

COMPETENCIES

This job aid describes competencies and competency statements and their purpose.

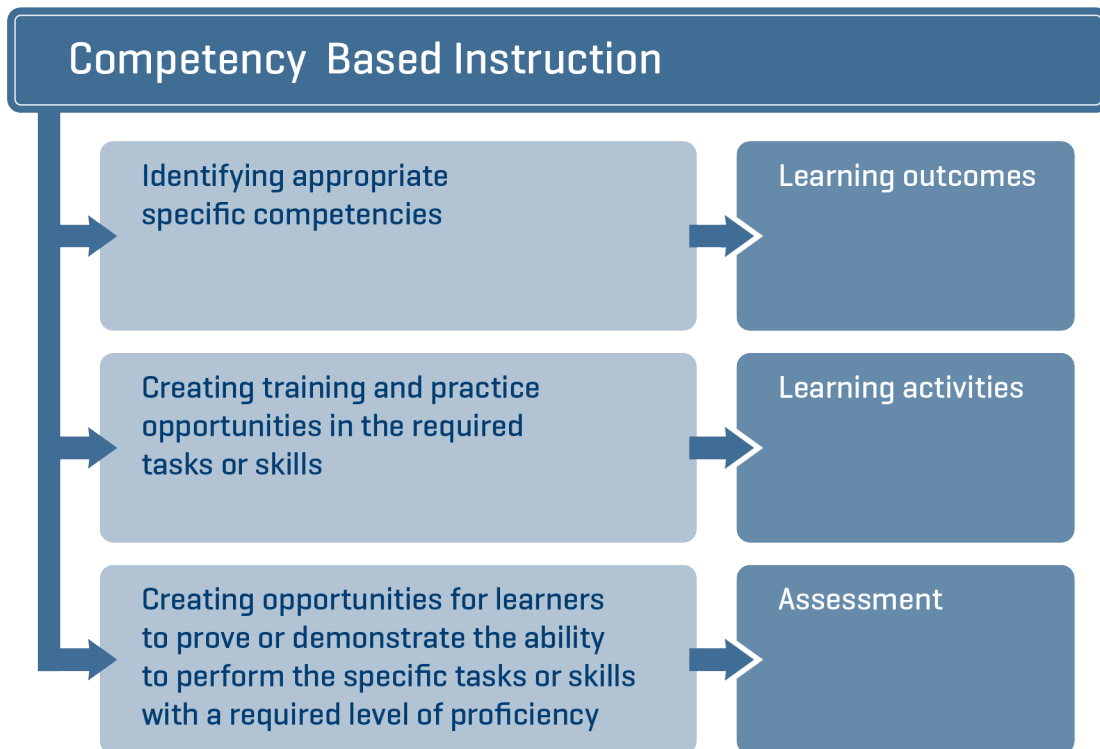
This job aid will help you to:

- define competency and competency statements
 - write competency statements
 - compare competencies statements and course level learning outcomes
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Competency Statements

The fundamentals of competency-based instruction are similar to what you are used to doing in your teaching practice at BCIT:



Course development always starts with clearly identifying the specific competencies that the learner will be able to demonstrate at the end of the learning period.

Definitions

A **competency** is something a person must be able to do successfully or efficiently in a specific job role. A competency is usually broken down into specific skills and may include sub-skills.

A **competency** statement is a description of what a competent individual does and in what context.

Writing a Competency Statement

The key element of competency-based instruction is competency statements.

Competency

Example: **Handle Hazardous Materials**

Competency Statement

Example: **Handle hazardous materials according to Occupational Health and Safety regulations and workplace requirements.**

Elements of a Competency Statement



Concrete Action Verb = a measurable verb that states actions which can be observed and measured when used in the context of an activity or task.

Context = what the nature of the action is (i.e. the object of the verb)

Criteria/Standards = specify the criteria for expected performance (e.g. to what level, to which standard, scope etc.). The criteria are typically performance-based and may need a subset of measurable outcomes to demonstrate proficiency in the main or broader competency. Criteria or standards are also the basis of informal and formal assessment (i.e. measurements of meeting the criteria or standard).

Note: Criteria or standards are all the **observable behaviours or sets of activities** that a person must be able to do to demonstrate the competency.

It may be necessary to break a general competency down into subskills. In the example above, “**handling**” would include selecting, using, storing and disposing of hazardous materials. So, for a learner to demonstrate they master the competency statement related to handling hazardous materials (given above) they may also have to meet the following subskills:

- **Select hazardous materials** according to OHS regulations and workplace requirements **[e.g. WHMIS]**
- **Use hazardous materials** according to OHS regulations and workplace requirements
- **Store and dispose of hazardous materials** according to OHS regulations and workplace requirements

For more examples of competency statements, see Appendix 1.

Source: "How to Construct a Competency Statement" is excerpted from *Open Competency Toolkit* (Section 1.5.) by D. Green and C. Levy, 2021, eCampusOntario, copyright 2021 by [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](#).

Competency Statements and Learning Outcomes

Competency statements and learning outcomes have the same purpose. They both clarify specific, observable and measurable behaviour that a learner or worker should be able to demonstrate at the end of training. Some programs use competency statements and some use learning outcomes. The choice generally depends on whether employers and industry leaders report a need for graduates to have specific skills that meet criteria or standards from outside authorities.

The format of competency statements and course-level learning outcomes are similar but differ in their focus.

Competency Statements	Course Level Learning Outcomes
<p><i>Most common focus:</i> demonstration of specific skills</p> <p><i>Often determined in the context of workplace demands.</i></p>	<p><i>Most common focus:</i> mastery</p> <p><i>Often determined in the context of higher education instruction.</i></p>
Begin with an action verb	Begin with an action verb
Identify context	Identify content <i>[most often knowledge but can also be skills or attitudes]</i>
Clarify criteria or standards* that must be met <i>*often from outside bodies or authorities</i>	Clarify degree of mastery that must be reached <i>[optional at course level]</i>
	Include conditions <i>[optional at course level]</i>

Appendix 1 Competency Statement Examples

Business

Competency Statement:

Manage project resources to meet client and contractor needs.

[OECD, 2014]

Subskills [standard/criteria same as in competency statement]

- Organise the use of resources to meet expectations and identify difficulties.
- Plan, coordinate and manage internal and external resources to accomplish assignments within the given deadlines.

Competency Statement:

Lead team meetings according to Provincial guidelines.

Subskills [standard/criteria same as in competency statement]

- Provide a clear agenda.
- Encourage participation of all members.
- Maintain order and constructive discussion of agenda items.
- Decide or vote on meeting outcomes.
- Keep accurate minutes.

Nursing

Competency Statement:

Maintain client privacy, confidentiality, and security by complying with legislation, practice standards, ethics and organizational policies.

[BC College of Midwives and Nurses, 2021]

Subskills [standard/criteria same as in competency statement]

- Identify common scenarios in which client privacy, confidentiality and security are concerns.
- Interpret legislation, practice standards, ethics and organizational policies.
- Apply practice standards and ethics in daily interactions.
- Apply privacy regulations and legislation in the healthcare environment.

Carpentry

Competency Statement:

Demonstrate safe work practices according to Occupational Health And Safety Guidelines.

[ITA, 2018]

Subskills [standard/criteria same as in competency statement]

- Apply shop and site safety practices.
- Apply personal safety practices.

Competency Statement:

Use survey instruments and equipment in alignment with company practices and safety standards.

[ITA, 2018]

Subskills [standard/criteria same as in competency statement]

- Use ladders, scaffolds and access equipment appropriate to situation
- Use site layout equipment as described in planning documents.

References

BC College of Midwives and Nurses. (2021). *Entry-Level Competencies for Registered Nurses*. https://www.bccnm.ca/Documents/competencies_requisite_skills/RN_entry_level_competencies_375.pdf

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