

TAATAS504A

Unit Descriptor

Application of the Unit

Facilitate group processes

This unit specifies the competency required to lead or facilitate group processes to achieve an agreed outcome.

Group facilitation is a competency involving the effective management of a group in circumstances where the facilitator provides a pathway for the group to achieve identified and agreed outcomes.

- This competency requires high-level communication and interpersonal skills as well as knowledge of various group process techniques and activities to explore and analyse a focus/subject area, maximise group involvement and interaction and develop common/agreed solutions/outcomes.
- Group facilitation may be applied in many circumstances including focus groups, workshops, meetings and change processes. Group facilitation can be used to resolve issues, find solutions, collaboratively develop ideas, develop new ways of working and explore problems/issues. It is relevant to community, educational and work situations. The process may be conducted for a client or may be internally focused.
- While group facilitation is a clear part of the unit outcomes for *TAADEL402A Facilitate group-based learning*, the facilitation process in that unit is driven by the predetermined competency/learning outcomes to be achieved. In that unit, the facilitation process revolves around ensuring progression towards the desired outcomes.
- In this unit, the focus is usually defined but the outcomes derive from the competency of the facilitator in guiding, informing, facilitating and monitoring the group.
- The competency specified in this unit is typically required by trainers/facilitators, assessors, consultants, supervisors, managers and leaders.

Unit Sector

Training Advisory Services

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. Establish group objectives and processes	1.1 The <i>focus of the group process</i> is researched, in consultation with the <i>client and other stakeholders</i>, where applicable and <i>group participants</i> are identified 1.2 Group input is initiated, confirming objectives 1.3 <i>Group process techniques, activities</i> and timelines are planned 1.4 Group purpose, processes, expectations and roles of members are discussed, negotiated and agreed to by the group as a whole 1.5 <i>Resource requirements</i> are identified and arranged 1.6 Recording processes are discussed and agreed by the group and confirmed with the client, where applicable 1.7 Appropriate <i>evaluation methods</i> are agreed upon and incorporated into the process to ensure group and client needs are met, where applicable
2. Manage facilitation	2.1 Issues/ideas/perspectives of group members are elicited using identified group process techniques that accurately reflect group member needs 2.2 Appropriate <i>facilitation skills</i> are used to explore issues/ideas/perspectives in a <i>supportive environment</i> that encourages participation and productive contributions from all group members 2.3 All interactions with group members reflect sensitivity to <i>social and cultural differences and any individual needs</i> 2.4 Information is provided which is designed to develop, extend and challenge group perspectives and frames of reference 2.5 Group members' knowledge, expertise and skills are acknowledged and utilised 2.6 Opportunities for group members to contribute additional information, learn from each other and develop knowledge/skills are provided 2.7 Group dynamics are monitored to maintain focus and direction, continuity, engagement, participation and timelines
3. Develop group outcomes	3.1 Proposed <i>outcomes</i> are sought from group members 3.2 Proposed outcomes are noted/documented for group to discuss and further develop 3.3 Facilitation skills are used to draw a collective and agreed outcome which responds to individual needs/perspectives 3.4 Outcomes are documented in accordance with agreed client/organisational and group requirements 3.5 Proposed actions arising from agreed outcomes are raised with the group and appropriate steps are taken to initiate these, where appropriate

4. Finalise group process
- 4.1 Feedback and reflection are used to identify and implement improvements to future practice in group processes
 - 4.2 Evaluation methods are selected and used to identify effectiveness of group process
 - 4.3 Stakeholders and clients are briefed, if relevant, on issues, developments and outcomes arising from group process
 - 4.4 Records and reports of process and outcomes are documented, distributed and stored in accordance with established reporting requirements of client/organisation

KEY COMPETENCIES

Key Competency	Example of Application	Performance Level
Communicating ideas and information	using a variety of facilitation styles to provide information encouraging a supportive environment for people to actively participate being open to people's ideas	3
Collecting analysing and organising information	collecting information and gaining consensus on concepts researching the purpose of group processes	2
Planning and organising activities	outlining the structure of the session to key stakeholders arranging suitable resources to assist in facilitating group processes	3
Working with others and in teams	clarifying roles and responsibilities of other team members identifying how additional personnel can assist in facilitating group processes	2
Using mathematical ideas and techniques	organising time to complete group activities summarising numerical information in a graphically friendly format	1
Solving problems	obtaining feedback and using it to improve future practices	2
Using technology	designing handouts and graphic presentations to display ideas	2

RANGE STATEMENT

The Range Statement adds definition to the unit by elaborating critical or significant aspects of the performance requirements of the unit. The Range Statement establishes the range of indicative meanings or applications of these requirements in different operating contexts and conditions. The specific aspects which require elaboration are identified by the use of italics in the Performance Criteria.

Focus of the group process may include:

- feedback and advice on product, policy, process, development, change
- research
- planning
- change management/new directions
- informal education
- community action
- special interest causes
- staff development
- industry/community liaison

Clients and other stakeholders may include:

- contracted client
- product developer
- employer/organisation
- government agency/department
- community group/body
- regulatory body
- association
- union
- committee
- management

Group participants may be:

- self-selected/nominated
- randomly selected
- targeted

Group process techniques may include:

- presentations
- demonstrations
- explanations
- questioning
- modelling
- scene-setting
- interactive/dialogue
- problem setting/solving
- experiential learning
- group work

Group activities may be:

- formal
- informal
- structured
- semi-structured
- unstructured

Resource requirements may include:

- products, policies, procedures
- research information/documentation
- financing
- subject experts
- facilities
- equipment/materials
- written materials/handouts
- administrative support

Evaluation methods may include:

- formal or informal feedback mechanisms
- surveys
- conducting interviews
- analysis of qualitative/quantitative data
- questionnaires
- personal, reflective behaviour strategies
- routine organisational methods for monitoring service delivery

Facilitation skills may include:

- using effective verbal and body language to:
- maintain group cohesion
- handle difficult situations
- manage group activities
- manage conflict
- maintain focus
- create interaction between group participants
- manage individual and group engagement and participation
- guide discussion
- introduce content
- obtain outcomes
- using a variety of group process techniques
- explaining and using a variety of creative thinking techniques

Supportive environment may include:

- establishing trust
- being open to opinions and ideas
- allowing group members to have their say
- asking questions of group/individuals
- being flexible in approach
- using appropriate interpersonal skills
- being sensitive to individual differences

Social and cultural differences may include:

- language barriers
- physical impairment or disability involving hearing, vision, voice, mobility
- intellectual impairment or disability
- medical condition such as arthritis, epilepsy, diabetes, asthma
- learning difficulties
- psychiatric or psychological disability
- religious and spiritual observances
- cultural images/perceptions
- age, gender and sexuality

Individual needs may include:

- language, literacy, numeracy requirements
- provision of personal support services
- adaptive technology or special equipment
- flexible sessions to allow for fatigue or administering of medication
- physical environment adjustments
- time adjustments to suit family needs

Outcomes may:

- be derived from exploration of issues
- emerge from facilitated group discussion/activities
- be based on information provided to group and accepted
- result from group creative thinking
- incorporate expert input
- encompass relevant research

EVIDENCE GUIDE

The Evidence Guide provides advice to inform and support appropriate assessment of this unit. It contains an overview of assessment followed by identification of specific aspects of evidence that will need to be addressed in determining competency. The Evidence Guide is an integral part of the unit and should be read and interpreted in conjunction with the other components of competency.

Assessment must reflect the endorsed Assessment Guidelines of the TAA04 Training and Assessment Training Package.

To demonstrate competency against this unit candidates must be able to provide evidence that they have the communication and interpersonal skills to effectively facilitate group processes by creating an environment that encourages active participation and results in an outcome for the client/stakeholder/organisation.

The evidence must show how candidates can establish objectives; use a variety of facilitation methods and group process techniques to explore the objectives and manage the group; and synthesise contributions to develop an outcome.

Required knowledge includes:

current techniques for group facilitation processes, such as:

- demonstrations
- explanations
- questioning
- modelling
- scene-setting
- interactive/dialogue
- problem setting/solving
- experiential learning
- group work
- creative thinking techniques, including:
 - brainstorming
 - making associations
 - visualising
 - building on associations
 - telling stories
 - creative writing
 - lateral thinking games
 - mind mapping
 - drawings
 - de Bono's Six Thinking Hats
 - using prompts
- a range of media and learning aides that can be used to promote discussion, such as:
 - graphic computer presentations
 - flipcharts
- access and equity principles and practices, such as:
 - sensitivity to cultural differences
 - allowances for reasonable adjustment
- instructional design, including:
 - sequencing information
 - supporting knowledge development
 - providing opportunities for practice
- evaluation/revision techniques, for example:
 - seeking feedback
 - administering evaluation forms

- monitoring group's progress against agreed goals
- relevant policy, legislation, codes of practice and national standards including Commonwealth and state/territory legislation, for example:
 - competency standards
 - licensing
 - industry/workplace requirements
 - duty of care under common law
 - recording information and confidentiality requirements
 - anti-discrimination including equal opportunity, racial vilification and disability discrimination
 - workplace relations
 - industrial awards/enterprise agreements
 - National Reporting System
- OHS relating to the facilitation of group processes, including:
 - assessment and risk control measures
 - reporting requirements for hazards
 - safe use and maintenance of relevant equipment
 - emergency procedures
 - sources of OHS information
 - role of key workplace persons
 - policies and procedures relevant to the learning environment

Required skills and attributes include:

interpersonal skills to:

- establish trust
- maintain appropriate relationships
- use appropriate body language
- actively listen and empathise
- notice people's non-verbal cues and signals
- resolve conflict

communication skills to:

- project voice clearly
- give constructive feedback
- give clear instructions or directions
- clearly explain ideas and opinions
- clarify others' ideas
- team leading skills to:
- offer support and assistance
- tactfully direct discussions 'back on track'
- ensure everyone feels heard in group discussions
- technology skills to:
- search electronic information and reference sources
- use software packages to produce visual learning aides
- document processes/outcomes
- use electronic communication methods
- integrative thinking skills to:
- explore issues from a number of contrasting points of view
- synthesise positions/points of view
- literacy skills to:
- read and interpret relevant information to design and facilitate group processes
- prepare required documentation and information for stakeholders
- analysis skills to:
- evaluate and act on feedback
- administrative skills to:
- plan and organise meetings
- access required resources

Products that could be used as evidence include:

- handouts to be given to group members
- graphic presentations which have been developed using computer applications
- feedback from colleagues and group members on facilitation styles
- information passed onto group members regarding the outcomes of the session and any further actions to be undertaken
- preparation notes and/or response to client briefing

Processes that could be used as evidence include:

- how group session was structured
- how feedback on facilitation skills was gathered
- how new ideas were put into action
- how group members were actively listened to

Resource implications for assessment include:

- access to groups of individuals to participate in group process
- access to suitable assessment venue and equipment
- workplace documentation
- cost/time considerations
- personnel requirements

The collection of quality evidence requires that:

- assessment must address the scope of this unit and reflect all components of the unit i.e. the Elements, Performance Criteria, Range Statement, Evidence Requirements and Key Competencies
- a range of appropriate assessment methods/evidence gathering techniques is used to determine competency
- evidence must be gathered in the workplace wherever possible. Where no workplace is available, a simulated workplace must be provided
- the evidence collected must relate to a number of performances assessed at different points in time and in a learning and assessment pathway these must be separated by further learning and practice
- assessment meets the rules of evidence
- a judgement of competency should only be made when the assessor is confident that the required outcomes of the unit have been achieved and that consistent performance has been demonstrated

Specific evidence requirements must include:

- evidence collected from at least three separate group processes that address different purposes and include different groups of participants with evidence in each process reflecting:
 - planning
 - resource requirements
 - information provided to the group
 - knowledge, skills and techniques used in facilitation
 - group responsiveness and activities developed to engage the group
 - outcomes achieved
 - evaluation
 - record/report of process

Integrated assessment means that:

- this unit can be assessed alone or as part of an integrated assessment activity involving relevant units in the TAA04 Training and Assessment Training Package. Suggested units include but are not limited to:
 - *TAADEL502A Facilitate action learning projects.*