening. Then we look at options for correcting those problems. It works really well and the workers have started talking more and sharing stories – it all helps to build a bank of possible solutions.'

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To be able to learn effectively, a learner needs to develop skills to investigate and problem solve, to ask for assistance and to investigate sources of information that could assist to find solutions. Understanding who's who in the workplace is an important part of working out if particular people could help with providing tips or advice in particular situations.

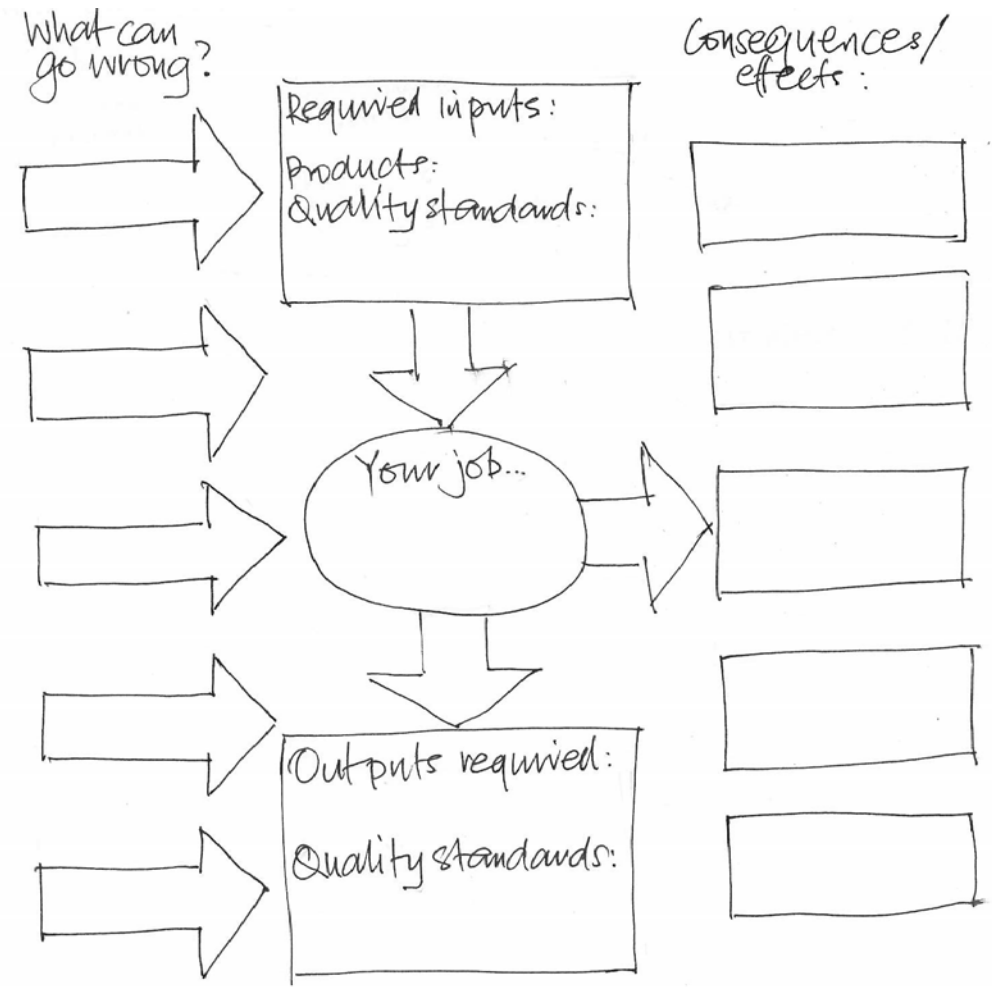
It's also important that workers understand the flow of work within a workplace, and take some responsibility for their place, or their work, in the flow.

The next activity needs to be applied to a context and delivered with discussion about the importance of keeping work flowing and the consequences of things being not quite right.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY

Understanding your workplace

Complete the following diagram and discuss the influences that effect your work within a small group.



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READING

The core skill of reading recognises the level that a person can:

- describe the purpose for reading
- select texts and locate particular information
- make links with prior knowledge
- interpret and analyse text where meaning could be embedded or 'hidden'
- evaluate the purpose of the text, examining the relationship between the intended audience and the author, and also the reader's position
- reflect on the meaning of text, taking into account the reader's viewpoint
- use various strategies to understand texts[8].

At the most basic level, reading is about locating specific information in a simple text, or recognising simple written or pictorial instructions. At its highest level, reading is about complex texts with implied or embedded meaning.

8 From p46 of the ACSF.

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SCENARIO Skimming and scanning

'I find it really useful to give learners some strategies to be able to access more complex work documentation – you know, techniques like skimming and scanning. The people that I train don't have to access many complex documents, but they do need to know how to do it for when that sort of document comes along – like legislation or government reports' says Dave, an LLN specialist.

'So when I introduce a new document or text, I give the learners a couple of minutes to look over it and then we have a talk about the purpose of the document and who wrote it. You can pick up a lot about the document by just reading the title and the first paragraph.

'Then I get them to have a look at the contents page – that's a really good place to get a quick overview of what's included in a document, and you can start to get your head around the heading levels. The main headings give an overview of the main parts of the document. Sub-headings indicate what the detail is about.

'The other thing I talk about is the structure of the document – I get learners to skim through and try and pick up the main parts and make any connections they can with the layout that can help understand how the document has been constructed. Sometimes there are links with colours or types of texts that can give you a bit of a heads up.

'The diagrams can be important too – sometimes they're placed at the start of sections and the text goes on to talk about what's in the diagram. So if you can access the diagram, or the graphic, that can help too.

'Once learners have an understanding of the structure, I get them to do a couple of activities around skimming and scanning. So I get them to skim the text and read the first sentence in every paragraph in a particular section. Or I ask them to scan through a document to find particular information. They're activities to break down a huge lump of text that can be really daunting and difficult to access.'

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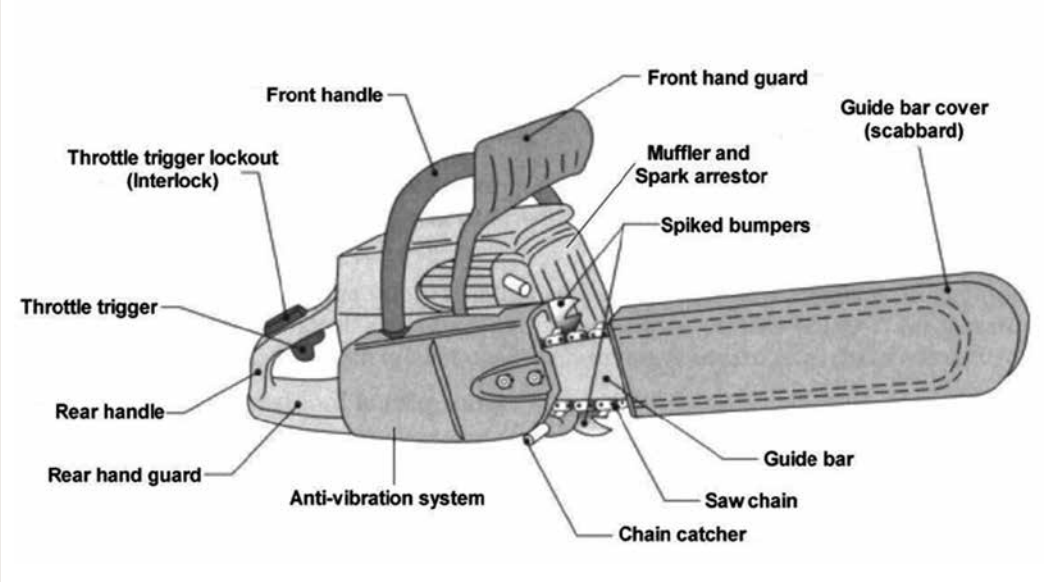
Every industry has its own vocational words – words that have particular meaning within that industry. Reference cards, or even posters can be a useful way to encourage learners to remember the words, and also to learn how to spell them.

▶ SCENARIO Vocational word lists

'Yeah – I do a lot of the chainsaw based training, and it's important that workers know what bits of the chainsaw are actually called. It just helps to call parts as they are, rather than to talk about 'thingys'! So I give the groups a couple of diagrams – one shows parts of the machine, the other is more of a list of parts. I put them on bits of card so that they can shove them in their pockets, at least while we're doing the training. It just helps them to learn the words they will need to know to be able to work effectively with a chainsaw', says Liz.

'During the training I keep referring to the cards so that they get them out of their pockets. That just helps to learn a new habit – it seems to be a helpful one.'



Learners could take their own photos and create their own personal reference lists that could be kept in a personal reference file.

There are different strategies to get learners to remember the words, and different strategies will work with different people. Some ideas include:

- understanding why the word is important
- understanding how the word fits into the wider industry
- understanding what the word means in practice
- linking the word to a fact
- explaining unusual and interesting words.

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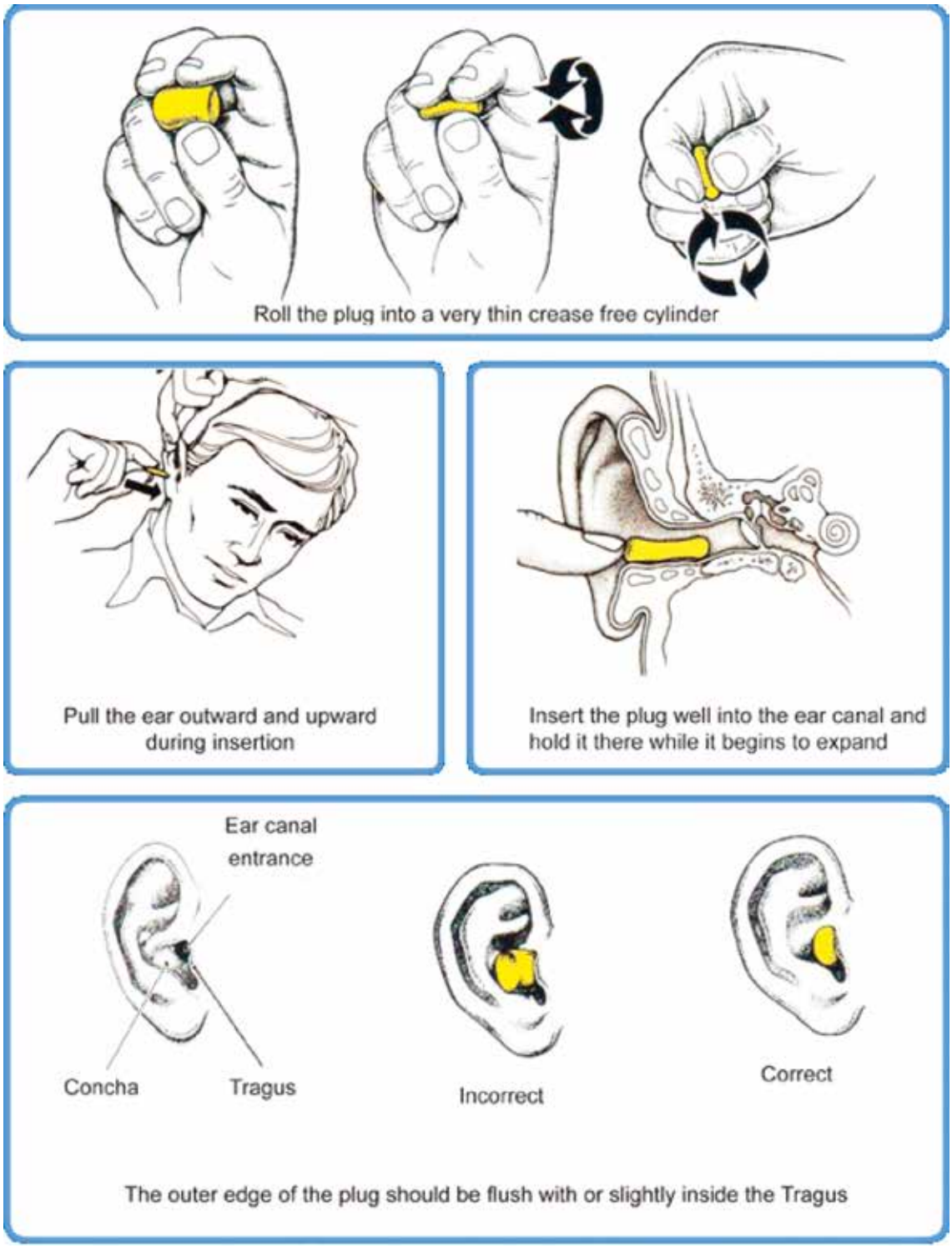
The strategy of using graphics can also apply to policies and procedures. Many policies and procedures are dense texts that can be difficult to access.

The following graphic is an excellent example of how diagrams or illustrations can assist with understanding written text.



From www.tinnitus.org.au accessed 14 February, 2013.

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SAMPLE ACTIVITY Procedures

Work as a group and choose a Standard Operating Procedure from your workplace. Simplify the document using photos to illustrate the key steps. Set the document out in a table similar to the following.

PROCEDURE	WRITTEN SUMMARY	PHOTOS
STEP 1		
STEP 2		
STEP 3		
STEP 4		
STEP 5		
STEP 6		
STEP 7		
STEP 8		

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WRITING

The skill of writing is about shaping written language according to purpose, audience and context. It includes pen and paper, as well as using technology to produce written texts. Writing requires the writer to meet the needs of the intended audience and increasingly through the ACSF skill levels, to write for a range of different purposes. It also requires increasing skills around the mechanics of writing: vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, spelling and legibility.[9]

Completing workplace forms is actually a reading and writing task, but included here because sometimes knowing what to write, and how to write it is difficult.

▶ SCENARIO Using model texts

'Give 'em examples! What's wrong with that? Give learners three or four completed forms so that they have a range of words and phrases to draw on when they need to complete a particular form. There's absolutely nothing wrong with that – providing models is a well established writing support strategy. And it works! You try it!', says Miro, who has a long history of training in the field.

Sometimes workers don't need to write very much, but what they write is important. Having a reference list of possible options could be useful for situations like those included in the following sample activity.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY Tagging out

Instructions to the trainer

- Organise learners into pairs
- Give each pair a copy of Handout 1 and Handout 2, below.
- One person should read out the reason why the Out of service tag needs to be completed, and the other should fill it out.

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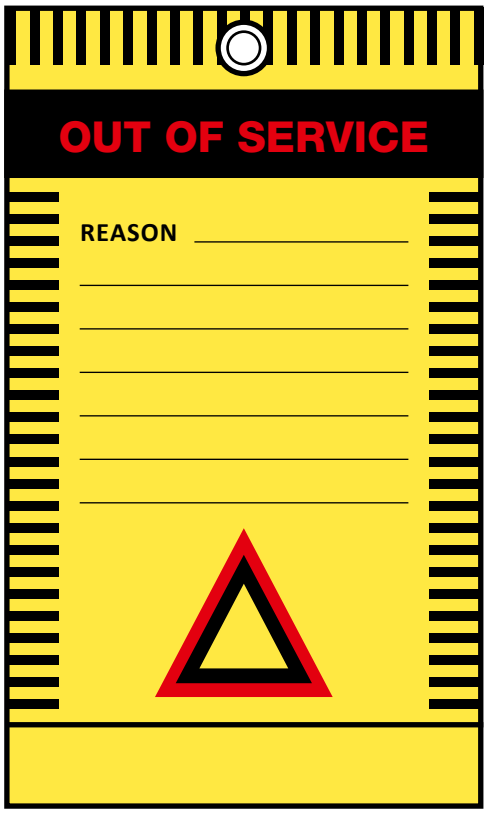
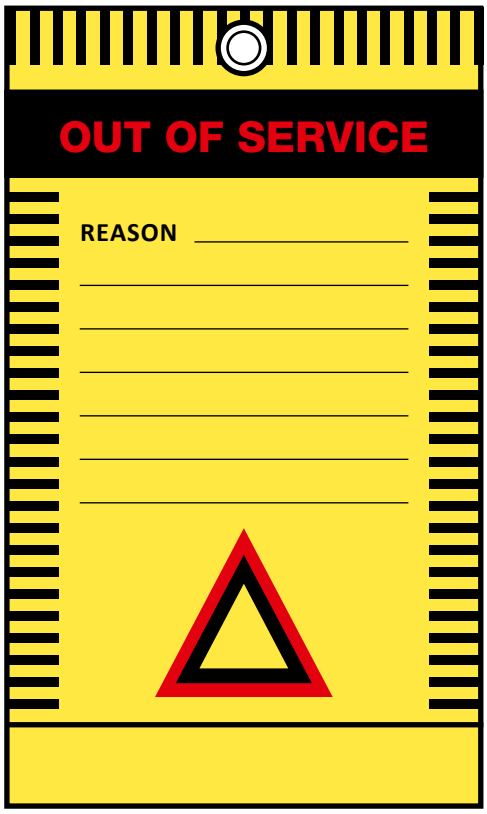
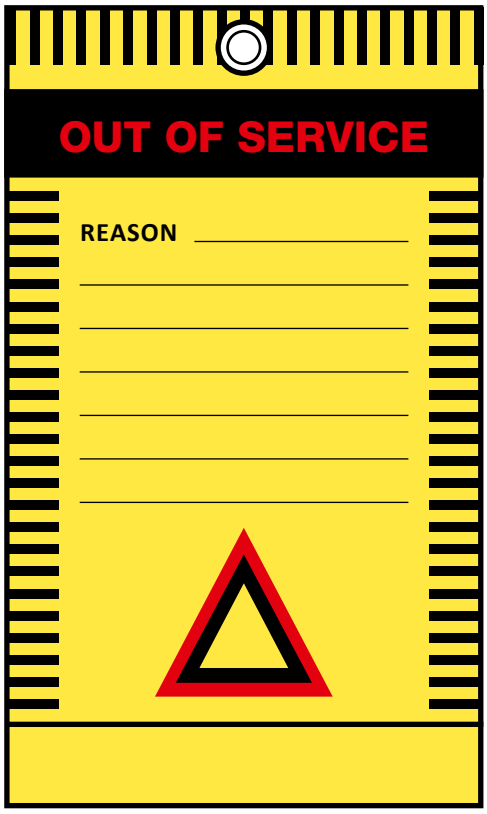
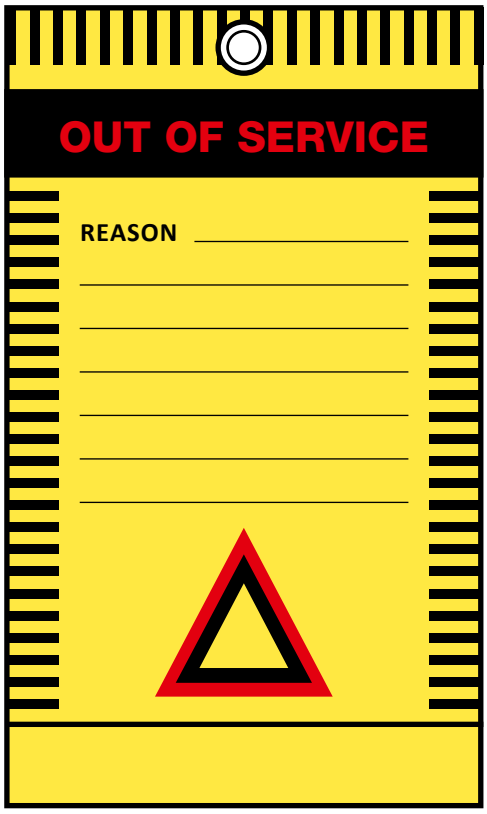
HANDOUT 1 Out of service tags









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HANDOUT 2 Out of service reasons

1. The on/off switch on the pole saw is sticking. It works some times and not others.

2. You are using a drill to do some repairs and you've noticed that the drive is slipping.

3. The planing machine has a small chip in one of the cutting blades and it's starting to leave noticeable marks on the timber.

4. The circular saw is veering to the left on all cuts, and the planks are uneven thicknesses.

5. A washer on the pump has deteriorated meaning that a lot of water leaks through the valve.

6. The brake on vehicle SBV5002 is slipping badly.

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SAMPLE ACTIVITY Completing forms

Instructions to the trainer

This activity can be completed in a number of ways: by asking learners to work in pairs where one reads the incident scenario to the other, who completes the form. Or you could read the scenario to a group and ask participants to complete it individually. The form could be completed by hand, or on a computer, which would allow an opportunity for the learners to develop skills in using a computer.

You could provide learners with completed versions of the report to use as models.

Giving learners a copy of the scenario would make the task easier, because they would have some of the words to begin with.

INCIDENT SCENARIO

Travis is a tree feller and he works full time for a forestry contractor called Buzz in Tasmania. His employee number is 20145. Travis has 20 years experience of work in the field and is well aware of the hazards and risks that come as part of the job. He is very aware how easily tree fellers could be injured on the job if they are distracted, or fail to ignore any warning signs of danger. He is very careful about following safety procedures and staying safe at work.

After completing work yesterday at about 4pm, Travis unloaded the equipment from the ute to the shed at the back of the main site office. As he turned to put the chainsaw on the floor he felt a sharp pain in his lower back. He thought it might be a temporary thing, so he decided to go home and rest for the night. The next day the pain was worse so he visited his doctor. The doctor informed Travis that he has a lower back strain and should avoid any lifting or unnecessary strain for up to two weeks.

Travis knows that he needs to go back to work and fill out the Incident Form for Steve Gibson, his supervisor.

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HANDOUT Incident Report Form

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

DESCRIPTION OF EVENT (please tick)				DETAILS		
Hazard		*Equipment Damage*		**Name of affected/ injured person:**		
Near Miss		*Plant Damage*		**Date of incident**	_____ / _____ / _____	
Injury – No Treatment		*Structure Damage*		**Time of incident**	am	pm
Injury – First Aid Treatment		*Workplace Inspection*		**Name of witness(es):**		
Injury – Medical Treatment		*Environmental Incident*		**Name of person completing this form:**		
Injury – Lost Time		*Hazardous Substances Spill*		**Name of person incident is reported to:**		
Date:		_____ / _____ / _____		**Time:**		

DESCRIPTION OF EVENT AND ACTIONS TAKEN

Incident Rating (please tick)			*Circle area of injury*
Low	*Medium*	*High*	Front Back
Answer Yes / No to Questions below			
Is there ongoing risk to persons/environment/equipment?			
Have current employees been informed of event?			
Have oncoming employees been informed of event?			
Has a hazard/ incident alert been posted?			
Describe event and actions (attach witness statements as separate documents			

Answer Yes / No / Not Applicable (N/A) to Questions below

Was correct PPE worn		Has JSA been completed		Was person trained	
Was guarding in place		Is SOP available		Has person been assessed as competent	
Was area correctly isolated		Has a manual handling risk assessment been completed		Has event occured before	
Has a hazardous substance risk assessment been completed		Has a plant risk assessment been completed		Is an investigation required	

Signature	

Submit for to supervisor as soon as possible after incident.

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ORAL COMMUNICATION

Oral communication involves speaking and listening, and is shaped by the audience, purpose and context that it occurs within. Oral communication can be about a transaction to achieve a particular purpose, such as to obtain information. These types of oral communications usually follow structured patterns and can occur between people who have no prior knowledge of each other.

Oral communication can also be interpersonal. Interpersonal communication usually requires an engagement or a relationship to be established, and the relationship effects the interaction.

Oral communication can be formal or informal and can be influenced by the context, the cultural understandings, the power relations, emotions and attitudes.

The ACSF skill of Oral communication recognises that when there are more than two people involved in a conversation, participation as both a speaker and a listener become more complex[10].

10 From p98 of the ACSF.

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▶ SCENARIO Say what you mean

I overheard one of the trainers talking to a young Indigenous trainee who was struggling with his training and appeared to be losing interest. The trainee was about to assist with stacking ply panels.

The trainer said, *'Rodney, you've got a bit of a way to go with your course and I know you've got stuff going down at home, but mate – you've gotta get this work squared away. The gate's always open for you, mate – you know you can come to me anytime and we can unpack what's going on.'*

I wasn't sure that Rodney understood what the supervisor was talking about, so I asked him what the trainer wanted.

Rodney said, *'Dunno really –I think he wants me to go and stack some panels at his place.'*

Rodney had a good understanding of the practical requirements of the training program but was often confused by communication loaded with colloquialisms and euphemisms. I knew I needed to have a chat to the trainer and explain that he wasn't communicating clearly with Rodney.

It's not always easy to say what you really mean, and to say it in a way that's acceptable to a colleague, a team member, or to someone that you supervise. The following activity is about getting some practise in saying difficult things.

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SAMPLE ACTIVITY What would you say and how would you say it?

Instructions to the trainer

- Organise learners into groups of three or four.
- Give each group a copy of the handout below.
- Ask them to think about how they would deal with the following situations. What would they say and how would they say it?
- Provide an example to one of the scenarios as a way of modelling good practice and discuss oral communication strategies used during interactions that can be difficult, such as:
  - use introductory phrases to set the scene
  - use empathetic tone and body language
  - listen to and respond to cues.
- Ask learners to complete the activity.
- Once completed, summarise by discussing what makes saying difficult things easier.

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HANDOUT What would you say and how would you say it?

1. Your supervisor has told you not to worry too much about doing pre-start checks because they're a waste of time. He reckons it's good enough for them just to be ticked off in the office to get them done quickly so that you can get on with the job. You know that's not good practice.

2. One of your team members keeps coming to work really late. Your manager has told you that if her punctuality doesn't improve, payroll will start docking her pay. You want to give her some warning.

3. One of your colleagues is really quiet and you know that there are some difficult issues happening at home with his family. But today he seems really low and quite withdrawn. You're very worried about him.

4. A work mate has just come back to work after an injury and is on a return to work program, where he works half days. One of the production staff is giving him a hard time, saying he's not pulling his weight. It's not right. What do you say?

5. One of your team members has done a really good job in difficult circumstances. Give him some feedback.

6. Your friend is getting married on a weekday and it's very short notice and you really want to go, but there's a really big job on at work and your team is short staffed. Ask your supervisor for a day off.

7. You have to tell an operator that he can't have the day off to go to his friend's wedding because of production commitments. He will be devastated. What do you say?

8. You've noticed one of the operational staff members giving a new staff member a really hard time because his English is not very good. You overheard him saying "you don't understand instructions quickly enough – you're too slow". You believe that's really unfair. What do you say?

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SAMPLE ACTIVITY Give and receive instructions

Instructions to the trainer

Work instructions are often given verbally. This activity is about listening to instructions.

- Divide the group into pairs.
- Ask one person to read out the instructions, while the other listens.
- Then the listener should repeat the instructions, while the reader checks their accuracy.
- How often are the instructions accurately conveyed?

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HANDOUT Giving instructions

1. Make sure you have all the right PPE for the job. You'll need ear muffs, safety glasses, hard hat, protective footwear and a high visibility vest.

2. Take the 4WD over to the E87 and check the water irrigation on the north side of the block there appears to be a bad leak about 10 metres in from the gate. And on your way back stop by the station and pick up the delivery from Pigdeons.

3. You'll need to check the tension of the chain on the Stil chainsaw before you go down to the southern coup. Remember it should be a bit loose on the guide bar, but tight enough so that you can't pull the drive links out. Don't over tighten it – that will wreck it.

4. We're going to modify the 18" debarker from a rotor system to an air bag tensioning system. It will be more cost effective. It will need to be machined to get the configurations to match, so can you load up the rotor and we'll take it over to Jimmy.

5. At a level 5 the rate is $18.58 – casual employees will get a loading of 23% on top of that and there are allowances. You could also claim for meals at $12.58 per meal, and also for the work that you'll do in confined spaces – that's 56 cents an hour. But look it all up on this chart – then it will make sense.

6. When you measure relative humidity, you use both wet and dry bulbs. The wet bulb always gives a lower temperature reading and the dry bulb always gives a higher reading and also the actual air temperature. The two measurements are used together to calculate the relative humidity as a percentage.

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NUMERACY

Numeracy is about using mathematics to make sense of the world. It is more than simply numbers and measurements; it involves an understanding of a situation to know when and how to apply mathematical tools.

The ACSF skill of numeracy is described against three indicators:

- the identification of mathematical information and meaning in tasks and texts
- the use and application of mathematical knowledge and problem solving processes
- the way informal and formal language, symbols and diagrams and conventions of mathematics are used to communicate.

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SCENARIO Mixing fuel

'Yeah – mixing 2-stroke fuel and working out ratios can be a bit difficult for some people to grasp. I used to just mark up a container with a big black line with oil on one side and petrol on the other for a 1:25 mix. But people are not always going to have that container with them, so I've put a fair bit of effort into thinking about how to teach the concept of ratios', says Davo.

'What I do now, is have a session that's about mixing liquids in different ratios. I constantly talk throughout the session about what a ratio is – you know, one part of one thing mixed with several parts of another. I get the groups to mix up either red cordial (red cordial is good because you can see it as well as taste) or salt solutions (which is also good because you can taste it). They usually mix 50:1, 25:1, 10:1, 5:1, 2:1 and we have all sorts of discussions about stronger and weaker solutions and how they look and taste.

'Then we talk about mixing volumes of fuel in ratio – multiplying both sides of the ratio by the same, number... millilitres and litres – all that. That leads onto looking at the ratios of fuel mixes that are used for various pieces of equipment, and about the consequences of getting the mixes wrong.

'I finish up with a few paper based exercises where they mark up measuring containers. I keep reinforcing all the time that we're talking about ratios, and how important it is to get the right ratio mix for the right machine. They usually persist with the written activities because they can see a purpose for it.'

Check out the ratio activities on the following page.

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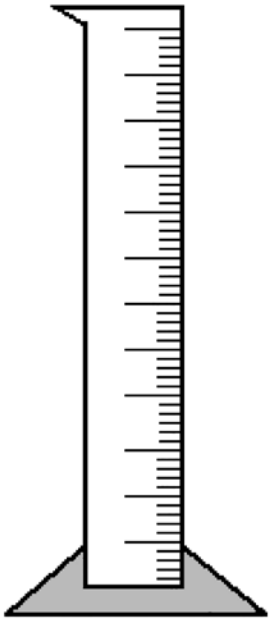
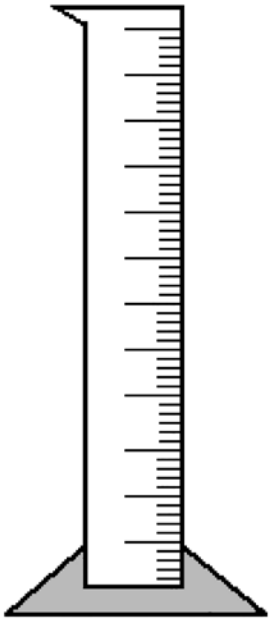
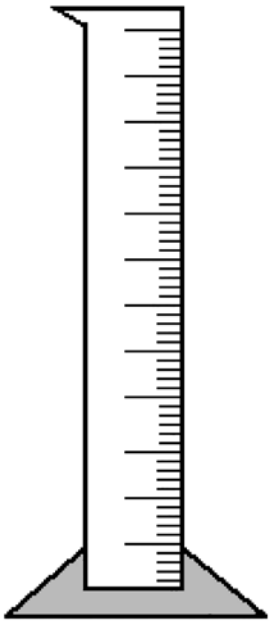
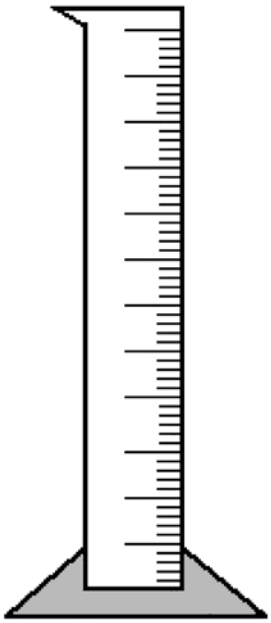
HANDOUT Ratios

Mark the measuring containers with appropriate measurements and then mark up the ratio mix.

Mark up for a ratio for 10:1. 	Mark up for a ratio for 5:1. 
Mark up for a ratio for 20:1. 	Mark up for a ratio for 25:1. 

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SCENARIO Reading charts and tables

'We use charts and tables in our work a lot. Just because you can quickly work out how to read a chart or a table, you shouldn't assume that everyone can do that. Some charts are read across and down at the same time and the required information connects at a particular point, others are read downwards and information needs to be filled in at the side, some tables need to be filled out in a down-across, down-across pattern. They're all different! Whether the task is to locate or enter information of a digital screen, or complete details on a paper-based form, to assume that someone intuitively knows how to interpret the table would be a mistake. Don't fall for it. Help your learners out and scaffold the process for them,' says Mikaela, an LLN expert who's worked alongside industry trainers for several years.

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HANDOUT Reading tables

Measurements taken from wet and dry bulbs are used to calculate relative humidity (RH).

The wet bulb always gives a lower temperature reading. The dry bulb always gives a higher reading and also the actual air temperature. These are the two measurements used for calculating relative humidity (RH). Using the correct RH tables you will obtain the relative humidity for your location.

Use the table in Handout 2, to locate the readings for each thermometer reading and follow across and down until the row and column meet. The number in that box is the relative humidity.

Use the table in Handout 2 to answer the following questions.

1. What would the relative humidity be if the dry bulb reading was 28°C and the wet bulb reading was 20°C?
2. What would the relative humidity be if the dry bulb reading was 31°C and the wet bulb reading was 25°C?

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HANDOUT Reading tables

100								**8**										
87	100							**9**										
75	87	100						**10**										
64	75	88	100					**11**										
54	65	76	88	100				**12**										
45	55	66	77	88	100			**13**										
38	48	57	68	79	89	100		**14**										
31	40	49	59	69	79	89	100	**15**										
25	33	42	51	60	70	79	89	**16**	100									
19	27	35	44	52	61	70	80	**17**	90	100								
15	22	29	37	45	54	62	71	**18**	81	90	100							
10	17	24	31	39	47	55	63	**19**	72	81	90	100						
6	10	19	26	33	41	48	56	**20**	64	73	82	91	100					
8	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**		**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**
3	9	15	22	28	35	42	50	**21**	57	65	74	82	91	100				
	5	11	17	24	30	37	44	**22**	51	58	66	74	82	91	100			
	2	8	14	19	26	32	36	**23**	45	52	59	67	75	83	91	100		
		5	10	16	21	37	34	**24**	40	47	53	60	68	75	83	91	100	
		2	7	12	18	23	29	**25**	35	41	48	54	61	69	76	84	92	100
			4	9	14	20	25	**26**	31	37	43	49	55	62	69	77	84	92
			2	7	11	16	22	**27**	27	32	38	44	50	56	63	70	77	84
				4	9	13	18	**28**	23	28	34	39	45	51	57	64	71	77
				2	6	11	15	**29**	20	25	30	35	41	46	52	58	65	71
					4	8	13	**30**	17	22	26	31	37	42	47	53	59	65
					2	6	10	**31**	14	19	23	28	33	38	43	48	54	60
						4	8	**32**	12	16	20	25	29	34	39	44	49	55
						2	6	**33**	10	14	18	22	26	31	35	40	45	50
							4	**34**	8	11	15	19	23	27	32	36	41	46
							3	**35**	6	9	13	17	21	25	29	33	38	42
								36	4	8	11	14	18	22	26	30	34	39
								37	3	6	9	12	16	20	23	27	31	35
								38	1	4	7	11	14	17	21	24	28	32
								39		3	6	9	12	15	19	22	26	29
								40		2	5	7	10	13	17	20	23	27

Wet bulb reading °C

Dry bulb reading °C

Relative humidity %

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Estimation is a skill that is used in lots of different ways for work tasks. This next activity is really about getting some estimation practise! It's worthwhile having a good discussion beforehand about units of measurement for distances, weights, area, capacity, as well as some of the terms used, such as diameter and circumference.

HANDOUT Estimating

Complete the table below, by deciding on an appropriate unit of measurement, estimating each of the items listed in the left column, then checking your estimations by measuring each, or checking measurements in appropriate manuals.

	Unit of measurement	Your estimate	Actual measurement
The capacity of a chainsaw fuel tank.			
The distance between the training room and your car.			
The diameter of the canopy of the closest tree.			
The distance to the closest shop.			
The weight of a 10 litre container of fuel.			
The area of the closest plantation.			
The circumference of the trunk of the closest tree.			
The capacity of the closest recycle bin.			
The area of the room you are in now.			

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Time and scheduling time to complete job tasks can take a lot of planning. An activity such as the one following can not only help with thinking about a day and a week and how time gets spent, but it could be a scaffolding task for completing log books and time sheets.

The following activity uses the 24 hour clock, and week days. Change it to suit your needs by downloading the Word® document from the ForestWorks website at www.forestworks.com.au.

HANDOUT Planning time

Think about the week ahead and the tasks that need to be completed, and fill out the following weekly plan.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
0600					
0700					
0800					
0900					
1000					
1100					
1200					
1300					
1400					
1500					
1600					
1700					
1800					
1900					
2000					
2100					
2200					

At the end of the week, check to see if the plan matched what you actually carried out. If not, what will you change next time you're planning your time?

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4 Workplace examples of foundation skills

This section includes examples of typical tasks that require foundation skills and that are carried out by those who work in the forest, wood, paper and timber products industry. The examples are organised under the headings: Learning, Reading, Writing, Oral communication and Numeracy. They are included in this guide to highlight the many, varied task that require foundation skills that workers need as part of their job, and that may need to be addressed as part of a vocational training program.

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LEARNING skills include being able to:
• understand work roles within team and organisation
• identify steps in a process or goals for a task
• know the equipment needed to complete identified task
• know the OHS rules for using equipment in the workplace
• seek assistance from mentor or supervisor if unsure of what to do
• access information on an issue from internet/intranet or other sources, for example an equipment manual
• pose questions to focus information search
• keep a personal learning file to assist with completing works tasks, such as model reports
• use simple strategies to clarify and reinforce learning, for example copying, underlining, memorising, practising skills in own time
• engage in learning with others, for example use basic approaches such as distribution of tasks and unstructured discussion to achieve group outcomes
• pose who/what/why questions to help direct information search
• use a methodical process to determine the training needs of others
• identify hazards

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READING skills include being able to:
• locate key information in OHS policies and procedures
• locate key information in relevant legislation and regulations, including rating / conservation systems
• interpret hazard advice
• read material data safety sheets
• read site safety plans
• understand signs, symbols and notices
• sort documents in alphabetical order or date order
• use product or materials information checklists
• read emails, notes, faxes or letters
• read order forms or price lists
• examine invoices from suppliers
• read equipment and product manuals
• read reports (routine and one-off) and checklists
• read work procedures and instructions
• read organisational directories
• read organisational newsletters/bulletins
• read site plans
• read internet- based information

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WRITING skills include being able to:
• complete and check time sheets
• fill in sickness or injury/accident forms
• complete incident reports
• copy information from one source to another
• enter information to databases
• complete work records
• write and respond to customer emails
• take notes, memos or phone messages
• write instructions for others
• report problems in writing, such as hazards and risks
• use word processing cut and paste, spell check and other basic functions
• write about benefits and types of sustainability practices, such as efficient water use, minimisation of chemical usage

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ORAL COMMUNICATION skills include being able to:
• communicate with team members to clarify work requirements and practices
• provide clear instructions and message to individuals and group
• ask clarifying questions to check understanding
• work courteously with clients in a business-like way
• listen to enquiries and complaints and respond
• seek advice or further information
• provide positive/negative feedback
• listen to and respond to feedback
• use telephone and two-way radio
• listen to presentations or give presentations to group
• report breaches to management
• make suggestions for improvement, for example ways to reduce energy, increase usage of recycled materials, reduce emissions
• build rapport with team members and customers
• work collaboratively with group to solve issues and problems
• communicate information about sustainability, such as information about energy or fuel usage, ways to minimise waste
• negotiate with employees and customers

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NUMERACY skills include being able to:
• complete pay or timesheet calculations
• add, subtract, multiply and divide whole numbers
• use fractions, decimals, percentages or ratios
• count orally or tally
• read and write numbers as figures or words
• calculate (in their head) or use a calculator
• estimate amounts (including length, weight, capacity, volume, speed, area, time or temperature)
• read and interpret dials, scales or digital readouts
• read, interpret and create tables, graphs and charts
• measure resources and usage under different conditions
• keep a record of accounts (resources used and costs)
• calculate costs of materials/resources
• read maps and plans, including GPS as required
• understand time using the 12 and 24 hour clocks, read analogue and digital clocks, or read parts of the hour (minutes and seconds)
• use a daily or weekly planner to schedule work for self and others

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5 Where to go for assistance

Resources

The following resources are available to support the development of foundation skills in the workplace.

LiteracyNet

Each year the Commonwealth Government funds the development of resources to support the development of language, literacy and numeracy skills in the workplace, through the WELL Resources funding program. Details about the resources developed are on the *LiteracyNet* website at www.innovation.gov.au/Skills/LiteracyAndNumeracy/LiteracyNet/Pages/default.aspx.

ACSF assessment tasks

A bank of validated ACSF assessment tasks, written for Pre-level 1 – Level 4 of the ACSF is available at www.precisionconsultancy.com.au/acs_framework. Each assessment task includes:

- a summary of the ACSF skills covered
- notes about content coverage
- instructions for the assessor
- a mapping of the ACSF skill indicator and domains of communication covered in the task.

Taking the lead

The *Taking the lead* website provides information to help training staff and employers, including:

- online professional development for trainers and assessors
- case studies showing how employers and employees benefit from training that supports and develops LLN skills
- LLN tips giving comprehensive advice on how to improve LLN
- a searchable resource directory of LLN resources
- the latest news and events on LLN training services and funding opportunities.

Go to www.takingthelead.com.au.

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Literacy face to face

Literacy face to face has been around for some time now, but the information included is still very relevant for those who want to help someone improve their literacy skills. Download the document at siandvasupport.sydneyinstitute.wikispaces.net/Literacy+Face+to+Face

Funding

WELL training

The Commonwealth Government funds the Workplace Language, Literacy and Numeracy (WELL) Program to assist organisations to train workers in English language, literacy and numeracy skills. This funding is available on a competitive grants basis to organisations for English language and literacy training linked to job-related workplace training and is designed to help workers meet their current and future employment and training needs.

For further information, go to www.innovation.gov.au/Skills/LiteracyAndNumeracy/Pages/default.aspx.

Pathways for vocational trainers

If you are interested in building your skills to support the development of foundations skills in vocational training, think about undertaking some training. The following units and/or qualifications provide a pathway for practitioners.

- TAELLN401A Address adult language, literacy and numeracy skills (which introduces the concepts of working with the ACSF)
- TAELLN501B Support the development of adult language, literacy and numeracy skills (which advances skills in working with the ACSF)

The LLN focussed qualifications recently added to the TAE10 Training and Education Training Package would also provide suitable skills and knowledge to carry out specialist LLN support for learners. The qualifications are:

- TAE70110 Vocational Graduate Certificate in Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice
- TAE80110 Vocational Graduate Diploma of Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Leadership.

Innovation and Business Skills Australia (IBSA) are currently developing a skill set for trainers to address foundation skills in vocational practice. For further information, go to www.ibsa.org.au.

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