



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

CSCINT404A Assess offender risks and needs

Revision Number: 2

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Modification History

CSCINT404A Second release: Layout adjusted. No changes to content.

CSCINT404A First release: Primary release.

Unit Descriptor

This unit of competency describes the outcomes required for specialist offender assessment staff responsible for structured assessment and review of offenders, to identify immediate and longer-term risks and needs and ensure allocation and referral of offenders to suitable and effective intervention and support services.

Application of the Unit

The unit may apply to the work of staff in an assessment unit actively involved in the offender assessment and review process and activities, as well as to supervising team members who conduct assessment.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

Not applicable.

Employability Skills Information

This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements describe the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.

Performance criteria describe the required performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where ***bold italicised*** text is used, further information is detailed in the required skills and knowledge and/or the range statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the evidence guide.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1 Observe offender behaviour and presentation.	1.1 Note the offender's emotional state within the context of known personal history and circumstances. 1.2 Observe the offender's physical presentation, note discrepancies and inconsistencies, and review observations against other information. 1.3 Research and check information about the offender's history, behaviour and emotional state from analysis of his/her information and behaviour and from offender files and reports. 1.4 Explore the offender's perception of his/her situation through questioning and responses to information. 1.5 Determine a general assessment of functioning according to recognised criteria and note indicators of impairment. 1.6 Use a range of communication strategies to develop understanding of offender's experiences, attitudes and needs.
2 Analyse nature and degree of risk.	2.1 Check and confirm offender's understanding of the nature of his/her circumstances using a range of communication and analysis strategies. 2.2 Explore offender's perceptions of his/her capacity to influence the situation and evaluate this for realistic and effective expectations. 2.3 Check offender's abilities and skills to handle or function within his/her situation and evaluate this for degree of risk to health and welfare. 2.4 Identify current factors that would work for or against change and assess them for significance to programs and services. 2.5 Explore and determine offender's perceptions of the roles of influential and relevant people and systems. 2.6 Identify and acknowledge offender's capacity to recognise and understand his/her situation and adapt according to new requirements and perceptions of the correctional environment. 2.7 Identify offender's motivation to change and assess this according to level of reality, expectations and experiences.
3 Determine intervention.	3.1 Identify intervention strategies based on offender's ability and potential to cope with his/her situation and assess resources and barriers relevant to the

ELEMENT**PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

offending behaviour and risks.

- 3.2 Determine offender's receptivity, level of awareness of his/her situation, openness to new information and capacity to learn and make behavioural changes, from a range of observation, checking of information and communication strategies.
- 3.3 Assess ***offender's risk factors*** and the nature of the offending behaviour and make recommendations on intervention strategies and referral according to degree of urgency, available programs and services and offender suitability.
- 3.4 Negotiate conditions of intervention with key people and agencies and with offender in a manner that encourages agreement and cooperation.
- 3.5 Provide advice and information to offender in language and style designed to promote understanding, provide reassurance and minimise anxiety, stress and confusion.
- 3.6 Include records of the offender's presentation and all relevant information in offender's file and relevant case notes and report to other agencies as required by organisational guidelines and practices.

Required Skills and Knowledge

This section describes the essential skills and knowledge and their level, required for this unit.

Required skills:

- routine and special assessment of offenders
- checking and analysing information for assessment of risks, special needs and developmental levels
- taking responsibility for duty of care outcomes based on the degree of risk and special needs of offenders
- preserving the rights and responsibilities of offenders and their safety and welfare
- supporting staff and protecting their safety and welfare
- providing supervision and case management strategies based on assessed risk and justifiable priorities
- making decisions based on knowledge of the impact of cultural and personal values on behaviour, expectations and program objectives
- responding to risks and incidents of varying degrees of severity
- adapting service or program responses to different special needs
- using clear, suitable and accurate communication
- developing and analysing actions appropriate for case plans
- collecting and analysing information
- documenting offender information and case plans
- complying with the organisation's security policies and operating procedures related to contact with offenders
- applying knowledge of statutory requirements relevant to the work sector and roles
- communicating assessment requirements in both formal and informal contact with offenders and key stakeholders
- taking into account the values, needs and circumstances of people from different cultures
- using personal, manual and electronic information
- using available support and resources and applying the criteria for access
- giving feedback on expectations
- maintaining a supportive and professional relationship with staff and support agencies
- maintaining a focus on agreements and behaviour outcomes
- identifying limits of role and taking actions to contact appropriate support people
- presenting assessment information in formal and informal settings.

Required knowledge:

- organisational policies, procedures and guidelines related to case management and offender programs and services

- indicators of risk to offenders, including indicators of:
 - suicide
 - mutilation and self-harm
 - physical violence
 - mental illness
 - sexual abuse
 - addiction and drug use
 - eating disorders
 - inappropriate relationships and sexual behaviour
 - provocative actions and behaviour
 - intellectual development and brain damage
 - personality issues, aberrant behaviour and psychological deviance in the context of the prison environment
 - cultural isolation and alienation, and language barriers
 - withdrawal and depression
- procedures and requirements for offender assessment reporting, including work site information processing and the organisation's offender information system
- legislation relevant to candidates' roles and responsibilities and service guidelines, such as:
 - accountability, including recording and reporting offender information
 - offender risk management model and process
 - processes and procedures for breaches of regulations and associated disciplinary actions
 - responding to risk assessment
 - access to information and restriction of access
 - appropriate relationships with offenders
 - appropriate relationships with staff and colleagues
 - rights and responsibilities of offenders
 - protocols for referral to specialist and support agencies
 - special needs
 - organisation's code of conduct, code of ethics and duty of care
 - range of specialist support services and programs available to offenders
 - processes for getting advice and assistance when there are problems
 - cultural practices that will have an impact on decisions made about flexibility and allowances, additional support and special programs
 - impact of cultural and personal beliefs on values, relationships, attitudes and behaviour
 - cultural prohibitions that have an impact on physical contact, relationships and communication.

Evidence Guide

The Evidence Guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge, the range statement and the Assessment Guidelines for this Training Package.

Overview of assessment

Evidence for assessment must be gathered over time in a range of contexts to ensure the person can achieve the unit outcome and apply the competency in different situations or environments.

Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit

In addition to integrated demonstration of the elements and their related performance criteria, look for evidence that confirms:

- the knowledge requirements of this unit
- the skill requirements of this unit
- application of employability skills as they relate to this unit
- ability to assess offender risks and needs in a range of (two or more) contexts or occasions, over time.

Context of and specific resources for assessment

Valid assessment of this unit requires:

- a workplace environment or one that closely resembles normal work practice and replicates the range of conditions likely to be encountered by an individual responsible for assessing the risks and needs of offenders as part of a coordinated team, including coping with difficulties, irregularities and changes to routine
- copies of legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines relating to assessing offender risks and needs
- access to appropriate learning and assessment support when required.

Method of assessment

The following assessment methods are suggested:

- observation of performance in routine workplace activities within a range of agreed responsibilities and in various work locations
- written and/or oral questioning to assess knowledge and understanding
- completion of workplace documents and reports produced as part of routine work activities
- third-party reports from experienced practitioners
- completion of performance feedback from supervisors and colleagues.

Guidance information for assessment

Assessment methods should reflect workplace demands, and any identified special needs of the candidate, including

language and literacy implications and cultural factors that may affect responses to the questions.

In all cases where practical assessment is used it will be combined with targeted questioning to assess the underpinning knowledge.

Range Statement

The range statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. ***Bold italicised*** wording in the performance criteria is detailed below. Add any essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts.

Needs may include:

- basic language and literacy skills
- living skills
- special accommodation
- behaviour change and management
- addiction services - drug and alcohol, gambling
- health, fitness and hygiene
- mental health
- disabilities - physical, intellectual, sensory and developmental
- training and education
- employment
- family support
- relationship development
- legal advice representation
- cultural support.

Intervention strategies will depend on the nature and degree of the risks and should include:

- individual counselling
- group therapy
- group support
- referral to external specialists and agencies
- special monitoring
- referral to special units
- specialist assessment
- medical treatment
- internal support, such as buddy systems.

Offender's risk factors will depend on the nature and degree of the risks and will include risk of:

- suicide and self-harm
- risk from others
- physical injury
- risk to others
- illness and infection
- sexual abuse
- risk taking and death
- criminal actions
- drug and substance abuse
- anger management

- domestic violence
- nature of the offence
- potential for repeat offence and re-offending.

Unit Sector(s)

Intervention.

Competency field

Not applicable.

Co-requisite units

Not applicable.