Observation and assessment in the early years sector
Tutor pack
A/506/0197
3605-402
City & Guilds
Believe you can

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Assignment overview

There are **six** learning outcomes to this unit.

1. Understand the purpose and value of observation and assessment in the early years sector
2. Understand the principles of observations and assessments in an early years setting
3. Know the range of observation and assessment methods available in an early years setting
4. Know how to involve others in observation and assessment for early years sector
5. Be able to carry out observations and assessments of babies and young children in the early years sector
6. Be able to use observations and assessments to evaluate and inform practice in an early years setting

This is a summary of the evidence required for the unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Task</strong></th>
<th><strong>Evidence required</strong></th>
<th><strong>Assessment criteria covered</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Plan, implement and record child observations</td>
<td>1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Evaluate and reflect on child observations</td>
<td>1.2, 1.3, 6.1, 6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Conclude on observations and assessments</td>
<td>3.1: 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignment 402 Observation and assessment in the early years sector

Tasks

Task A Plan, implement and record child observations

In your setting, having gained relevant permissions, you will be planning for and carrying out a series of observations using different observation methods to monitor children's learning and development.

Provide an explanation of their importance within the sector. (ref 1.1)

From your series of observations, select four which use at least three different observation methods. Your observations must include all areas of development and learning from the list below:

- physical
- communication, language and literacy
- cognitive/intellectual (mathematics/numeracy)
- personal, social, emotional and behavioural.

More than one area may be covered in each observation.

You must record the findings of each observation in a professional manner and ensure that the child's identity is not disclosed in your evidence (for example, you may refer to the child as Child A or Child B).

Your observation records should include an explanation for:

- for the chosen observation methods (the rationale)
- which physical, ethical and legal factors have been taken into account
- the relevant information from other sources that has been used (e.g. parents, children, key worker/person, team members and colleagues, other professionals, previous records).

(ref 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 5.1, 5.2)

Your records must show that you maintained confidentiality and data protection throughout the observation and assessment process. (ref 5.3, 5.4)
Assignment 402 Observation and assessment in the early years sector

Tasks (continued)

Task B  Evaluate and reflect on child observations

Provide an evaluation for each of the four child observations chosen within Task A. (ref 1.3)

Reflect on the child observations undertaken and the assessment methods used, explaining how these are used to inform the following:

- the next steps for learning and development of the child (links to current curriculum frameworks)
- the needs of the child
- the interests of the child
- your own practice
- service provision. (ref 1.2, 6.1, 6.2)

Your evaluations may also include links, with appropriate referencing, to the following:

- child development theories
- play theories and philosophical approaches.

Task C  Conclude on observations and assessments

In this task you are required to:

- analyse the different observation methods used in early years settings that you did not include within Tasks A and B, explaining how, when and why they can be used. Within your analysis you must specify the observation method and ensure that you have covered the required unit range. (ref 3.1)
- analyse the different assessment methods, explaining how, when and why they can be used. Within your analysis you must specify the assessment method and ensure that you have covered the required unit range. (ref 3.2)
- explain why it is important to involve the parent, carer and child in observations and assessments. (ref 4.4)
- Explain the involvement of others in the observation and assessment of children within the referral process and why their contributions are important. (ref 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)
**Pass characteristics**
The range covered is sufficient to demonstrate understanding.
Explanations and analyses may be limited, and or somewhat disjointed but are mostly relevant and accurate.
Comprehension is shown of the main facts – definitions are accurate, but may be limited.
Sources are relevant but may be limited or not used to best effect.

**Merit characteristics**
Explanations are logical and complete and reflect a clear understanding of the candidate's immediate area of experience, with some links to past and future.
Definitions and descriptions are detailed and are supported where relevant by suitable examples.
Analysis are methodical and plausible.
Sources are referenced and relevant.

**Distinction characteristics**
Explanations are detailed, using well chosen examples and impacts are well justified.
There is a confident understanding of the immediate context with developed relationships to the broader context.
There is a clear thread of coherence throughout which emphasises important aspects.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Merit</th>
<th>Distinction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>carried out and professionally recorded at least four observations, using three different methods, in accordance with relevant legislation for recording and storing information</td>
<td>evaluated the validity of the chosen observations methods to support holistic development and learning</td>
<td>rationalised methods chosen, clearly linked to purpose of observation and included a wide range of appropriate sources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The candidate has:**
- explained the importance of how observations and assessments are used within the early years sector
- explained the chosen observation methods (the rationale)
- explained which physical, ethical and legal factors have been taken into account
- explained the relevant information from other sources that has been used

**Grading criteria:**
- **Task A – Plan, implement and record child observations**

- **Pass:**
  - The candidate has:

- **Merit:**
  - The candidate has achieved everything at pass grade and with minimum guidance from the tutor:

- **Distinction:**
  - The candidate has achieved everything at pass and merit grade and:

**Note:** Each criterion assumes that any lower criteria are also met and that aspects of any higher criteria may be met in part. All criteria at each grade must be evidenced in order to achieve marks for grade, i.e., all pass criteria met and only one from merit, would result in a pass grade only. For distinction all criteria must be met for each grade.
**Assignment 402  Observation and assessment in the early years sector**  
Grading criteria: Task B – Evaluate and reflect on child observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Merit</th>
<th>Distinction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| B    | provided a detailed evaluation for each of the four child observations completed within Task A  
reflected on the child observations undertaken and the assessment methods used and explained how these are used to meet the points specified within task | The candidate has achieved everything at pass grade and with minimum guidance from the tutor:  
☑ presented the evaluation in a logical way with some attempt at academic referencing of child development, play theories) and philosophical approaches  
☑ within their reflection, have explained the links between information contained in the observation record, child development, likes/dislikes, individual and additional needs | The candidate has achieved everything at pass and merit grade and:  
☐ used analytical skills to evaluate the information obtained in their observations which make use of both qualitative and quantitative data  
☐ made judgements based on research and theory to support evaluation |

Note: **Each** criterion assumes that any lower criteria are also met and that aspects of any higher criteria may be met in part.  
**All** criteria at each grade must be evidenced in order to achieve marks for grade, ie all pass criteria met and only one from merit, would result in a pass grade only. For distinction **all** criteria must be met for each grade.
### Assignment 402  Observation and assessment in the early years sector

Grading criteria: Task C – Conclude on observations and assessments

| Task | Pass | | Merit | | Distinction |
|------|------| |------| |----------|
| C    | The candidate has: | | The candidate has achieved everything at pass grade and with minimum guidance from the tutor: | | The candidate has achieved everything at pass and merit grade and: |
|      | analysed the different observation methods used in early years settings that were not included within Tasks A and B, and explained how, when and why they can be used | | evaluated the contribution from parent, carer and child, making links to current curriculum guidance | | justified the contribution of others within observations, assessments and referral processes |
|      | analysed the different assessment methods, and explained how, when and why they can be used ensuring the required range has been covered | | explored the positive and negative consequences of the contribution of others in the observation, assessment and referral process | | |
|      | explained why it is important to involve the parent, carer and child in observations and assessments | |  | | |
|      | explained how and when the contributions of those specified in the task could be included in observations or assessments | |  | | |
|      | explained why observations and assessments must be used in the referral process | |  | | |

Note: **Each** criterion assumes that any lower criteria are also met and that aspects of any higher criteria may be met in part. **All** criteria at each grade must be evidenced in order to achieve marks for grade, ie all pass criteria met and only one from merit, would result in a pass grade only. For distinction **all** criteria must be met for each grade.
Observation and assessment of children is a fundamental part of professional practice. You will be expected to become proficient in this skill in order to complete the assessment for this unit and to gain your full Early Years Educator qualification.

Working closely with the manager of your setting or your supervisor, you are expected to undertake observation and assessment of children in your setting over a protracted period of time throughout your qualification.

If you are not already undertaking child observation and assessment within your role you are expected to begin to do so as soon as possible. You must secure permission from parents/carers and your supervisor before you commence any child observations and follow all requirements regarding data protection and confidentiality.

Your observation and assessment cycle needs to be well planned throughout and you should keep in close contact with you assessor so that you can develop your skills.

You will complete a series of observations throughout the duration of your programme of study. These observations should follow the development of one target child for the duration (preferred) or on two to three children. Your planning and commentary should:

- reflect the scope of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (or approved alternative early years curriculum).
- follow and specific guidance of the assignment.

The aim is to build up a specific picture of the child or children over time.

If your target child leaves the setting before you complete all of your child observations and assessments, you can select a different target child but you should retain all of the records previously completed.

From your collection of child observations and assessments, your final assessment will require that you select a minimum of four observations using three different assessment methods.
Assignment 402 Observation and assessment in the early years sector

Tutor/Assessor guidance

Tutors/assessors must not accept documents which do not meet the required confidentiality and data protection criteria.

Candidates must complete this assignment with children aged 0 - 5 years, within a real work environment.

It is a requirement that candidates carry out ongoing observations of children in a real work environment.

Candidates must evidence that they have gained relevant permissions and followed workplace practice for observations and assessments.

It is highly recommended that the observation and assessment cycle is carried out on a target child over six months. However, City & Guilds recognises that this may not be possible for those candidates who may move settings for experience or other relevant reasons, and such candidates should not be disadvantaged if their observations and assessments involves more than one child. It is however mandatory that the candidates meet the full criteria of the tasks in this assignment to achieve a grade.

From the series of observations completed in the setting, candidates must choose four observations and assessments, using three different methods to cover all aspects of development. Candidates must show observation assessment planning, evaluation and reflection for the individual and additional needs of the children being studied.

These observations should follow the development of one target child for the duration (preferred) or of two to three children. The planning and commentary should:

- reflect the scope of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (or approved alternative early years curriculum).
- follow and specific guidance of the assignment.

The aim is to build up a specific picture of the child or children over time. During this period the candidate should receive regular support and feedback from the tutor/assessor so that they can develop competency in their observation and assessment skills.

Candidates will cover the following areas for development and learning which links to Unit 401, Outcome 1.1:

- physical
- communication, language and literacy
- cognitive/intellectual
- personal, social, emotional and behavioural.
On completion of each observation, candidates will evaluate their findings in relation to:

- child's development stage, interests and needs
- interactions observed
- practitioner's role
- current frameworks
- partnership working.

Candidate may make links to:
- theoretical perspectives and approaches.

Candidates will also complete an overall reflection on how observations and assessments can be used within the early years setting. Candidates should be encouraged to consider their choice of observation and assessment methods and tools to ensure current curriculum guidance on assessment is followed.

Tutors/assessors may wish to put together a pro-forma to ensure the candidate has generated and submitted the relevant documentation.

As a minimum, these must include:

- four planned child observation records, showing three different methods
- four plans for next steps developments
- relevant permissions
- four evaluations
- a reflective account
- appropriately referenced sources (eg Harvard referencing system).

It is highly recommended that candidates should evaluate the observations to show a clear understanding of the purpose and benefits, combined with practical experience of observation and assessment methods and the skills involved in recording and using them.

Candidates should be encouraged to research and make links between different child development and play theories, philosophical approaches and their observations.

Reflections may include:

- the appropriateness of the chosen observation method
- next steps for learning and development for children
- meeting the needs of the child
- meeting the interests of the child
- development of candidate practice
- supporting improvements to the quality of service provision.
Candidates should be directed to consider their own level of competence in written and verbal English when recording, evaluating and using the collected data. The use of a cover sheet could be advantageous if candidates are new to observing and assessing, and would provide comprehensive information about the observation/assessment. This could include the following information:

- child's pseudonym
- child's age
- date
- name of observer
- environment
- permissions gained
- aims and purpose of observation
- start and finish times.

NB Please note that candidates who have been referred (or wish to improve their grade) will be required to use a whole new set of observations and assessments for resubmission, completing all tasks in this new context. Ideally this means that candidates should have a minimum of eight observations.
**Potential links to other units:**

*Some aspects may be covered depending on the type and content of the chosen observation and assessment.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task A</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Learning outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Plan, implement and record child observations | 301 Promote partnership working with parents | 3.2 - support parent’s engagement as partners in their child’s health, well-being, learning, development, play  
3.3 - use different strategies to encourage partnership working with parents  
3.4 - engage with parents to meet the needs of children to enable them to progress  
3.5 - share records with parents and carers to promote their active participation in their child's progress  
3.6 - reflect on practice to improve working in partnership with parents |
| | 302 Model, promote and support positive behaviour in children | 2.1 - use observations to identify potential triggers or factors that could lead to changes in behaviour  
2.2 - use strategies to support children to gain an understanding of expectations about their behaviour and understanding of goals and boundaries  
3.6 - record instances of behaviour in line with work setting requirements |
| | 304 Promoting diversity, equality and inclusion in the early years sector | 1.4 - explain the importance of applying equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to  
- planning activities  
- selecting resources  
- language used  
- cultural awareness |
| | 305 Working in partnership with colleagues and other professionals in early years settings | 1.1 - explain the reasons for working in partnership with colleagues and other professionals  
4.1 - use observation and assessments of children to identify support needs  
4.2 - use a range of effective communication strategies with colleagues and other professionals  
4.3 - engage with colleagues and other professionals to meet the needs of children to enable them to progress |
| | 306 Plan and implement activities, play opportunities and educational programmes in an early years setting | 1.4 - explain how other sources of information can be used to support planning activities, play opportunities and educational programmes  
2.1 - use assessment as a basis for the planning of activities, play opportunities and educational programmes for provision within the play and learning environment in the areas of:  
- communication and language |
- physical development
- personal, social, emotional development, group learning and socialisation
- literacy
- numeracy/mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design
- meeting children's additional needs

2.2 - engage with key worker/person, colleagues, parents/carers to discuss children's progress and plan of next steps

2.3 - develop holistic plans to support development and learning of children for the following areas:
- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social, emotional development, group learning and socialisation
- literacy
- numeracy/mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design
- meeting children's additional needs

| 308 Promoting the health and safety of children | 1.3 - describe the **factors** to take into account when planning healthy and safe environments:
- indoor
- outdoor
| 4.5 - support children to explore and manage risk and challenges |

| 309 Promote children's speech, language and communication development | 2.3 - describe why practitioners need to recognise and respond to the varying levels of children's speech, language and communication when:
- settling into the setting
- planning activities for individuals and groups
| 3.1 - use different **methods** for providing support to children taking into account of their:
  a. age
  b. specific needs
  c. abilities
  d. home language where this is different from that of setting
  e. interests
| 3.2 - use day to day activities within the setting to encourage speech, language and communication development in children
| 3.3 - engage with children to develop speech, language and communication:
  a. on a 1:1 basis
  b. in groups
<p>| 4.2 use the key factors within the early years <strong>environments</strong> to support communication, language, literacy and numeracy/mathematics |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>310 Support organisational requirements for recording, storing and disclosing information and providing reports in an early years setting</th>
<th>Unit 310 underpins this assignment. Candidates and tutors/assessors must have regard for this unit whilst completing this assignment.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>311 Supporting children’s creative and imaginative play and experiences</td>
<td>It is likely that candidates will use aspects of this unit within their observations, assessments and planning. Candidates and tutor/assessors must have regard for this unit whilst completing this assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400 Theories which underpin practice in the early years sector</td>
<td>It is likely that candidates will use aspects of this unit within their observations, assessments and planning. Candidates and tutor/assessors must have regard for this unit whilst completing this assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401 Child development from conception to seven years</td>
<td>It is likely that candidates will use aspects of this unit within their observations, assessments and planning. Candidates and tutor/assessors must have regard for this unit whilst completing this assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task B</td>
<td>Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate and reflect on child observations</td>
<td>301 Promote partnership working with parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>302 Model, promote and support positive behaviour in children</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>305 Working in partnership with colleagues and other professionals in early years settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>306 Plan and implement activities, play opportunities and educational programmes in an early years setting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1- use assessment as a basis for the planning of activities, play opportunities and educational programmes for provision within the play and learning environment in the areas of:
   a. communication and language
   b. physical development
   c. personal, social, emotional development, group learning and socialisation
   d. literacy
   e. numeracy/mathematics
   f. understanding the world
   g. expressive arts and design
   h. meeting children's additional needs

2.2 - engage with key worker/person, colleagues, parents/carers to discuss children's progress and plan of next steps

2.3 - develop holistic plans to support development and learning of children for the following areas:
   a. communication and language
   b. physical development
   c. personal, social, emotional development, group learning and socialisation
   d. literacy
   e. numeracy/mathematics
   f. understanding the world
   g. expressive arts and design
   h. meeting children's additional needs

3.2 - use routines to support children's holistic development

3.3 - use spontaneous opportunities and activities to support children's holistic development

3.5 - engage with children whilst undertaking activities and play opportunities in regards to:
   a. communication and language
   b. physical development
   c. personal, social, emotional development, group learning and socialisation
   d. literacy
   e. numeracy/mathematics
   f. understanding the world
   g. expressive arts and design
   h. meeting children's additional needs

3.6 - ensure a balance is maintained between adult-led and child-initiated activities

4.1 - evaluate practice in promoting children's:
   a. communication and language
   b. physical development
   c. personal, social, emotional development, group learning and socialisation
   d. literacy
   e. numeracy/mathematics
   f. understanding the world
   g. expressive arts and design

4.2 - reflect on how to adapt own practice to meet the individual/additional needs of children
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task C</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Learning outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Conclude on observations and assessments | 301 Promote partnership working with parents | 1.2 - explain the importance of working in partnership with parents within the setting and to promote positive home learning and experiences  
1.3 - explain the importance of clear principles and policies to support the engagement of parents in their child's early learning  
3.2 - support parent’s engagement as partners in their child's health, well-being, learning, development, play  
3.3 - use different strategies to encourage partnership working with parents  
3.4 - engage with parents to meet the needs of children to enable them to progress  
3.5 - share records with parents and carers to promote their active participation in their child's progress  
3.6 - reflect on practice to improve working in partnership with parents. |
| 302 Model, promote and support positive behaviour in children | 3.7 - access help and support where there are concerns about the behaviour of children  
4.2 - work with children to ensure they have strategies to protect themselves and make decisions about safety. |
| 304 Promoting diversity, equality and inclusion in the early years sector | 3.2 - use actions that model inclusive practice in:  
a. planning activities  
b. selecting resources  
c. language used  
d. cultural awareness  
e. planning and carrying out physical care routines  
3.3 - support others to promote equality and rights  
3.4 - reflect on how practice promotes equality, diversity and inclusion. |
| 305 Working in partnership with colleagues and | 1.1 - explain the reasons for working in partnership with colleagues and other professionals |
**other professionals in early years settings**

1.4 - describe the support provided by the following professionals in the early years sector to families:
   a. SALT  
   b. SENC0  
   c. midwife  
   d. health visitor  
   e. key worker/person

2.1 - describe the factors that may lead to the identification of a support need in reference to:
   a. family structure  
   b. personal, social and emotional development  
   c. physical development  
   d. socio-economic status  
   e. health and well-being

3.2 - explain the duty of care for an early years practitioner to identify and act on a support need

3.3 - explain the practitioner's role in identifying support needs of children and/or families within own early years setting

4.1 - use observation and assessments of children to identify support needs

4.2 - use a range of effective communication strategies with colleagues and other professionals

4.3 - engage with colleagues and other professionals to meet the needs of children to enable them to progress.

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**306 Plan and implement activities, play opportunities and educational programmes in an early years setting**

1.2 - explain the importance of involving the individual child in planning activities, play opportunities and educational programmes to meet their needs and interests

1.6 - explain how play opportunities and educational programmes can be implemented through
   a. adult-led activities  
   b. child-initiated activities  
   c. physical play activities

1.7 - explain how planning and implementing activities, play opportunities and educational programmes can support group learning and socialisation

4.1 - evaluate practice in promoting children's:
   a. communication and language  
   b. physical development  
   c. personal, social, emotional development, group learning and socialisation  
   d. literacy  
   e. numeracy/mathematics  
   f. understanding the world  
   g. expressive arts and design

4.2 - reflect on how to adapt own practice to meet the individual/additional needs of children.

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**309 Promote children's speech, language and communication development**

2.1 - explain the ways in which adults can effectively support and extend the speech, language and communication development of children

2.2 - explain the positive effects of adult support for the children and their parents/carers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>313 Continuous professional development using reflective practice in the early years sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 - explain how continuing professional development and reflective practice can be used to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. develop best practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. identify practice which requires improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 - reflect on observations made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 - make recommendations to improve/change professional practice based on reflection undertaken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 - share outcomes of reflective practice with others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignment 402 Observation and assessment in the early years sector

Assignment mark sheet

Candidate name

Centre name

Candidate number

Centre number

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Task name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Mark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Plan, implement and record child observations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pass (1 mark)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Merit (2 marks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Distinction (3 marks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Evaluate and reflect on child observations</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Conclude on observations and assessments</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Conversion chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average mark</th>
<th>Overall grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0 – 1.5</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 – 2.5</td>
<td>Merit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 – 3.0</td>
<td>Distinction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total mark for all graded tasks

Divided by the number of graded tasks

\[ \frac{\text{Average mark for tasks}}{3} = \text{Overall grade} \]

All tasks must be passed to allow a grade to be claimed.

I can confirm that the evidence listed for this unit is my own work and was carried out under the conditions and context specified in the assessment specification.

Candidate signature  Date

I confirm that the candidate has achieved all the requirements of this unit with the evidence listed and the assessment was conducted under the specified conditions and context, and is valid, authentic, reliable, current and sufficient.

Tutor/assessor signature  Date

Internal quality assurer signature (where applicable)  Date

External quality assurer signature (where applicable)  Date