

Appendix C

Expectations for Writing Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes

- Are statements of performance that can be readily demonstrated by a student indicating that certain learning has been achieved.
- Focus on the terminal performance of the essential knowledge, skill, attitude, and not on what the learning is or where and how learning occurs.
- Describe essential knowledge, skills, attitudes in the vocational, generic employability, and general education areas.
- Are expressed at a program level and at a course level:
 - **Vocational or Program Learning Outcomes:** Describe the essential, vocationally relevant learning that all students must demonstrate in order to graduate from a program.
 - **Course-level Learning Outcomes:** Define only the essential, significant, transferable performances to be achieved by all learners before they receive credit for that specific course, either vocationally or with regard to essential employability skills. Can be achieved without dictating specific course content, teaching methods, or assessment practices.
 - **Elements of Performance (EOPs):** Are associated with specific learning outcomes and define/clarify the progression of learning/skill development to achieve the course level learning outcomes. Are indicators of the means by which the student may proceed to satisfactory performance of the learning outcome.

Guidelines for Expression

Departmental consensus on the learning outcomes of a course is often best achieved by faculty and instructors of the same course working in teams. Determine the essential outcomes of a course by answering the following question: What should a student be able to do by the end of the course to demonstrate the required knowledge, skills and/or attitudes?

There should be as many outcomes as needed to clearly reflect what the students should be able to do upon completion of your course. However, a general rule of thumb for a 42-hour course is 3 to 5 outcomes.

Characteristics

1. A learning outcome describes one of the **required skill** proficiencies for the course.

Original Example:	Improved Example:
Explain the importance of preventive maintenance.	Perform preventive maintenance on pneumatic and hydraulic systems.

2. A learning outcome captures a performance that a competent person would **use outside the context of the course and reflect skills demonstrated in the workforce or industry.**

Original Example:	Improved Example:
Be familiar with safety regulations related to child care.	Respond appropriately to unsafe or emergency situations

3. A learning outcome begins with an **action verb** that describes what the learner will be able to do upon completion of the course. Reference: Bloom’s Taxonomy.

Original Example:	Improved Example:
Learn about advocacy planning, current social policy and legislation.	Develop an advocacy plan using knowledge of current social policy and legislation.

4. A learning outcome specifies an **integrated performance**, instead of multiple performances.

Original Example:	Improved Example:
Learn about advocacy planning, current social policy and legislation.	Develop an advocacy plan using knowledge of current social policy and legislation.

5. A learning outcome describes a performance that is **observable and can be assessed**.

Original Example:	Improved Example:
Demonstrate knowledge of marketing concepts and terminology.	Develop marketing strategy for a specified product.

6. A learning outcome requires **application** of skill, knowledge or attitude/value.

Original Example:	Improved Example:
Define the components of effective business documents.	Produce business documents to meet the requirements of various scenarios.

7. A learning outcome presents a **clear, concise and precise** statement describing the required action.

Original Example:	Improved Example:
Interact and communicate effectively with others in groups and teams in ways that contribute to productive working relationships.	Contribute to effective working relationships.

8. A learning outcome describes ***learner performance***, not the instructor's activities, learning plans, or instructional strategies.

Original Example:	Improved Example:
Prepare a defensible argument to support one of the positions taken on euthanasia in the film "A Time to Die".	Argue both sides of an ethical issue.