

Understanding Evidence Types in Competency Based Assessment

In competency-based assessment, judgement about a person's competency is based on gathered evidence. The process seeks performance evidence, knowledge evidence, and indirectly, foundation skills evidence as described in the unit of competency.

The Nature of Evidence

Evidence must directly address what it's intended to prove. For example, a CV becomes evidence when it's used to demonstrate background experience or performed job roles. Therefore, a key aspect of gathering evidence is ensuring its relevance to the competency in question.

Types of Evidence

To inform judgements in competency-based assessment, three types of evidence are often referred to: direct, indirect, and supplementary. The categorisation can be subjective, and the same piece of evidence may be classified differently depending on its usage.

- **Direct Evidence** - Direct evidence represents what a person does or is observed to do. This could be a tangible product of work or an assessor's observation of the individual performing a task. It's often seen as the strongest form of evidence because it is concrete and directly observable.
- **Indirect Evidence** - Indirect evidence is based on what a person claims to do. Although this type of evidence might not be as powerful as direct evidence, it's still valuable and critical for processes such as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), where individuals describe their past experiences.
- **Supplementary Evidence** - Supplementary evidence supports or enhances other types of evidence when direct or indirect evidence may not be sufficient or obtainable. It could be further details provided by another assessor, or extra documents supporting an individual's claim.

Transition Between Types of Evidence

The type of evidence can change depending on its usage. For example, if an observation checklist used to collect direct evidence is passed to another assessor, their recounting of the observation becomes indirect evidence. If this indirect evidence supplements previously gathered direct evidence, it can then be classified as supplementary.

Conclusion

Direct, indirect, and supplementary evidence are all valid within competency-based assessment, with direct evidence being the most powerful. It's crucial to understand the role of each type of evidence and how to utilise them effectively in the assessment process.

Note: This VET Fact Sheet provides general information and should not be considered as legal advice.