



The Assessor and Assessment

(An extract from the Approved Assessors Manual)

The Approved Assessor

Aromatawai

The Ministry of Education position paper on Aromatawai (*Rukuhia, Rarangahia, 2011*) suggests that, whilst the term is generally understood as a term to describe assessment, there are distinct differences between aromatawai and assessment. The authors of that paper describe two important features of aromatawai. The first feature is that aromatawai is the articulation of a set of ideas located within a mātauranga Māori paradigm and the second; aromatawai has implications for present practice.

The Takarangi Competency Framework (TCF) has three levels of assessment. The first is a form of self-reflection - Whaiaro Whakaaro which allows participants to consider the integration of their knowledge in terms of their practice. The second level is Whakawhitiwhiti which is where the candidate works with tuakana and teina to discuss and debate the nature of their evidence of practice. The third level Arotake, is the stage at which the Approved Assessors consider the evidence presented against the competency levels of the framework.

For those engaged with the Framework, they are involved in reflexive practice when self-reflection leads to new practice or the learning of new knowledge in order to practice differently. Whilst assessment is important it is but a tool to track ongoing development of knowledge and application of that knowledge.

Specific tasks and functions of the Approved Assessor

Moral authority and deep integrity combined with competence is a leader (assessor) who walks the talk. They demonstrate the values and behaviours they want to see.. They need to be honest and open. They require cultural knowledge but more importantly the leadership qualities necessary to guide other kaimahi to attain best practice.

A key underlying principle for Approved Assessors is ensuring people who obtain placement on the TCF are safe practitioners and promote best practice at their level of competency.

The assessment process requires the collection of evidence to support and reinforce the rationale for the recorded assessment. The approved assessor must bear in mind that the Takarangi Competency Framework views competence as a fusion of elements that contribute to whānau ora including being able to understand competence within the work setting. All assessments carried out must be fair, valid and consistent. To this end, the work of the Approved Assessors must always reflect:

- adherence to the values and objectives of the Framework
- Kaupapa Māori practice
- quality management systems
- ethical standards and behaviour.

What makes an Approved Assessor?

1. Experience of the Takarangi Competency Framework assessment process.
2. Assessment experience - they have compiled a portfolio and have been assessed.
3. Completed an approved assessors' workshop.
4. Technical expertise.
5. Possess sufficient cultural capital to support the aspirations of the Takarangi Competency Framework.

Technical and sector expertise

As an Approved Assessor you are expected to:

- have professional development in the provision of kaupapa Māori practice, in Māori development, health or social service sectors
- have professional development in the provision of the practice element of your role
- be able to talk with authority and personally demonstrate the competencies of the framework. All assessors will have experience in compiling a portfolio and being assessed against the competency framework.

Benefits of assessment

The TCF and the Approved Assessors promote a process of planned and organised life-long learning in a kaupapa Māori milieu. Benefits of assessment include:

- whānau having faith that services are professional and consistent in the care and interventions that they provide
- the competency level of the worker's skills and knowledge are fully acknowledged and can be consistently applied in other organisations across the sector
- workforce development strategies can be focussed on the areas of need both for individuals in the service and for services as a whole
- whānau of competent and confident kaimahi are more likely to get the professional service they want and need
- ensuring a measurable means of assessing the integration of mātauranga and or training into practice.

Quality assessment practices

The following illustrates the fundamental features of quality assessment practice as promoted by NZQA for industry training.

Manageable	Assessment can be done within the time and resource available.
Fair	Evidence is fairly collected and judged.
Integrated learning	Evidence is found from day-to-day activities and training.
Authentic	Evidence is produced by the kaimahi being assessed.
Open	What evidence is needed? Assessments are planned.
Consistent	Another assessor reviewing the same evidence would come to the same conclusion.
Valid	Method of assessment evaluates the agreed competencies.
Sufficient	Enough evidence is provided to make a conclusive decision about the kaimahi competence level.

Evidence

The term evidence describes the recording of information and objects that demonstrate what the kaimahi knows and does. During the assessment, you look at and record this evidence against the Framework.

The manner and form of evidence depends directly on what knowledge and skills are being demonstrated and for which level of the Framework. Judgments about the competence of a kaimahi are made on the basis of evidence presented. Evidence needs to be as follows.

Authentic refers to the evidence clearly illustrating what the kaimahi knows and is able to do in their everyday activities. As an assessor, you will need to establish and be able to confirm that each kaimahi has met the specific requirements of the specific competency standard.

Valid is defined as ensuring that the evidence matches the requirements of the competency level being sought. Where the kaimahi is required to demonstrate specific knowledge, skills or understanding, it is not valid to consider their other knowledge, skills or abilities. The method of evaluation must match the competency domain being assessed e.g. understanding with knowledge tests or assessing skills with action methods etc.

Fair refers to the consistency of assessment. This requires that all kaimahi are measured against the same criteria. While there is flexibility in the ways in which kaimahi may demonstrate their competence, the criteria of the Framework must be consistently applied. Legitimate responses that may differ from your own

expectations but still match the criteria should be accepted. Assessment must be free from bias arising from gender or your own beliefs.

Sufficient evidence to be confident and clear that all of the requirements of the competency level sought are met. Some assessors are accused of accepting too little evidence while others want too much. In fact, the volume of evidence collected will vary according to the competency and level being assessed. Ensure there is a mixture of direct, indirect and historical evidence presented.

Types of evidence

If the assessment process has been valid, reliable, fair, and the evidence is sufficient then deciding whether someone meets the criteria should be straight forward. There are three main types of evidence that, as an assessor, you will need to be aware of. The three types of evidence are as follows.

Direct evidence

This refers to practical day to day evidence that is easily accessible from the workplace and links directly to the competency.

- It is produced directly from the kaimahi illustrating and demonstrating what they know by doing it in the present and real situation.
- This evidence can be collected by observing the performance of the kaimahi and asking questions of those involved e.g. kaimahi could commence the assessment process with a karakia, followed by why they chose that karakia, what process did you go through to choose that karakia.

Indirect evidence

This refers to examples about the competence of the kaimahi rather than evidence of their practice.

- This can include evidence from a third party (includes attestations), records of kaimahi competence in the past and kaimahi knowledge of processes and concepts.

Indirect evidence often requires further investigation and analysis by the assessor to verify the authenticity and validity of the evidence against the set criteria.

Historical evidence

This refers to kaimahi achievement and competence from the past.

- records of competence and performance completed in the past
- qualifications that clearly cover the specific criteria being assessed.

‘Records’ lose their currency over time and the framework looks most favourably on things done within the last five (5) years.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

- situational experiences e.g. meeting minutes
- documentation e.g. case notes
- learning
- training undertaken
- observations
- attestations.

Observation

- direct observation – observing work in progress
- observing completed work
- observing digital records
- viewing case notes
- actual practice observation.

Documentation

Documentation such as case notes need to be considered in light of confidentiality and service policy. An assessor should ensure that evidence has no personal identifying details. They should also be aware when there is a need for consent forms.

Documentation could include paper based work activities e.g. Te reo on a pamphlet with an explanation of what kupu were chosen and why.

Attestation

A formal written or direct korero (to you as the assessor) from someone that is able to attest that a kaimahi has demonstrated the required competencies at a specific time and place.

An attestation may be from a third party which describes something that a kaimahi does or has done and the candidate points out how this evidence supports their competency.

Notes

As the assessor, you may need to guide the kaimahi to ensure that they have good range of evidence collection methods. This helps them accurately demonstrate their competencies and the appropriate levels.

In general, the **strongest evidence** is direct followed by indirect. Historical evidence is the weakest of the three types of evidence.

A kaimahi may provide one piece of work to evidence **three separate competencies**. It is vital that the kaimahi clearly identifies the competency to be considered e.g. using different highlighter in a case note.

Attestations from whānau or whānau members should be considered with care and assessors need to be confident that ethical issues of such endorsements have been addressed.