

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION OF PORTFOLIO

The Portfolio

The Portfolio is a record of the candidate learning related to the units that he/she is seeking exemption in order to support his/her claim of competence in a given area. It is a folder or file that contains:

- ▶ assessment of the candidate learning related to the competencies for which he/she is seeking recognition;
- ▶ descriptions of the activities undertaken at the place of employment;
- ▶ any courses, seminars or self-directed study which the candidate has undertaken related to the units of competence for which the candidate is seeking recognition;
- ▶ evidence from supervisors, colleagues and others about the candidate's skills and abilities related to the units of competence for which the candidate is seeking recognition.

Developing the Portfolio

One of the most difficult tasks is deciding what to include in the portfolio. The act of building a portfolio is a learning process in itself and usually includes the following stages:

- ▶ familiarization with, and self-assessment against, the units of competence for which you are seeking exemption;
- ▶ a review of your existing abilities and your learning related to the units of competence for which you are seeking exemption;
- ▶ identifying personal development needs;
- ▶ identifying other sources of help and guidance;
- ▶ identifying appropriate sources of evidence;
- ▶ identifying opportunities to maximize evidence generation;
- ▶ planning and organizing planning competencies to be assessed;
- ▶ compiling the evidence;
- ▶ presenting your portfolio for assessment.

Organising the Portfolio

The way in which you organize your portfolio is crucial. The assessor should find the portfolio easy to follow and should be able to readily identify the evidence that supports your claims for competence. There should be a Contents Page that outlines each section of the portfolio. Within each section you should place the evidence collected. This should be complete, signed and dated. The portfolio will enable you to give a comprehensive account of your skills and abilities in relation to the units of competence. In order to do this it should:

- ▶ be structured in a clear and logical way;
- ▶ be supported by evidence from colleagues and supervisors;
- ▶ describe your role and the environment in which you work;
- ▶ be easy to read and understand; and
- ▶ allow you some freedom of expression.

Authenticity of the Evidence in the Portfolio

The assessor must be sure that all of the evidence is your own work. It may be necessary for the assessor to ask questions about the evidence you have provided or for you to collect further evidence in order to confirm that the content of your portfolio is authentic. For example, when looking at a computer generated document, it can be difficult to tell if an item of evidence is entirely your own work or it may be difficult to differentiate your own work from that produced by others in your work team. In these cases a Verification Letter could confirm the authenticity of your evidence.

Is the Evidence in the Portfolio Sufficient?

Sufficiency has been achieved if:

- ▶ all of the criteria within each of the core competencies have been identified;
- ▶ your evidence is current and up-to-date;
- ▶ your performance is consistent and can be demonstrated over a period of time;
- ▶ you can demonstrate that you have the relevant knowledge and understanding and can apply it to the competencies for which you are seeking exemption.

The amount of evidence required for each competency will depend on a number of factors. An absolute minimum would be to have one item of evidence, provided this meet the criteria outlined above on competency. Generally, a single item of evidence is unlikely to demonstrate your competence. A number of evidences collected over a period of time may be needed to demonstrate this.

What Evidence is Required for Knowledge and Understanding?

Knowledge and understanding are crucial to performance. You must be able to demonstrate that you have the appropriate supporting knowledge and understanding related to the competencies. The assessor may want to ask you some questions when you submit your portfolio to check out your knowledge and understanding relating to these competencies.

Is the Evidence in Your Portfolio Current?

It is important to recognize that even if your evidence meets the competencies, it may not demonstrate that you are currently competent if it was produced some years ago. It is essential that your evidence show current competence. It may be necessary for you to include other sources of evidence in the overall package. For example, letters of verification, certificates, reports, products related to the competencies for which you are seeking credit.