

Assessment Feedback

Welcome to your NZOIA assessment. Assessment can be a stressful time so NZOIA has tried to design its assessment processes to make them as user friendly as possible. Assessment is about gathering enough information so that a judgement can be made on your performance against the criteria outlined in the syllabus. It is a snapshot over the two or three days. It's best that you do what you usually do and then the feedback you receive will be useful.

Assessment is happening at all times not just when you are asked to present information or perform a task. The main ways assessors gather information are:

- Your logbook
- Setting a specific task – the criteria will be clearly stated
- Setting a holistic task – this is generally a longer task where you have to consider all the environmental, group, equipment and personal factors and make decisions based on those.
- Written Tests
- Verbal questions
- Presentations to peers
- Discussion
- Observation
- Intuition

Feedback

The assessors aim to keep you informed as to your progress as honestly and clearly as they can, but if you need further clarification of assessment tasks or assessment feedback please check in with them.

During your NZOIA assessment a variety feedback techniques could be used by your assessors. These serve a variety of purposes such as:

Creating a supportive atmosphere

- Gathering a variety of evidence to make judgements
- Clarifying criteria and benchmark performance
- Letting the assessee know where they are re benchmark
- Training
- Encouraging reflective learning
- Checking on performance and decision-making.
- Checking on perceptions of group/individual

Whatever method is used it should include the following criteria:

- Develop rapport
- Allow for 2 – way communication
- Identify specific behaviours not personal comments
- Be honest
- Be purposeful
- Within scope of assessment

Following is a summary of the most common methods used:

- **Self Reflection and Peer Feedback**

You will be asked what areas of your performance need improvement and then your peers will be given the opportunity to comment on those areas.

You will then be asked what areas you performed well and again your peers will be given the opportunity to comment. After reflecting on the comments you will then be asked where you think your performance sat in regard to the benchmark. If the assessor disagrees with your assessment then further dialogue will take place to clarify criteria, expected performance. The assessors call on benchmark is final.

- **Pro-active**

You will be asked 4 questions:

- What worked well?
- Why did it work well?
- What were you trying to achieve?
- What would you change?

- **Keep, Stop and Start**

This is usually a group process where peers share with you what you should

- Keep doing
- Stop doing
- Start doing

It is important that you can give constructive feedback as well as receive it.

- **Socratic**

This is a series of one on one questions which could start with you being asked to explain why you chose to do something in a particular way.

Don't be intimidated it's not usually because you did something wrong the assessor is just trying to see whether you know the benefits or pitfalls of a specific system.

It's a style of assessing and feedback which goes a bit deeper than observation alone. It's a good opportunity to show how much you do know.

- **1 on 1**

This is direct feedback on how you performed. It is still 2-way communication so you can ask for clarification or more information.

- **Benchmark**

This is done individually or in groups and the criteria are broken down into component parts and you say whether you believe whether you have performed above the benchmark, at benchmark or below benchmark. It should be noted that 'at benchmark' is a pass. It's a time when benchmark criteria are clarified and keeps you informed as to your progress. Self assessment is an important skill for an instructor so that is being assessed as well as the criteria. The assessors call on benchmark is final.

- **Checklists**

The assessors often have checklists to keep track of what has been assessed and what still has to be assessed. It's often a series of small tasks and the assessor marks them off as they see them. If they see something which concerns them they'll choose one of the other methods to give you feedback. You can ask to see the checklists at any time.

- **Second chance**

If time permits you may be given a second chance to perform a task which you believe you usually perform better under non-assessment conditions. There is less room for error in second chance assessment and assessors expect to see a much improved performance. Second chance is not an option where client safety is the issue.

- **Not-negotiable**

This means that your assessor has stepped in and taken over because you have jeopardised your own safety or that of your clients. It is a not-negotiable fail. It usually doesn't require much feedback because you feel pretty bad about it already.

- **What, so what, now what**

This is likely to be your final feedback again it could be done individually or in a group. If you feel more comfortable with individual feedback you can request it. A NZOIA award is one small step along the pathway to becoming the best instructor you can be, so even if you pass your assessor may talk about what you need to work on next. If you are deferred the reassessment criteria will be explained.

Your assessor welcomes feedback and dialogue on decisions... but if you are contesting every decision and disagreeing with both your assessors you may need to take time out and reflect on your performance and openness to feedback.

Self-Assessment and Peer Feedback

Based on John Herons model and adapted by NZOIA

NZOIA is committed to providing quality feedback on its assessment and training courses in order to encourage self-awareness and professional growth. The Self Assessment and Peer Feedback Model (SAPF) provides a forum through which it is possible to achieve the following objectives:

1. Offer valid and useful feedback i.e. educated opinions from skilled observers are offered to interested and open recipients in a constructive atmosphere.
2. Improve each person's ability to assess their own strengths and weaknesses.
3. Increase awareness of the standards of the profession.
4. Practice effective communication techniques, especially the sharing of constructive criticism with your peers.
5. Provide the assessee with an ongoing review of their performance during the course.

The Method

Training in the use of this model is provided as necessary.

Recognising the criteria: the specific criteria being assessed must be clearly understood by everyone before commencing an assignment.

Round 1: points to improve: after completing an assignment, the assessee begins by describing those aspects of their performance which in their opinion need to be improved upon. The other members of the group are then asked by the Assessor (acting as a facilitator) to offer their views according to the same criteria. The assessee receiving feedback is encouraged to silently accept or reject any of the information as they see fit.

Round 2: strengths: the assessee then identifies those things which they did well. This is followed by each member of the group, including the Assessors.

Round 3: the benchmark: the third round asks for a single statement from each person. With the assessee going first as before, everyone is asked to state where, in their opinion, the assessee's performance is in relation to the benchmark eg. below, just below, on, above or well above the required standard.

No further discussion of the feedback takes place. Some sharing of technical matters may be valuable as a training component, but must not be confused with the feedback process.

Ground Rules

1. The feedback is given in a supportive manner, with the aim of helping the assessee to refine their self-assessment.
2. All comments are exclusively related to the criteria agreed on in advance.
3. When giving or receiving feedback, everyone should understand that they are opinions being expressed eg. "I" statements, take full responsibility for your views, look at and talk directly to the recipient
4. Feedback should be specific, be based on actual observation and avoid the hypothetical. Avoid labeling people or their characteristics, concentrate on behaviour and its affects. (refer DESC model below as a tool to help structure feedback)
5. The assessee is encouraged to mentally sift all the information, agreeing or rejecting what is offered as they believe is appropriate.
6. No discussion takes place. No justifications are necessary. Requests for clarifications can be made through the Assessor who is facilitating.
7. The assessee begins each round.
8. No mixing of rounds
9. The events of the course are confidential to those involved. Care should be taken not to discuss matters during or after the course in a manner that could be seen as a breach of trust.

The DESC model can be a useful way of organising feedback:

Describe what the assessee actually did

Explain the consequences as you perceive them

Then if it is 'things to improve'....

Suggest alternatives and outline the....

Consequences as you would expect them to occur

Note that during the course of the assessment a variety of adaptations to the model will be used to ensure quality, and the most effective use of time.

[these SAPF notes are based on material compiled by Hugh van Noorden for NZOIA Assessors]