



30655QLD  
COURSE IN FIREARMS SAFETY  
(APPROVED FOR FIREARMS  
LICENSING IN QUEENSLAND)

TRAINERS AND ASSESSORS  
GUIDE







# TRAINERS AND ASSESSORS GUIDE



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## Foreword

The Australian community can reasonably expect that persons seeking firearms licences possess the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to use firearms lawfully, responsibly and safely. In recent years, events such as the Port Arthur tragedy, and media stories depicting violent acts involving firearms, have heightened awareness of the potential for firearm misuse. As a result more stringent gun laws have been introduced. Queensland has also legislated to ensure that applicants for licences have an adequate knowledge of safety practices for the use and storage of the category of the weapon applied for. A principal way in which this requirement may be satisfied is by the successful completion of an approved training course in weapons safety.

In Queensland we have had an externally accredited course in Weapons Act safety since 1996 and since that time applicants for firearms licences have undertaken this training and have been assessed. New national standards for vocational education and training have been introduced and consequently I have approved this new course based upon national industry-based competencies.

This new course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland) meets these standards and provides a new benchmark for firearm safety training in Australia. Its strength comes from the fact that it has been developed in close consultation with, and with input from, industry representatives from the major shooting bodies. The accompanying Trainers and Assessors Guide and Standard Assessment materials provide invaluable support in ensuring consistency of standards across the State.

I express my appreciation for the efforts of those responsible for the development of this new course.



R. ATKINSON APM  
Commissioner of Police Queensland Police Service

## SECTION A - INTRODUCTION

### Background

In May 1996, the Australasian Police Ministers Council (APMC) agreed to a number of resolutions in order to bring about uniform, national firearms laws and training. It was agreed that all jurisdictions would require first time licence applicants to complete an accredited course in firearms safety training. The accreditation was to be by an appropriate authority and there was also to be a system of accredited trainers to bring prospective licensees to the required standard. The course was to focus on firearms law, firearms safety and firearms competency.

In December 1996, the Queensland Police Service had accredited a short course, the *Weapons Act Safety Course*. In January 1997, the *Weapons Act 1990* was amended to make completion of 'a course approved by the Commissioner of Police' a requirement for firearms licensing in Queensland. The Commissioner approved the *Weapons Act Safety Course* as the course approved under the Act for weapons licensing in Queensland.

Subsequently, further national discussions led to the development of *Minimum National Standards for Firearms Safety Training in Australian States and Territories*. These standards were endorsed by the APMC in December 2000 and provided the basis for the development of the course: *30195QLD Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)*. The development of *30195QLD Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)* in 2001, conformed to all requirements for developing and documenting vocational education and training (VET) courses leading to an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Statement of Attainment.

The course development committee convened in 2001 to provide input into the development of *30195QLD Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)* comprised representatives from the RTOs approved to deliver the former *Weapons Act Safety Course*. It has continued to meet each 6 months to review implementation issues associated with the course.

In June 2005, the *Weapons Act 1990* and supporting Regulations were amended principally to include crossbows as Category M weapons and to streamline some licensing procedures. In response to these changes, the committee's membership was expanded to include representatives of relevant crossbow agencies and associations. Information from this committee has been considered in this revision of the course *30195QLD Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)*.

Input has also been sought from Weapons Licensing Branch, Queensland Police Service. Officers of this Branch monitor:

- changes to relevant legislation
- reports arising from incidents involving firearms and other specified weapons
- coroners' reports where firearms and other specified weapons have been involved.

At the national level, the working party overseeing firearms safety training for licensing purposes has monitored course development and implementation across all jurisdictions. In 2004, an outcome of this monitoring was the development of revised *Minimum National Standards for Firearms Safety Training in Australian States and Territories* that detail the minimum framework for all State and Territory firearms safety training for licence applicants. These revised standards were endorsed by the Queensland Minister for Police and Corrective Services in March 2005 and have been addressed in this revision of the course.

As part of their licence application, all members of the public seeking Weapons Act licences in Queensland are required to provide evidence of having successfully completed this course at a registered training organisation (RTO) approved by the Queensland Commissioner of Police.

**On 14 February 2007 the course was reaccredited in its current form due to the expiration of the 5 year accreditation period and was subsequently given the national code 30655QLD *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)*.**

## What is the Purpose of this Guide?

The *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)* is a competency-based course with units of competence related to categories A & B, C, D, H firearms and category M (crossbows). Units of competence related to categories A & B, C, D and H firearms are drawn from the Outdoor Recreation Industry Training Package (SRO03). The unit XBOWS001B is an enterprise unit developed by the Queensland Police Service that relates specifically to Category M (crossbows).

These units of competence are considered to be the minimum standards for persons seeking Weapons Act licences in Queensland. Potential licence applicants choose the units of competence related to the specific categories of firearms for which Weapons Act licences will be sought.

This guide is designed to assist trainers structure appropriate activities to enable learners to develop these competencies. It also assists assessors to determine each learner's level of competence against the standards and for the purpose of obtaining a Weapons Act licence in Queensland a learner's level of competence must be assessed using standard assessment materials that are included in Section E of this guide.

## How is the Guide Structured?

This guide is presented in five sections:

### **Section A – Introduction**

Section A provides a background to the *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)* and describes how the units of competence for this course were developed. It also provides an overview of competency-based training.

### **Section B – Trainers Guide**

Section B assists trainers develop a supportive learning environment and structure off-the-job training activities designed to develop learners' competence in the units of competence.

### **Section C – Assessors Guide**

Section C assists assessors determine appropriate assessment pathways for learners and provides guidelines for the selection and use of the standard assessment materials.

### **Section D – Explanation of Terms**

Section D provides an explanation of the major terms used in the guide and general information about competency standards.

### **Section E – Assessment, Recording and Evaluation Materials**

Section E comprises standard assessment materials for use with the following categories of firearms:

- Categories A & B
- Category C
- Category D
- Category H
- Category M (Crossbows)

It also contains a sample questionnaire for gathering participant feedback and a sample summary assessment sheet for recording learners' achievement on the standard assessment materials.

### **Section F – Course outline**

Section F comprises Version 1.0 of the accredited course outline for: *30655QLD - Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)*.

## Who Developed the Firearms Safety Competency Standards?

The following competencies for this *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)* are drawn from the Outdoor Recreation Industry Training Package. They encompass all requirements as specified in the *Minimum National Standards for Firearms Safety Training in Australia* and legislative requirements in Queensland for Weapons Act licensing as they relate to Categories A&B, C, D and H firearms.

SROFAS001A	Demonstrate knowledge of Firearms Legislation, firearms and community safety
SROFAS002A	Demonstrate use of Category A and B firearms safely
SROFAS003A	Demonstrate use of Category C firearms safely
SROFAS004A	Demonstrate use of Category D firearms safely
SROFAS005A	Demonstrate use of Category H firearms safely

These units were developed by the Service Industries Skills Council Ltd trading as Service Skills Australia and are nationally accredited for the period 16.01.2003 – 30.01.2007.

The competency standard: *XBOWS001B - Use crossbows lawfully, responsibly and safely* also conforms to the requirements outlined in the *Minimum National Standards for Firearms Safety Training in Australian States and Territories* and was developed by the Queensland Police Service collaboratively with representatives of the following Queensland agencies and associations:

- Archery Australia
- North Queensland Archery Association
- Queensland Living History Association
- Turbow Archery Products

Representatives of the following agencies and organisation provided further advice and assistance in the development of the course documentation and in the development of the non-endorsed materials including the standard assessment materials and the Trainers and Assessors guide.

- Queensland Rifle Association Inc
- Queensland Military Rifle Club Inc
- Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Qld) Inc
- Queensland Amateur Pistol Shooting Association Ltd
- Service Skills Australia

## What are Competency Standards?

Competency standards describe the skills, knowledge and attitudes that people need to perform their jobs to the required industry standard. The competency standards for the *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)* are the standards determined by the Commissioner of Police to be the minimum requirement for persons seeking Weapons Act licences in Queensland. They also meet the requirements as set out in the *Minimum National Standards for Firearms Safety Training in Australian States and Territories* that were endorsed by the Queensland Minister for Police and Corrective Services in March 2005.

Further general information about competency standards and their format can be found in Section D.

## What is Competency-Based Training?

Competency-based training is a key feature of the Australian Vocational Educational and Training (VET) system. It is underpinned by industry developed competency standards that describe the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to perform specific workplace roles. Competency-based training is concerned with assisting learners to develop these competencies and to enhance their abilities to transfer and apply those competencies in new situations and environments.

In summary, competency-based training:

- is organised around units of competence rather than subjects and/or training modules;
- prepares learners for assessment against nationally-endorsed competency standards based upon industry requirements;
- requires learners to demonstrate their level of competence in real and/or simulated work environments;
- is designed to be flexible and allow for the different ways people learn; and
- emphasises what a person is able to do rather than the time spent on training.

## SECTION B - TRAINERS GUIDE

### Role of the Trainer

A trainer in the *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)*, has a key role to structure learning activities that assist learners develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes outlined in the units of competence.

Another role of trainers is to support learners during learning and assessment activities. This involves:

- communicating effectively
- providing feedback about progress
- assisting learners overcome learning barriers
- providing support to those with language, literacy and numeracy difficulties
- explaining learning activities
- explaining the assessment process.

Some learners may believe that they have already gained these competency standards through either prior formal training or work and/or life experiences. The onus is upon these learners to demonstrate that they have all the knowledge skills and attitudes outlined in the competencies across their respective range statements. In practice, this means that the learner must provide sufficient documentary evidence to enable the assessor to make an informed decision. As the trainer you have a supportive role in assisting these learners determine the nature of evidence to be gathered and submitted in support of their RPL applications (see page 24).

The trainer also has other roles. These include assisting the assessor to structure assessment situations that identify learners who need further development and to counsel learners who, at the time of the assessment, do not demonstrate a satisfactory level of achievement on any of the standard assessment materials.

Provided you meet the minimum human resource requirements outlined in the *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)* your organisation/association may require you to perform both the *trainer* and *assessor* roles. The assessor role in no way negates the roles and responsibilities you have as a trainer.

Assessor roles are discussed in section C of this guide.

## Developing and Delivering Training

All training associated with the *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)* is to be conducted off-the-job. It involves both theory exercises and practical *dry and live fire* activities for Categories A&B, C, D, and H firearms and *live fire* activities for Category M (crossbows) on approved ranges and/or in approved field settings.

Your training program should:

- be responsive to the needs of learners
- allow learners to develop and practice safe firearms skills in a supervised and controlled environment
- provide opportunities for learners to explore concepts in different situations
- provide appropriate feedback about learners' progress.

Feedback from participants about the course and its delivery can assist you to adapt your delivery methods and improve your teaching techniques. The following checklist will assist you to consider relevant issues to plan a structured training approach.

My training plan requires me to:

- assess the learning needs of learners;
- explain the purpose of firearms safety training and the requirements of the *Weapons Act 1990*;
- give learners the opportunity to investigate the required skills and knowledge specified in the competency standard;
- demonstrate safe firearms/weapons handling skills specified in the competency standard;
- ensure safe firearms/weapons handling in all training situations;
- review the key points of training;
- check learners' understanding by asking them to explain required knowledge and to demonstrate firearms/weapons safety skills; and
- provide constructive feedback to learners about their performance.

A participant feedback sheet is also included in section C of this guide.

## Customisation

You will be assessing the learning needs of learners as you progress. As you do, it will become apparent that in some situations it will be necessary to modify planned activities to target the learners' prior knowledge and experiences or their specific learning styles/needs.

For example, learners with particular physical disabilities may require either specialised equipment or be restricted in the ways in which they can use firearms. Other learners may have special language, literacy and/or numeracy difficulties. It is important to customise your training to meet these special needs.

While it is essential that this customisation occurs, it is **NOT** acceptable to change the required level of competence set out in the competency standard.

The choice of units is fixed for each particular category of firearm/weapon as the specified units are mandatory for Weapons Act licensing in Queensland.

Training and assessment within units must be in accordance with the Range Statement and may reflect specific technological applications, procedures and policies of the registered provider. For example, the available approved range facilities may not suit the requirements of all categories of firearms. This variation may **NOT** change either the Performance Criteria or the Workplace Outcomes (required skills and knowledge).

SROPAS units from the Outdoor Recreation Industry training package can only be customised in accordance with the Guidelines for Customisation outlined in that training package.

Any customisation of the crossbow unit XBOWS001B can only be done in accordance with the 'Guidelines for customisation of accredited courses under the AQTF', *AQTF Guidelines for Course Developers*, July 2002 (pages 26 – 28).

## Supporting Learners

In order for you to facilitate effective learning it is important that you provide learners with ongoing support. You can support learners by:

- communicating effectively
- giving helpful feedback
- identifying potential barriers to learning
- providing support with language, literacy and numeracy
- explaining learning activities
- explaining the assessment process.

## **Communicating effectively**

Communicating in an open and positive way that provides the learner with encouragement and support about how to improve performance is an important part of developing an effective learning environment. You can foster a supportive relationship with learners by:

- being open and encouraging and avoiding an atmosphere of criticism
- providing positive feedback that engenders acceptance, builds confidence and compares performance with the competency standard
- using practical examples and visual images to explain abstract ideas and processes
- drawing upon learners' prior experiences
- explaining tasks clearly
- asking questions to make sure learners understand the specific concepts/procedures and legislative requirements
- helping learners identify and focus on overcoming skill and knowledge gaps.

## **Providing helpful feedback**

Feedback is any information that helps learners to monitor their progress. It is best when it is provided in a positive way. Feedback that is inadequate, delayed, unduly judgemental or ambiguous results in lost learning opportunities and can lead to alienation.

You can give effective feedback by:

- providing information about what learners are doing well, as well as what needs improvement
- talking about things that can be acted upon
- focusing on priority areas that need attention
- being supportive and non-judgemental
- sharing ideas and information rather than by giving advice
- being direct and specific and providing examples
- exploring alternative solutions with the learner
- avoiding overloading the learner with too much feedback
- making sure the time and place for feedback are appropriate
- asking the learner what they think they have done well
- avoiding saying "you did a great job but ..." as the learner is likely to remember the negative message rather than the positive one.

## **Identifying potential barriers to learning**

A learning barrier is anything that impedes or stops learning. Learning barriers may arise from:

- internal and external factors affecting learners' personal lives
- learners' physical and emotional states
- other physical and emotional factors related to the learning environment including interactions with the trainer.

It is important to give learners an opportunity to share what they believe to be potential barriers to their becoming competent, and discuss with them various ways of

overcoming these barriers either by customising training or encouraging them to access appropriate counselling or other avenues of advice.

Learners' language, literacy and/or numeracy support needs are often perceived to be significant barriers to learning. The level of language, literacy and/or numeracy required in the training should relate directly to the level of language, literacy and/or numeracy required by the units of competence as this outlines the level required in the workplace.

Any discussions that you have with learners about their support needs must remain confidential. The purpose of these discussions is to ensure that you, as the trainer, do not become another learning barrier and so impede learners becoming competent.

### **Providing support with language, literacy and numeracy**

Tests included in the standard assessment materials have been designed so as to reduce the demands of written language. You should select the specific forms of the tests that best meet the needs of your learners. Nevertheless, some learners may still require additional support with language, reading and writing or using numbers to complete these tests. Forms 3 and 5 have been specially designed for use in an interview situation with learners experiencing language and literacy difficulties.

Some learners may find it difficult to admit that they need support. Be sensitive to this. Strategies that can help you support the learner and to identify the help they may need are:

- ensuring initial conversations take place in a private area
- making it clear to the learner that all conversations are confidential
- endeavouring to develop a rapport with the learner and to build trust.

### **Explaining the learning activities**

Learning activities are designed to assist learners develop competence so that they can present evidence to be assessed against the competency standard.

It is important to explain the format of a unit of competency (see also section D pp 29) and the way it can be used to guide learning:

- the **elements** – describe the outcomes that contribute to the unit of competency i.e., what industry related tasks a learner will be able to do as a result of the training
- the **performance criteria** – specify what is to be assessed and the required level of performance based on the application of knowledge and skills to the task
- the **required skills and knowledge** – describe the essential skills and knowledge
- the **key competencies** – provides a ranking of how the key competencies are demonstrated against three levels of performance
- the **range statement** – relates to the full unit of competence and provides the range of contexts and conditions to which the performance criteria apply. It

allows for different work environments and situations that will affect performance

- the **evidence guide** – the underpinning knowledge, skills and attitudes learners need to know and be able to demonstrate to prove competence. It provides essential advice for assessment of the unit of competency and must be read in conjunction with the performance criteria and the range statement of the unit of competency and the Training Package Assessment Guidelines.

Learners should know what to expect in the learning activities you have organised so that they can be prepared and use the learning opportunity to its full potential. You should encourage learners to raise any issues they may have about the activities.

## Explaining the assessment process

Learners need to know what will be expected of them in terms of assessment. This will include:

- what is assessable
- how the assessment relates to training outcomes (knowledge, skills and attitudes)
- what the assessable tasks are
- when they will be administered
- what standards of achievement are expected.

Learners should also be encouraged to identify any relevant prior learning that they have. This may mean that they do not need to complete all of the training, or can be recognised as already competent.

## Working with Assessors

If you are not the assessor it will help if you maintain close contact with the assessor as they can be a valuable support to the learning process. They can:

- assist with explaining the competency standards to the learner
- assist the learner to collect and prepare evidence required for presentation and assessment
- provide feedback to the learner about their performance
- assist in the identification of learning needs.

Where the result of assessment is that the learner is “not yet competent”, the assessor can discuss with both you and the learner, learning options that will give the learner the opportunity to develop competence in the required areas.

## SECTION C – ASSESSORS GUIDE

### Role of the Assessor

The *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)* is a competency-based course with units of competence drawn from the Outdoor Recreation Industry Training Package related to Categories A & B C, D and H firearms and an enterprise unit developed by the Queensland Police Service that relates to Category M (crossbows).

Learners choose the units of competence for the particular category/ies of firearms for which Weapons Act licences will be sought. These units of competence are considered to be the minimum standard for persons seeking Weapons Act licences in Queensland.

The course also meets the requirements set out in the *Minimum National Standards for Firearms Safety Training in Australian States and Territories* that were endorsed by the Queensland Minister for Police and Corrective Services in March 2005. It also meets the requirement of the *Weapons Act 1990* that the Commissioner of Police approve a course of safety training for Weapons Act licence applicants.

There is a potential for litigation as well as serious personal and community injury or damage arising from either the misuse or careless use of firearms. The Commissioner of Police needs to be assured that all applicants for Weapons Act licences in Queensland have basic firearms safety knowledge and skills and that they will observe safe practices when shooting. They must be able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge to the standard outlined in the units of competence associated with the *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)*.

Your role as an assessor is to determine each learner's level of competence against these standards. It is important that this is done carefully and thoroughly with the results recorded to ensure that only those with the appropriate knowledge and skills receive the *Statement of Attainment* and are thus eligible to apply for Weapons Act licences in Queensland. To do this you will need to ensure that you have sufficient, appropriate information about each learner to substantiate your assessment. This could become particularly important in the event of a learner's firearms safety knowledge and skills coming into question arising from an incident involving a firearm.

It is imperative that you are satisfied that the assessment evidence upon which you make your judgement represents the learner's own work. It is not permissible for learners to be given standard assessment materials to be completed in other than an appropriately supervised environment. For example it is not permissible for standard assessment materials to be completed at home, unsupervised.

## Standard Assessment Materials

To guide you in the assessment process, a series of standard assessment materials has been developed for each category of firearms. These materials ensure an appropriate balance is maintained between assessing learners' knowledge of relevant legislative provisions, social responsibilities and safety procedures and their demonstration of safe firearms handling skills and practices on an approved range or in an approved field firing setting. They also provide consistency in assessment standards to be applied across the State.

For the purpose of obtaining a Weapons Act licence in Queensland, a learner's level of competence must be assessed using the standard assessment materials. These materials have been carefully designed not only to ensure an appropriate coverage of each unit of competence and its underpinning knowledge and skills but also to ensure that the principles of validity, reliability, flexibility and fairness are met.

## Organisation of the Standard Assessment Materials

There are standard assessment materials for Categories A&B, C, D and H firearms and a separate set for Category M (crossbows). These materials are discussed below and the materials themselves appear in Section E of this guide.

A The standard assessment materials for Categories A&B, C, D and H firearms include:

- a **common safety test** applicable to all categories of firearms.

The *common safety test* seeks to determine learners' knowledge of:

- legislative provisions in Queensland concerning firearms and their use
- social responsibilities associated with the use of firearms
- general firearms safety procedures.

This test appears in parallel forms to enable it to be used in individual or group settings and with persons with language, literacy and numeracy difficulties. For example the interview schedule – Form 3 can be used for RPL interviews as well as with learners with language difficulties. Should a learner not reach the required standard on their first attempt on this test a second form can be used to re-assess them after further formal training.

It is mandatory that learners demonstrate satisfactory achievement on this test prior to engaging in live firing on approved ranges and/or in approved field firing settings.

Learners who already hold a Weapons Act licence for a particular category of firearm and are seeking a licence for another category of firearm may be granted RPL for this common safety test.

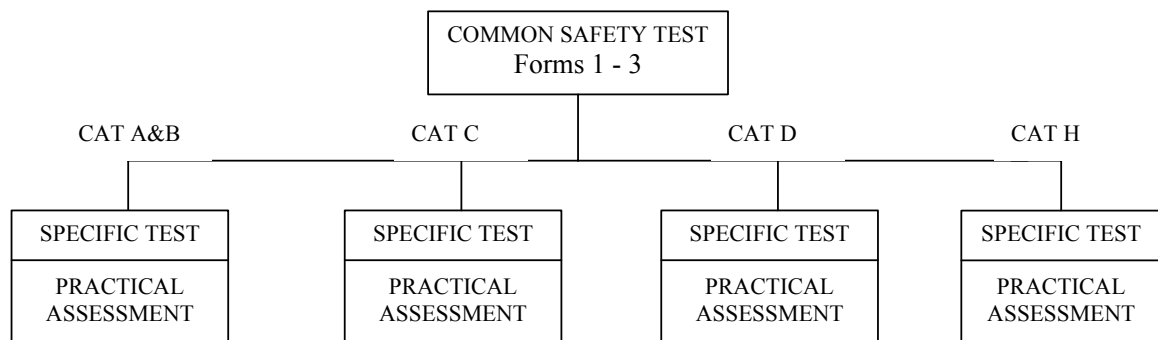
- a **specific test** related to each particular category of firearm

Specific tests address learners' knowledge and understanding of firearms terminology, basic firearm functions, firearms safety issues and procedures, and the responsible use of firearms for each category of firearm.

- a **practical assessment** specific to each category of firearms.

Practical assessments are comprised of an observation schedule for the particular category of firearm to guide the assessor in observing the learner's performance in both live and dry fire situations on either an approved range or in an approved field firing setting.

This organisation of the standard assessment materials for Categories A&B, C, D and H firearms is shown in the diagram below:



B The standard assessment materials for Category M (crossbows) include

- a **crossbow safety test**.

The *crossbow safety test* seeks to determine learners' knowledge of:

- legislative provisions in Queensland concerning crossbows and their use
- social responsibilities associated with the use of crossbows
- general crossbow safety procedures.

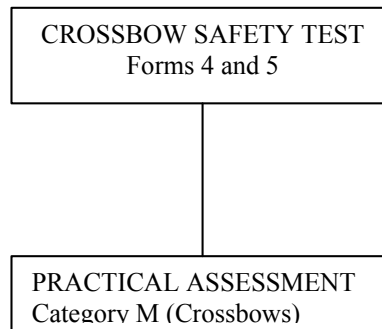
This test appears in parallel forms to enable it to be used in individual or group settings and with persons with language, literacy and numeracy difficulties. For example the interview schedule – Form 5 can be used for RPL interviews as well as with learners with language difficulties. Should a learner not reach the required standard on their first attempt on Form 4 of this test the interview schedule (Form 5) can be used to re-assess them after further formal training.

It is mandatory that learners demonstrate satisfactory achievement on this test prior to engaging in live firing on approved ranges and/or in approved field firing settings.

- **a *practical assessment***

The crossbow practical assessment is comprised of an observation schedule to guide the assessor in observing the learner's performance in live fire situations on either an approved range or in an approved field firing setting.

This organisation of the standard assessment materials for Categories M (crossbows) is shown in the diagram below:



## Supplementary Assessment

You may choose to develop and use supplementary assessment materials to further assist you in making judgements about the competence of particular learners. This supplementary assessment must not replace the use of the standard assessment materials.

## Additional Assessor Responsibilities

As an assessor, you also have a number of other responsibilities that include:

- providing information to the learner about the assessment process
- explaining the competency standards to the learner where required
- giving guidance to the learner about how to document acceptable evidence for the RPL process (see pages 24)
- identifying and making contact with the trainers involved
- identifying learning needs when the learner is assessed as 'not yet competent'
- recording and reporting the outcomes of assessment i.e., "signing off"
- organising Statements of Attainment to be awarded at the completion of the assessment.

For the Statement of Attainment associated with the *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)* to be recognised nationally, assessment must be conducted by an appropriately accredited workplace assessor and

under the auspices of a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) acting in accordance with the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (July 2005)* under the Australian Quality Training Framework.

## Assessment Pathways

There are two major assessment pathways to meet the assessment needs of differing groups of learners. These are:

- (a) Assessment as part of the *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)* for those learners without relevant prior training and life experiences; and
- (b) Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for those learners whose prior training and/or life experiences may have already equipped them with the competency.

In either assessment pathway it is a requirement for Weapons Act licensing in Queensland that assessors use the standard assessment materials to determine learners' competence.

## Using the Standard Assessment Materials

The standard assessment materials are designed to elicit responses from learners that will enable the assessor to make a judgement about each learner in relation to the specific units of competence chosen by the learner.

The standard assessment materials help the assessor to make a judgement by:

- structuring the assessment
- defining what evidence is needed to demonstrate competence
- determining what information is gathered and used to make judgements about the learner's level of competence.

There are four steps to follow when you use the standard assessment materials:

- Step 1 Choose the assessment pathway
- Step 2 Select the appropriate standard assessment materials
- Step 3 Assess the learner's competence
- Step 4 Record the assessment results

## **Step 1 Choose the assessment pathway**

Learners in association with their trainers and/or assessor will select the assessment pathway most appropriate to their backgrounds and training needs. For most learners this will be *pathway (a)* that involves assessment as part of their participation in the *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)*.

A minority of learners will have developed the competence through prior training and/or life experiences and for them, *pathway (b)* that involves assessment through the RPL process is more appropriate.

## **Step 2 Select the appropriate standard assessment materials**

In order to make a decision about a learner's level of competence you will need to use a combination of assessment materials. This will ensure that you gather sufficient evidence to enable you to make a valid judgement about the learner's demonstration of the required level of performance and knowledge. The standard assessment materials provide a balanced assessment of a learner's knowledge, skills and attitudes.

You should select the specific standard assessment materials for a particular learner after consideration of the appropriate assessment pathway and the evidence necessary in order for you to make an informed judgement about them as it relates to a particular category/ies of firearms/weapons.

### **Assessment materials for pathways (a) and (b)**

#### **Pathway (a) – Assessment as part of training**

This will be the pathway for the majority of learners and will involve formal training as part of the *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)* in:

- legislative provisions concerning firearms and their use
- social responsibilities associated with the use of firearms
- general safety procedures
- firearms handling skills appropriate to the specific category/ies of firearms

Assessment of learners seeking Weapons Act licences in Queensland who are following this pathway must be by way of the standard assessment materials.

Learners must demonstrate satisfactory achievement on the:

- relevant safety test
- practical assessment.

Learners undertaking assessment in relation to Categories A&B, C, D, and H firearms must also demonstrate satisfactory achievement on the specific test(s) related to the particular category/ies of firearms for which licences are being sought

You must be satisfied that the assessment evidence used to make your judgement, particularly in the case of the safety test, is the learner's own work. It is NOT permissible for learners to be given standard assessment materials to be completed in other than an appropriately supervised environment. For example, it is not permissible for standard assessment materials to be completed at home, unsupervised.

### **Pathway (b) – Recognition of prior learning (RPL)**

The process that allows for the recognition of competence acquired through prior formal training or work experience or life experience is called *Recognition of Prior Learning*

In this pathway the onus is upon learners to demonstrate that they have **all** the knowledge and skills outlined in the units of competence across their respective range statements. In practice, this means that the learner must provide sufficient documentary evidence to enable you to make your decision.

### **RPL application**

An RPL application should comprise:

- a portfolio
- an interview\*
- a demonstration\*

\* where the applicant has received formal training as part of particular occupations such as police officer, security guard or member of the armed services you may choose to waive this requirement.

The portfolio must include a written submission detailing the applicant's relevant prior training and formal qualifications as evidence that the applicant has the knowledge, skills and attitudes to use the particular category/ies of firearms legally, responsibly and safely across the range statements outlined in the units of competence. For example, a learner may previously have completed the former *Course in Weapons Act Safety* or formal firearms safety training as part of particular occupations such as police officer, security guard or member of the armed services.

The portfolio may also contain reports from coaches/ supervisors attesting to the applicant's relevant knowledge and skills; training reports; activity reports of applicant's past work performance; entries in log books, note books and completed reports; or a previous assessor's report on observations of the applicant's work performance.

As the assessor you should determine whether the applicant has the underpinning knowledge particularly of legislative changes that may have taken place since their prior training. Included in the series of standard assessment materials are interview schedules (Forms 3 and 5) that directly address this underpinning knowledge for the particular categories of firearms/weapons. Each of these interview schedules provides a set of questions and beside each are the key points the applicant is expected to include in their answers.

An alternative to an interview is to have the applicant undertake the relevant safety test. You may also wish to confirm the applicant's practical skills for the particular category/ies of firearms. The observation checklist which comprises the practical assessment will assist you to confirm/assess the applicant's firearms handling skills.

### **Step 3 Assess the learner's competence**

This is where as the assessor you make a judgement about the learner's competence against the standards stated in the units of competency. The judgement could be either that the learner is "competent" or "not yet competent". This assessment relates to each unit of competence as a whole and in making your assessment you will be considering the learner's achievement on each of the standard assessment materials and determining whether it meets the required standard.

The learner must be advised about how the assessment will be conducted including the range of assessment materials to be used and where and when the assessment will take place. It is important to remember that learners will be required to demonstrate competence on both tests of knowledge and practical tests of safe firearms handling skills. The Summary Assessment Sheet requires the learner to acknowledge that he/she received this assessment briefing prior to undertaking the assessment.

The learner should be given the opportunity to generate further evidence and undertake further assessment if assessed not to have reached the required standard on any of the standard assessment materials or be counselled to undertake structured training to develop the required standard.

### **Step 4 Record the assessment results**

The Summary Assessment Sheet has been designed so that you can maintain a cumulative record of each student's results. It also has spaces for both you and the learner to sign. This is to record that you have advised the learner of his/her assessment results and the reasons for your decision.

It is the responsibility of the RTO to award the learner with the appropriate *Statement of Attainment*. For statements of attainment to be awarded, the RTO will have a process or system so that you can relay the results of assessment to the relevant administrative area. Where there are several trainers and assessors or the assessment is conducted over a number of occasions it is recommended that RTOs use the Summary Assessment Sheet. This sheet remains with the learner and records the results of his/her assessment. A sample summary assessment sheet is included in Section E.

## **Providing feedback to learners**

Providing feedback to learners is an important part of the assessment process. Every effort should be made to give timely and constructive feedback. You should provide immediate and supportive feedback to the learner as this will help to ensure the

learner maintains the motivation to continue with the training and assessment process. Feedback may be provided immediately after the assessment session or at a time arranged with the learner. It is recommended that feedback be given after all observations and at the conclusion of any interview with the learner.

### **Review process**

Learners must have access to a formal process of review if they genuinely believe that:

- the assessment process has been either unfair or biased; or
- their results do not adequately reflect their demonstrated level of performance on the standard assessment materials.

## **Confidentiality of assessment records**

It is your responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of assessment records. Your RTO will have a system to ensure confidentiality that you will need to follow. Assessment records can only be accessed by the learner, the assessor, the RTO's nominated representative and the members of the team conducting formal audits of the RTO. **Access by anyone else requires written authorisation by the learner.**

## **Working with trainers**

If you are the assessor, but not the trainer, you will need to maintain close contact with the trainer/s as they can be a valuable resource during the assessment process.

Trainers can:

- assist with explaining the competency standards to the learner
- assist the learner to collect and prepare evidence required for presentation and assessment
- work with you to set up assessment opportunities.

The result of assessment may be that the learner has not achieved the required standard on a particular standard assessment material or is 'not yet competent' on a unit as a whole. In this case you can discuss with the learner and/or the trainer, learning options that will give the learner the opportunity to develop competence in the required areas.

## **Reviewing the assessment processes**

To ensure the quality of the assessment process (validity, reliability, flexibility and fairness) it is important for you to review the processes used. Consistency in the interpretation of the evidence and checking that the competency standards and standard assessment materials are current must be considered.

## SECTION D – EXPLANATIONS OF TERMS

### Terms

<b>Accreditation</b>	Accreditation is the process of formal recognition of a course by the State accrediting body where no relevant Australian Qualifications Framework qualification or units of competency from a Training Package exist.
<b>Accredited course</b>	An accredited course is a structured sequence of vocational education and training that leads to an Australian Qualifications Framework qualification or Statement of Attainment.
<b>Assessment</b>	Assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace as expressed in the relevant endorsed industry/enterprise competency standards.
<b>Assessment context</b>	The assessment context is the environment in which the assessment will be carried out. This will include physical and operational factors, the assessment system within which assessment is carried out, opportunities for gathering evidence in a number of situations, the purpose of the assessment, who carries out the assessment and the period of time during which it takes place.
<b>Assessment guidelines</b>	Assessment guidelines are an endorsed component of a Training Package which underpins assessment and which sets out the industry approach to valid, reliable, flexible and fair assessment.
<b>Assessment materials</b>	Assessment materials are non-endorsed components of a Training Package or course and include any tests/resources that assist in the assessment process.
<b>Assessment methods</b>	Assessment methods are particular techniques used to gather different types of evidence. They may include questioning, observation, interviews, portfolios, and written and practical tests.
<b>Assessment process</b>	The assessment process is the planned set of procedures for assessing learners' competence, communicating the results of assessment and recording learners' assessment results.

<b>Assessment system</b>	An assessment system is a controlled and ordered process designed to ensure that assessment decisions made are consistent, fair, valid and reliable.
<b>Assessor</b>	An assessor is an appropriately accredited person responsible for assessing learners and recording their assessment results.
<b>Audit</b>	An audit is a systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining evidence to determine whether the activities and related outcomes of a training organisation comply with the <i>Standards for Registered Training Organisations</i> .
<b>Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)</b>	Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is the policy framework that defines all qualifications recognised nationally in post-compulsory education and training within Australia.
<b>Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF)</b>	The Australian Quality Training Framework is the nationally agreed set of quality arrangements for the vocational education and training system in Australia.
<b>Competency</b>	The specification of knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill to the standards of performance required in the workplace.
<b>Competency standard</b>	Competency standards define the competencies required for effective performance in the workplace. Standards are expressed in outcome terms and have a standard format comprising of unit code, unit title, unit descriptor, elements of competency, performance criteria, required skills and knowledge, key competencies, range statement and evidence guide. Also see unit[s] of competency
<b>Element of competency</b>	Elements of competency are the basic building blocks of competency and continue the description of the key purpose of the unit itself. They describe, in outcome terms, functions a person is able to perform in a particular area of work. These outcomes must be demonstrable and assessable.

<b>Evidence / quality evidence</b>	<p>Evidence is information gathered which, when matched against the performance criteria, provides proof of competency. Evidence can take many forms and be gathered from a number of sources. Assessors often categorise evidence in different ways for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• direct, indirect and supplementary sources of evidence;</li> <li>• evidence collected by the learner or evidence collected by the assessor;</li> <li>• historical and recent evidence collected by the learner; and</li> <li>• current evidence collected by the assessor.</li> </ul> <p>Quality evidence is valid, authentic, sufficient and current evidence that enables the assessor to make the assessment judgement.</p>
<b>Evidence guide</b>	<p>The evidence guide is part of a unit of competency. Its purpose is to direct assessment of the unit of competency in the workplace and/or a training environment. The evidence guide specifies the context of assessment, the critical aspects of evidence and the required or underpinning knowledge and skills. The evidence guide relates directly to the performance criteria and range statement defined in the unit of competency.</p>
<b>Flexible learning and assessment</b>	<p>Flexible learning and assessment means an approach to VET which allows for the adoption of a range of learning and assessment strategies (including online) in a variety of learning environments to cater for differences in learning styles, learning interests and needs, and variations in learning opportunities</p>
<b>Nationally recognised training</b>	<p>Nationally recognised training means training and assessment, delivered by a Registered Training Organisation, which meets the requirements specified in national industry/enterprise training packages or in AQF accredited courses where no relevant training package exists.</p>
<b>National recognition</b>	<p>National recognition means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the recognition and acceptance by an RTO of AQF qualifications and statements of attainment issued by other RTOs, enabling individuals to receive national recognition of qualifications and statements of attainment</li> <li>• recognition for national operation of training organisations registered under AQTF standards</li> </ul>

<b>Performance criteria</b>	Performance criteria are evaluative statements that specify what is to be assessed and the required level of performance. They specify the activities, skills, knowledge and understanding that provides evidence of competent performance for each element of competency.
<b>Qualification</b>	Qualification means formal certification in the VET sector by an RTO and that a person has achieved all the units of competency stated for the qualification in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a nationally endorsed Training Package</li><li>• an accredited course that provides training for the qualification.</li></ul>
<b>Quality</b>	Quality means the ability of a set of inherent characteristics of a product, system or process to fulfil requirements of customers and other interested parties.
<b>Range statement</b>	The range statement links the required knowledge and organisational and technical requirements to a context. It describes any contextual variables that will be used or encountered when applying the competency in a workplace situation.
<b>Reassessment</b>	An assessment activity initiated to determine a learner's achievement after additional formal training or as a result of an appeal against the outcome of a previous assessment.
<b>Recognition of prior learning (RPL)</b>	RPL means recognition of competencies held, regardless of how, when or where the learning occurred. RPL assesses the individual's prior learning to determine the extent to which that individual is currently competent against the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards of entry to, and/or partial or total completion of, a qualification.
<b>Records of assessment</b>	The information of assessment outcomes which is retained by the organisation that is responsible for issuing the nationally recognised Statement of Attainment or qualification.
<b>Registered training organisation (RTO)</b>	Registered Training Organisation means a training organisation registered in accordance with the AQTF, within the defined scope of registration (see scope of registration).

<b>Registration</b>	Registration means the formal approval and recognition of a training organisation by a state or territory registering body in accordance with <i>the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (July 2005)</i> and <i>the Standards for State and Territory Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies</i>
<b>Review process</b>	A process whereby the person being assessed, or other interested party, such as an employer, may dispute the outcome of an assessment and seek reassessment.
<b>Scope of registration</b>	Scope of registration means the defined scope for which a training organisation is registered that identifies the particular services and products that can be provided. An RTO may be registered to provide either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• training delivery and assessment services and products and issue AQF qualifications and statements of attainment or</li> <li>• assessment services and products and issue AQF qualifications and statements of attainment</li> </ul>
<b>State or territory course accrediting body</b>	The state or territory course accrediting body is the body responsible under the state or territory VET legislation and decision-making framework for administration of the accreditation of courses
<b>State or territory registering body</b>	The state or territory registering body is the body responsible under the state or territory VET legislation and decision-making framework for all the processes related to the registration of training organisations, including the imposition of sanctions
<b>Statement of attainment</b>	Statement of Attainment means formal certification in the VET sector by an RTO under the AQF that a person has achieved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• part of a qualification</li> <li>• one or more units of competency from a nationally endorsed Training Package or</li> <li>• all the units of competency comprising learning outcomes for an accredited course that does not meet the requirements for a qualification</li> </ul>
<b>Learner</b>	A learner is any person presenting for assessment. The learner may be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a learner undertaking training in the <i>Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)</i></li> <li>• a learner/worker who has undertaken firearms safety training in a workplace</li> <li>• an experienced person wanting their firearms safety knowledge and skills recognised</li> <li>• or any combination of the above.</li> </ul>
<b>Trainer</b>	An appropriately accredited person approved by the RTO to deliver training in the <i>Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)</i> .

**Training package**

A training package is an integrated set of nationally endorsed competency standards, assessment guidelines and AQF qualifications for a specific industry, industry sector or enterprise.

**Unit(s) of competency**

Unit of competency means the specification of knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace. Units of competency define the outcomes for training delivery and assessment and lead to the issuance of AQF qualifications and Statements of Attainment. Also see competency standard. The unit of competency is the smallest component for recording learners' competence.

## Competency Standards

Competency standards identify workplace requirements and are designed to allow flexible application in the workplace, but are sufficiently detailed to provide consistent outcomes.

Competency standards are nationally recognised occupational standards which clearly describe what is expected of people working in various occupations. They provide criteria to assess whether a person is performing competently and they specify the underpinning knowledge and skills which are essential for competent performance.

The *Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland)* is based on units of competence drawn from the Outdoor Recreation Industry Training Package relating to Categories A&B, C, D and H firearms and an enterprise unit developed by the Queensland Police Service that deals with the lawful, responsible and safe use of crossbows.

Each unit of competence specifies the particular job function or activity and is made up of the following components:

<b>Unit Code</b>
The unit code conforms to national coding requirements.
<b>Unit Title</b>
The title is a succinct statement of the outcome of the unit of competency.

<p><b>Unit Descriptor</b></p> <p>The unit descriptor assists with clarifying the unit title by providing additional information and notes any relationship with other industry units.</p>
<p><b>Elements</b></p> <p>Elements describe the outcomes which contribute to a unit of competency.</p>
<p><b>Performance Criteria</b></p> <p>Performance criteria specify the required level of performance and are assessable.</p>
<p><b>Required skills and knowledge</b></p> <p>This section describes the required essential skills and knowledge that the person needs to perform work to the required standard. For example, learners will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of what constitutes a firearm under the legislation and the categories of firearms under the Weapons Categories Regulation 1997.</p>
<p><b>Key competencies</b></p> <p>This section lists the 7 Mayer key competencies. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collecting, analysing and organising information</li> <li>• communicating ideas and information</li> <li>• planning and organising activities</li> <li>• working with others and in teams</li> <li>• using mathematical ideas and techniques</li> <li>• solving problems</li> <li>• using technology.</li> </ul> <p>The Application and performance level provides a ranking of how the key competencies are demonstrated against three levels of performance. For example, <i>collecting, analysing and organising information</i> is at level 1 in all units of this course and might involve learners sourcing and locating information in relevant legislation, manufacturers' handbooks and specific range rules in order to determine legislative and range requirements and the effective operation and maintenance of equipment.</p>
<p><b>Range statement</b></p> <p>The range statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole providing the range of contexts to which the performance criteria apply. It allows for different work environments and situations that will affect performance.</p>

**Evidence Guide**

The evidence guide describes the underpinning knowledge and skills that must be demonstrated to prove competence. It provides essential advice for assessment of the unit of competency and must be read in conjunction with the performance criteria and the range statement of the unit of competency and the Training Package Assessment Guidelines.

# SECTION E – ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND EVALUATION MATERIALS

## STANDARD ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

For Category A&B, C, D and H firearms, the standard assessment materials are comprised of:

- (a) a ***common safety test*** applicable to all categories of firearms.

This test addresses the learner's knowledge of legislative provisions in Queensland concerning firearms and their use, social responsibilities associated with the use of firearms and general firearms safety procedures.

The test appears in parallel forms (Forms 1 and 2) to enable it to be used in individual and/or group settings.

- (b) a ***common safety test (Interview format)***

This test assesses the same scope as the common safety test. It is an interview schedule to be used in situations where learners are either:

- seeking recognition through the RPL process; or
- experiencing language, literacy and/or numeracy disabilities which would disadvantage them in satisfactorily completing Forms 1 or 2 of the test.

- (c) a ***specific test*** related to each particular category of firearm (Form 3)

These tests address the learner's knowledge and understanding of firearms terminology, basic firearms functions, firearms safety issues and procedures, and the responsible use of firearms for each category of firearm.

- (d) a ***practical assessment*** specific to each category of firearms.

These tests are comprised of an observation schedule for the particular category of firearm to guide the assessor in observing the learner's performance in both live and dry fire situations on either an approved range or in an approved field firing setting and under the control of an approved range officer.

Assessors may, if they so choose, use supplementary assessment materials to further assist them make judgements about the competence of learners.

For Category M (Crossbows) the standard assessment materials are comprised of:

(a) a **crossbow safety test**

This test (Form 4) assesses learners understanding of the basic safety rules applicable to crossbows and their responsibilities under relevant legislative provisions in Queensland. It also assesses their knowledge of the basic parts of crossbows and their functions.

(b) a **crossbow safety test (Interview format – Form 5)**

This test assesses the same scope as the crossbow safety test. It is an interview schedule to be used in situations where learners are either:

- seeking recognition through the RPL process; or
- experiencing language, literacy and/or numeracy disabilities which would disadvantage them in satisfactorily completing Form 4 of the test.

(c) a **practical assessment – Category M (Crossbows)**

This test is comprised of an observation schedule that guides the assessor in observing the learner's performance in *live fire* situations on either an approved range or in an approved field firing setting and under the control of an approved range officer.



**PART B: Learner to complete:**

I was advised about the assessment requirements for this course before being assessed and I have been informed of my assessment results on this test and the reasons for that decision.

Learner's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK SHEET

### COURSE IN FIREARMS SAFETY (Approved for Firearms Licensing in Queensland)

<b>Name of Trainer:</b>	
<b>Name of Participant (optional):</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

### PURPOSE

The purpose of gathering participant feedback is to continually improve the quality of this course and its delivery.

### INSTRUCTIONS

Please provide your feedback by placing a ✓ in the relevant boxes and written comments in the spaces provided.

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#### Content

Course content	Agree strongly	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
The content was appropriate to my needs.					
The amount of content was just right.					

- What content do you think should be cut out?

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- What other content do you think should be included?

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### Presentation Methods

Course presentation	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
The degree to which the presentation methods held my interest was...					
The balance of theory and practice was...					

What other presentation methods would you suggest for this course?

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- **Course Trainers**

Course trainers	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
The content knowledge of the trainers was...					
The professionalism of the trainers was...					
The communication skills of the trainers were...					

What other feedback would you give the trainer/s?

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- **Resource Materials**

Course material	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
The provision of handout resource materials to reinforce the course content was...					

What other resource materials would you have found helpful?

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### **Duration of Course**

The course was:

<b>Too short</b>	<b>Just right</b>	<b>Too long</b>

- **General Comments**

Please make any other comments or suggestions you might have.

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**Thankyou**