Common Assessment for the OALCF Goal Paths

Introduction

Literacy Northwest
Regional Literacy & Basic Skills Network

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO
Ontario's employment & training network

Developed by Wendy Olson and Sandra Altenburg

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Welcome to the ***Common Assessment for the OALCF Goal Paths Resource Package***; a resource developed for practitioners working with adult learners in the Ontario Literacy and Basic Skills Program.

Background

With the introduction of the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework in 2011, Literacy and Basic Skills agencies across Ontario are implementing a competency based approach to literacy programming. In order for LBS agencies to efficiently and effectively serve learners and fully transition into the OALCF, they need to have a common assessment strategy approach and tools to ensure data integrity and accurate assessment results that support appropriate learner referrals.

This resource continues the work that was initiated by the Literacy Northwest Common Assessment Working Group in the winter of 2012. The group identified the need for one resource that incorporates initial, ongoing and exit assessment tools and practices for each goal path.

Further research, such as the survey evaluation results for the "Collective List of Assessment Tools", notes that while the tools resource is very useful, it's not comprehensive enough to inform the development of an assessment strategy or to complete a full OALCF assessment. Survey respondents also noted that many practitioners did not have the time to review and/or research all of the identified tools. The "OALCF Implementation Strategy", developed by CESBA also noted that practitioners indicated concern about how to select content and identify a starting point for instruction.

More recently, an LBS Practitioner survey conducted in the Fall of 2013 indicates that while agencies are using the tools and resources provided by the Ministry there remains a need for goal path specific, task based assessment activities that are aligned to the new framework for initial, ongoing and exit assessment. The survey results also reflect some of the same needs identified by practitioners in previous feedback such as:

- Concern about practitioner time to research and develop task based activities
- Need for assessments that are directly related to the learner's goal path
- Need for tools that help to track, analyze assessment results
- Need for tools that inform training plan development and activities
- Need for a common approach to assessment within the OALCF and CaMS reporting
- Need for resources that can be used for on-going practitioner training, knowledge retention and succession planning

The survey results also indicated that a high percentage of the respondents are using CABS and the OALCF Implementation Strategy Resources for Initial Assessment, and approximately half identified they have developed their own tools. Respondents noted that these tools are user friendly and include performance descriptors that are aligned to the new framework, and results are easy to understand and can quickly be incorporated into learning.

About the Resource:

The ***Common Assessment for the OALCF Goal Paths Resource Package*** has been developed to address practitioners concerns and build upon and compliment the above noted resources. It is a culmination of sample tasks and activities that are adapted from the "Selected Assessment Tools", provided by MTCU and other tools that are currently being used in the literacy field across Ontario.

The resource package will be available in English and French, in print and/or on-line. The resource is designed to be accessed/used by practitioners, in its entirety (all five goal paths), or for specific goal paths, and/or just the assessment activities or tracking/support tools. Each tool or resource has value in itself and can be easily incorporated into any current assessment strategy.

A note about initial skills assessment:

Current practices indicate that most agencies use an initial skills-based assessment prior to beginning task-based assessments. This practice provides the practitioner with a starting point for choosing task-based assessment activities and helps determine initial competencies and task groups to focus on. This approach provides an indication of what skills a learner has.

Using a task-based approach a learner is assessed at intake, first using a range of task-based assessment tools and activities, such as demonstrations or activities, and secondly, where necessary, skill-based activities that may involve math, reading comprehension and a writing sample. Task-based initial assessment provides an understanding of the learner's ability to use their existing literacy skills and competencies at particular levels of task complexity. This approach provides an indication of what a learner can do with the skills they have.

Striking a balance between task-based and skill-based assessment will vary depending upon learners. For example, if the learner's goal path is related to Secondary School there will be a need for skills development in order for them to transition successfully into an academic learning environment. On the other hand, a learner with a goal path related to Employment will most likely spend more time on task development. For more information on task based programming and assessment please click on the link at the bottom of this page.

This resource package is not meant to replace any current assessment processes or procedures but to compliment current practices and resources that service providers are already using. The recent practitioner survey, mentioned earlier, indicated that most agencies are already using the sample resources for initial skills-based assessment from the OALCF Implementation Resource. Therefore, we have not included a sample in this resource package. To access those resources please click the link below:

OALCF Implementation Strategy Resources:
http://www.lbspractitionertraining.com/images/stories/PDF/NewerISR/initial%20skills%20assessment.v2.pdf

Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/publications/OALCF_Task-Based_Prog_Mar_11.pdf

How is this resource organized?

The ***Common Assessment for the OALCF Goal Paths Resource Package*** contains six sections:

Section1:
Introduction and Description
Support Tools for Practitioners:

a) Sample OALCF Common Assessment Strategy

b) Task-Based Assessment, Milestone and Culminating Task Tracking Sheet

c) Blank task template

Sections 2 – Section 6 contain the five goal path resources, each goal path includes

a) Index of Activities

b) Key Development Skills Check List

c) Assessment activities for each competency, level and task group

d) Answer Guide

e) Resource List

Section 1: Contains the introduction and a description of the resource package. It also contains tools that can be used for a common assessment strategy, task tracking and task development.

1. The **Common Assessment Strategy** is a sample of a written formalized assessment strategy. The first section outlines what tools are used, when they should be used, and for what purpose. Agencies can use this tool to build upon their current assessment practices to demonstrate capacity to select and use appropriate task-based activities. The second section outlines how to use assessment results and data reports to inform decisions regarding goal paths, assessment and provides a common approach to reporting.

2. **Task Based Assessment, Milestone and Culminating Task Tracking Sheet** is a tool that practitioners can use to track and easily identify what assessment has been done and what needs to be completed. The tracking sheet can be used as documentation and a quick visual reference to show/share with your learner and/or to show progress during a monitoring visit.

3. **Sample Task Template:** A template that practitioners can use to develop their own assessment activities. Each goal path resource is designed so that practitioners can add, change or revise the assessment activities to best suit their learners or programming needs.

Sections 2 - Section 6: Contain the individual goal path resources that each contain five parts:

Part 1: Index of Activities: A list of all the assessment activities and other task groups for that goal path. Practitioners can quickly review the activity index to see what competency and tasks groups are being assessed.

Part 2: Key Development Skills List: A table consisting of the key development skills required to successfully transition and demonstrate competency to transition in that goal path. (Taken from MTCU Goal Path Descriptor, link is below). Each indicator has been aligned to the OALCF. These lists are designed so that practitioners can check off initial assessment results and then see what competencies need to be worked on. A practitioner can use this as a starting point to choose learning plan activities and training. This tool can easily be transferred into the learner's file as a tracking tool.

http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/lbs_oalcf_resources.html

Part 3: Assessment Activities and Tasks: Assessment activities for each of the six competencies, task groups and levels.

i) Activity Cover Page: is organized by Competency, task group and level and consists of:

a) Activity title and task group
b) Performance Descriptors - taken from the OALCF framework and are characteristics of learners performance and task complexity, identifies what constitutes successful task performance
c) A sample of the embedded skills/knowledge required to complete the task
d) Additional sample tasks (1-3) with links, and/or where the resource can be found
e) Practitioner's Notes: Space provided for quick observation or notes
f) Successful Completion: Space provided to easily mark if the learner was successful
g) Acknowledgment Box

Practitioners can use this cover page to easily identify learner's performance by checking off the performance descriptors and skills. Learners are able to demonstrate readiness for a milestone task and practitioners can provide evidence of task-based assessment and activities in their files.

ii) Activity Sheet(s): Most activities have a hard copy sample that practitioners can print or copy. Where there are no sample tasks we have included links where assessment pieces can quickly be downloaded for use, or the activity itself may be online. Practitioners can choose which activity is most suitable for their learners, and their learning style preference.

Part 4: Answer Sheets: Answers for each of the assessment activities.

Part 5: Resource List: Resources used for that goal path.

How does this resource align with the OALCF?

In 2012-2013 MTCU provided LBS agencies with an OALCF Implementation guide; a self-assessment tool, that describes the indicators that agencies are required to have in place to successfully transition into the new framework. The "fully in place" indicator, Section 5, Appendix B: Task-Based Assessment states: "To be fully in place an":

> ***"Agency has an assessment strategy to describe what tools are used for what purpose (initial, ongoing, exit assessment), for which transition path and under what circumstances the assessment is conducted and there is a process used for assessment results to inform overall agency targets"***

Furthermore, the MTCU Practitioner Guide to Task-Based Programming outlines a goal-directed assessment process and provides LBS agencies with an evaluation tool that compares a task-based approach to a skills-based approach. We can use this tool to guide us to better understand and work within the new framework.

This resource aligns with both of the above indicators by providing literacy practitioners with:

- a consistent approach to assessment practices through the use of a common strategy
- task-based assessment tools that are specific to the learner's goal path
- a variety of resources that are authentic and relevant to the learner's goal path
- a variety of resources/activities that are aligned to the OALCF Competencies
- a task-based approach to program assessment and programming
- support tools that are user-friendly and provide documentation of task-based assessment

For more information regarding task based assessment and programming please click on the link below:

http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/publications/OALCF_Task-Based_Prog_Mar_11.pdf

Throughout the ***Common Assessment for the OALCF Goal Paths Resource Package*** you will notice 5 icons, tiny creatures in various stages of flight and transition captured on the Activity Cover Page. Each one symbolizes the various characteristics needed for renewal, success, transition, transformation and strength, much like the characteristics our learners need to transition successfully in their chosen goal path. These tiny creatures serve as a reminder that even the most unassuming being can achieve the most amazing results and they each represent one of the five possible goal paths that you and your learner are on!

Apprenticeship Goal Path	**Ant**	Despite their tiny size these little insects are immensely strong and represent great strength of will and accomplishment. This insect above all others, is progressive, and, proactive, always adapting to the environment and never letting little things or even natural disasters get in the way of progress. It's their unsinkable nature that reminds us to keep moving forward for progress.
Employment Goal Path	**Worker Bee**	Did you know that bees are the only insect in the world that make food humans can eat? They play a significant role in the pollination of crops and the ecology. Approximately, 70% of our crops, to some degree are pollinated by bees. In many cultures the bee represents; industry, diligence, cooperation and productive hard work.
Independence Goal Path	**Lady Bug**	Believe it or not, this tiny little beetle is found almost every climate across the world. To many cultures the lady bug represents a sign of luck and prosperity, and is tied to the energies of renewal and regeneration, life and hope.
Secondary School Goal Path	**Grasshopper**	A grasshopper can only jump forward ...not backwards ... or sideways. Many believe that when a grasshopper appears before you it is connected to change. It is reaffirming you that it's time for you to make your move and forge ahead.
Post-Secondary Goal Path	**Butterfly**	Some cultures believe that if a butterfly lands on you, it represents change, rebirth, a new life or a new creation. The butterfly has the ability to change from a crawling caterpillar to a flying adult. We almost forget the struggle the butterfly has gone through because its transition is almost magical when it happens.

OALCF Common Assessment Strategy

Assessment Component	TOOL	WHY	WHEN
Initial Assessment: **Task Based**	**Common Assessment for OALCF Goal Paths Resource** - Task based assessment tools for each of the five goal paths.	- Use as a starting point to identify primary competencies to inform learner plan development and training - Identify skills gaps - Compare assessment results with "key development skills", (taken from Goal Path Descriptors) to identify tasks necessary for goal completion - Provide evidence of task based approach to assessment/programming	- After registration form is signed - or first meeting with client
Initial Assessment: **Skills Based**	**Quick Screen** http://www.lbspractitionertraining.com/oalcf/eskargo-a-oalcf-implementation-strategy-resource Or You may have developed your own as part of an intake package.	- Provides practitioner with a "snapshot" of skills and abilities - Used as a starting point to further inform task based assessment activities and help determine initial task groups, complexity of tasks and inform learner plan development - Provide evidence in file of skills & task based assessment activities specific to learners goal	- Upon second visit or dependent upon time with learner during initial intake

Assessment Component	TOOL	WHY	WHEN
Ongoing Assessment **Task Based**	**a) Common Assessment for OALCF Goal Paths Resource**	- To support initial assessment results - Learners can demonstrate readiness for milestone - Learners can demonstrate ability in other task groups of competency - To show progress and provide evidence in learner file	- When learner shows proficiency in the tasks they have been working on
Ongoing Assessment **Task Based** *continued*	**b) Milestones** - Milestones should be chosen together with learner - Provide agencies with a common way for reporting and show learner progress - More formal assessment activity	- Milestones are an end of level indicator in that task group - Learner knows exactly what is expected and what they need to do to be successful in their goal path - Builds commitment to learning as they are more engaged in their learning process - Funder indicator of learner progress and program performance	- To be administered when learner has achieved end of level indicators or when learner shows proficiency in the tasks they have been working on

Assessment Component	TOOL	WHY	WHEN
Exit Assessment **Task Based**	**a) Common Assessment for OALCF Goal Paths Resource**	- Prepare learner for exit assessment and/or culminating tasks - Resource can be used for exit assessment to demonstrate readiness for culminating task - Learners can demonstrate performance in other tasks that may be required for successful transition	- End of level competency
Exit Assessment **Task Based** *continued*	**b) Culminating Tasks** - One indicator of readiness for transition - Formal assessment activity, MTCU transition ready	- Indicator of proficiency in Key Skills required for successful transition - Funder indicator of learner progress and program performance	- To be administered prior to discussing next step destinations & referrals

Resources:

Practitioner Guide to Task Based Programming:

http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/publications/OALCF_Task-Based_Prog_Mar_11.pdf

Foundations of Assessment: http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/publications/OALCF_Foundations_of_Assessment_March_2011.pdf

Milestone User Guide: http://oalcf-repository.ca/

How do Assessment results inform agency targets?			
CaMS Reports		**Why?**	**When**
Weekly - **Case Activity Report #61** This report shows service plan case status, activities, learner profile information, outcomes and expenditures for individual clients (one line per service plan).	**Check to see if**: - Are milestones being entered, attempted, or not attained? - Are Learners "Competency Clients"? (Column Y – YES) - Review goal path percentages	- Check for integrity of data - If learner is not a Competency Client they will not show up on Report 64 - Review actual numbers with forecasted percentages - Are they matching up? Why? Why not? - Will you have to change your marketing efforts to target specific goal path?	- Each program and/or SPRA needs to decide when it is best to review these reports but at a minimum every second week to ensure data is entered prior to the release of Report 64.
Weekly – **Inactive Files Report #20** Provides a summary of cases that have not had any service plan activities recorded in the last 60 days of the last planned activity.	**Review inactive files:** - When was the last milestone scheduled? - When was the last activity scheduled? - Is the learner attending? - Is the learner at risk? - Are there a lot of inactive files? Why?	- Inactive files do not count in Report 64, they have to be shown as a "Competency Client" - Does/should the file be closed?	- Follow up with practitioner or learners as necessary

How do Assessment results inform agency targets?			
CaMS Reports		**Why?**	**When**
All Data Learner Profile **Report #60B** This report shows Information that attributes to the core measures	**Check data:** - Are we entering the data correctly? - Are we targeting those who are in the most need? - Check/review referrals in & out	- Ensure the integrity of data being pulled for Report 64 - Can compare actual to forecasted numbers - Can we improve these numbers? Is there an agency that we should be working with that we are not? Why?	- Monthly
All Data-Outcomes Report #60D - This report summarizes LBS completion information and 3, 6, and 12 month follow-up outcomes for each service delivery site. - This report refers to information that attributes to the numbered core measures noted on Service Quality reports.	**Review report for:** - Is follow up being completed in a timely manner? - Are learners satisfied with our service? - Are learners successful in their transition? - Are learners completing their service plans? - Are we reporting referrals properly?	-Ensure the integrity of data being pulled for Report 64 -Ensure the coordination of services amongst EO providers -Assist in preparation of other MTCU reports and program evaluation	- Monthly

How do Assessment results inform agency targets?			
CaMS Reports		**Why?**	**When**
DSQ Report #64 Shows performance indicators for LBS performance commitments and compares to actual results**.** Note: All of the above operational reports detail information that assists in the management and evaluation of cases and program performance.	**Review Performance Measurements:** - Are we meeting our target numbers? Above? Below? - Are numbers matching with Report 61? - Are we "hitting" the markers for - "Efficiency"? - Are learners showing progress, completing milestones? Completing culminating tasks?	- Assist with preparation of QSAR reports and reporting to stakeholders (i.e. Board of Directors) - Use as a tool to plan or revise marketing and programming activities - Able to show performance improvement to funder	- Monthly/Quarterly

Resources: http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/publications/eois_cams_reports_ref.pdf

Task-based Assessment, Milestone and Culminating Task Tracking Sheet

Learner's Name_____ **Goal Path:** _____

Find and Use Information			Communicate Ideas and Information			Understand and Use Numbers		
A	**Task Based Assessment**	**Milestone**	**B**	**Task Based Assessment**	**Milestone**	**C**	**Task Based Assessment**	**Milestone**
	Date	Date		Date	Date		Date	Date
A1.1			**B1.1**			**C1.1**		
A1.2			**B1.2**			**C1.2**		
A1.3			**B1.3**			**C1.3**		
A2.1			**B2.1**			**C2.1**		
A2.2			**B2.2**			**C2.2**		
A2.3			**B2.3**			**C2.3**		
A3			**B3.1a**			**C3.1**		
			B3.1b			**C3.2**		
			B3.2a			**C3.3**		
			B3.2b			**C4.1**		
			B3.3a			**C4.2**		
			B3.3b			**C4.3**		
			B4					

Use Digital Technology			Manage Learning			Engage with Others		
D	**Task Based Assessment**	**Milestone**	**E**	**Task Based Assessment**	**Milestone**	**F**	**Task Based Assessment**	**Milestone**
	Date	Date		Date	Date		Date	Date
D.1			**E.1**			**F**		
D.2			**E.2**					
D.3			**E.3**					

Culminating Task Description:	**Completion Date:**
Referral Notes:	

Blank Task Template

Comp.

Level

Task Group:

Other Task Groups and Levels:

Performance Descriptors

- ❑
- ❑
- ❑
- ❑
- ❑
- ❑
- ❑

Additional Sample Tasks

Embedded Skills

- ❑
- ❑
- ❑
- ❑

Practitioner Instructions

Practitioner Notes

Adapted From:

Successful	Yes	No