

Upfront Assessment of Need Guidelines

Skills SA



Government of South Australia
Department of State Development

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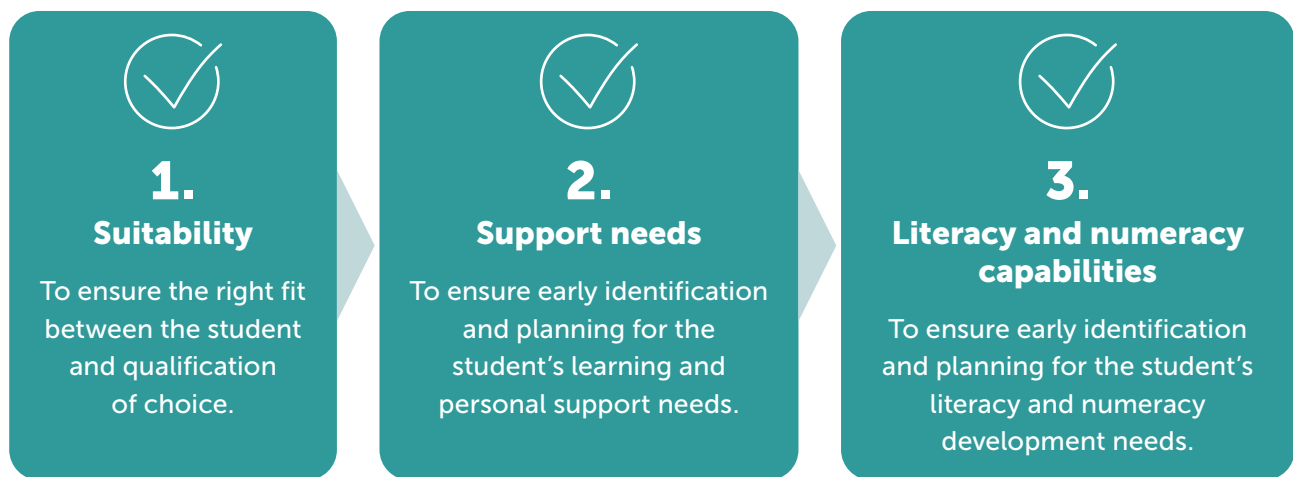
1. Upfront Assessment of Need (UAN) process

The UAN is designed to ensure every subsidised student has their needs assessed early and supports put in place for a successful training outcome.

The 3 UAN assessments

The UAN process includes 3 distinct assessments that are of equal importance.

Training providers must assess a student's suitability and support needs first, and then, regardless of the student's support needs, assess their literacy and numeracy capabilities.



All 3 UAN assessments must be completed before creating a training account (or in line with the timelines for training contracts – see page 24 for more information). This includes organising any learning, personal and foundation skills supports identified through the UAN process.

The [VET Readiness Orientation \(VETRO\) UAN Guidelines](#) are a subset of the UAN Guidelines for school students accessing courses on the VET for school students list.

Complying with the UAN Guidelines

Training providers holding a Funded Activities Agreement (FAA) must conduct the UAN with all students seeking access to subsidised qualifications, skill sets, and managed courses in compliance with these guidelines. This includes qualifications delivered under a training contract arrangement or through a project.

Training providers holding an FAA must have a documented [UAN procedure](#) that complies with these guidelines.

There are some circumstances where the UAN can be modified to ensure a student's needs are accommodated and the process is equitable (see information on page 25 about literacy and numeracy modifications).

2. Suitability and support needs assessments

There are 7 areas of suitability and support needs that must be assessed before the literacy and numeracy assessment is undertaken.

The table below identifies the 7 areas that must be assessed and provides examples of signs the training provider may see during the assessment that indicate support or action is needed to enable the student to succeed in training.

Table 1: 7 areas of suitability and support needs

Area of suitability	Examples of support needs (signs)	Examples of supports and actions
1 Ability to communicate effectively in English <i>*See below for more information</i>	<i>Training provider to customise according to the training product, mode of delivery and in-house supports</i> • Unable to read, understand and complete basic forms without assistance • Limited vocabulary • Unable to respond to questions, follow discussion, or needs interpreter • Low level prior education in first language or illiterate in first language	<i>Training provider to customise according to the training product, mode of delivery and in-house supports</i> • Referral back to school • Referral to Skills SA Infoline • Referral to TAFE SA funded International Second Language Proficiency Ratings (ISLPR) assessment and access to fee free English language courses • Referral to Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) • Referral to Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program
2 Ability to meet inherent course requirements related to: • prerequisites • training and assessment performance criteria	• Unable to meet inherent course requirements due to disability or health • Does not yet meet prior educational attainment, experience or qualifications required • Does not possess sufficient digital literacy skills* <i>*See below for more information</i>	• Vocational bridging units available to enable digital literacy skills to be met • School to provide personal or learning supports • Referral back to school • Referral to Skills SA Infoline

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Area of suitability	Examples of support needs (signs) <i>Training provider to customise according to the training product, mode of delivery and in-house supports</i>	Examples of supports and actions <i>Training provider to customise according to the training product, mode of delivery and in-house supports</i>
3 Career goals and aspirations of the individual are aligned with the course of choice	• Course does not align with the individual's personal career goals or aspirations • Unable to identify own or any personal career goals or aspirations • Unable to articulate the reasons for wanting to undertake the course or course is not own informed choice • Lacks the level of interest or motivation needed for the course	• Referral back to school • Referral to Skills SA Infoline • Referral to alternative course that better matches career goals and aspirations
4 Understanding of: • employment pathways course can lead to • employer expectations • working conditions in this field of employment	• Course will not lead to the employment opportunities the individual is seeking • Limited to no understanding of employment pathways, employer expectations and/ or working conditions • Personal preferences, beliefs or values are not aligned with the type of employment the course leads to, employer expectations, or working conditions	• Information provision, referral to more appropriate course and re-interview • Referral back to school • Referral to Skills SA Infoline
5 Understanding of and ability to meet industry, regulatory or legislative requirements required for training and employment as graduate. For example: • clearances to work with children or vulnerable adults • drivers licence • drug and alcohol testing • occupational specific tickets or licences	• Requirements cannot be met for this course • Requirements impacted at this time by legal issues, age, or other reasons (specify)	• Information provision, referral to more appropriate course • Re-interview when requirement can be met • Referral back to school • Referral to Skills SA Infoline

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Area of suitability	Examples of support needs (signs) <i>Training provider to customise according to the training product, mode of delivery and in-house supports</i>	Examples of supports and actions <i>Training provider to customise according to the training product, mode of delivery and in-house supports</i>
6 Aptitude for learning	• VET study skills such as planning, organising, time management, prioritising, self-discipline, self-directed learning, or problem-solving need development or are impacted by disability* • Prior or current poor attendance history • Capabilities to successfully interact with other students or trainer need development or are impacted by disability* • Communication skills such as listening, speaking, observing, or empathising need development or are impacted by disability* • Ability to stay on task, focus or maintain attention or concentration needs development or are impacted by disability* <i>*The definition of disability is broad and does not rely on a formal diagnosis of disability, and includes disability in relation to physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological, learning disabilities and physical disfigurement [Source: Department of Education Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Fact Sheet 1 DDA]</i>	• Assistance with preparations for formal study environment and course expectations • Tutorial/study skills support through training provider • Tutorial/study skills support through school • School to provide personal and learning supports • Reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act Education Standards • Development of individual disability access plan • Referral to Success and Wellbeing Services (SWS) for supports • Referral back to school

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Area of suitability	Examples of support needs (signs) <i>Training provider to customise according to the training product, mode of delivery and in-house supports</i>	Examples of supports and actions <i>Training provider to customise according to the training product, mode of delivery and in-house supports</i>
7 Understanding of: • course expectations • delivery methods • course and incidental costs • location of training • recognition of prior learning • work placement • attendance requirements	• Limited to no understanding of expectations and ill-prepared for participation in the course • Good understanding of course expectations but currently unable to meet all requirements due to circumstances that cannot be supported – will re-apply at later date • Good understanding of expectations but individual identified they are impacted currently by: - transport to get to training or work placement - finance/income to pay for course costs - accommodation issues - personal/family circumstances or commitments - disability/health - access to the technology required to undertake the course (internet, computer, laptop) - other (specify)	• Timetabling adjustments • Flexibility in course requirements or assessment options to accommodate personal barriers • School to provide personal or learning supports • School to provide more time in student timetable for participation in VET • Referral back to school • Referral to SWS for supports • Referral to external services for support

Training providers must embed the 7 areas of suitability and support into their pre-enrolment process. The pre-enrolment process must identify, at a minimum:

- which training provider staff member undertakes this assessment
- at what point in the pre-enrolment process each of the 7 areas of suitability is assessed, and how
- where evidence and findings from the assessment are recorded and made available to relevant staff
- how supports and actions identified through the assessment will be implemented and monitored.

Training providers must also:

- conduct the suitability and support needs assessment with every student each time a student seeks access to a subsidised qualification, including when they are returning to the same training provider for a different subsidised training product

- identify in their pre-enrolment process:
 - what signs their staff should look for when conducting the suitability and support needs assessment, based on the demographics of their student groups
 - what support and action recommendations their staff should make in response to the needs of their student group.

***Students with low English language capabilities**

Training providers must not issue an ACER literacy and numeracy assessment to a student who demonstrates **any** of the following indicators:

- An inability to read and understand simple or routine everyday information or forms in English
- An inability to write simple or routine everyday information, or complete basic forms in English
- Very limited vocabulary in English and an inability to do **any** of the following:
 - Respond to verbal questions in English
 - Provide answers beyond yes or no to questions in English
 - Follow a discussion in English
 - Understand written or spoken English without it being interpreted into the student's first language.
- Very low prior level of education in the individual's first language, or illiteracy in the individual's first language
- An inability to construct answers verbally and in writing to basic questions, for example:
 - What do you like to do when you have free time?
 - Where do you shop for your food or clothes?
 - What tasks are you responsible for in your family home?
 - What is your favourite sport you like to play or watch?



Students with low level speaking, listening, reading, and writing English language capabilities are at a significantly higher risk of causing workplace damage and death, injury, or harm to themselves and others during training, simulated or real work placements, and on the job as an apprentice, trainee or graduate. At particular risk are children and vulnerable adults receiving care from a student on placement, trainee or graduate in the community services and health industries, where the student, trainee, or graduate has low levels of English language capabilities.

If a student demonstrates any of the above indicators of low English proficiency, training providers must refer the student to an appropriate provider of fee-free English language assessment that can determine their level of proficiency.

Providers of fee-free English language assessment and training are:

- [TAFE SA English Language Program](#)
- [Skills for Education and Employment \(SEE\) Program](#)
- [Adult Migrant English Program](#)



Students who are assessed through an English language assessment as needing English language training can also access this training free through the above providers and programs. Students can develop their English language to the level needed to successfully undertake the vocational course, and then re-apply for access to the subsidised course with the training provider.

Training providers' whose groups include students for whom English is not their first language, can email UANAdvice@sa.gov.au for assistance with establishing a working relationship with the Educational Manager of the TAFE SA English Language Program. This will enable the training provider to work closely with TAFE SA to support students being referred for English language assessment, and to be kept informed (with the student's permission) on outcomes from the assessment of English and any English language training they may need to undertake.

If TAFE SA, AMEP or SEE program providers conduct an English language assessment to confirm the student has the level of English needed to succeed, or they confirm the student has completed the required English language training needed to succeed, the training provider can re-assess the student when they re-apply for a subsidised vocational course.



***ACER Digital Literacy Assessment**

From September 2025, subsidised training providers will have access to the CSPA digital literacy assessment tool under Skills SA's license. Using this assessment tool is optional under the UAN.

This tool is mapped to the [Digital Literacy Framework](#).

Training providers are advised to:

- review training package information against the Digital Literacy Framework to gain an insight into the skills needed
- look at the units of competency in the courses they deliver to help them identify the types of digital literacy skills their students need to have on entry to the course and to consider what would be covered through their own delivery.

Training providers can identify digital literacy gaps during the suitability and support needs assessment, through optional use of the digital literacy assessment tool, or at any stage in the pre-enrolment process.

Training providers who have identified digital literacy gaps can choose to:

- support development of this skill in-house
- refer the student to external development e.g. ACE, TAFE, local library, local council, SEE program
- require the student to complete a digital literacy unit(s) of competency as a vocational bridging unit(s) before or during their vocational course.

From September 2026, Skills SA will commence a trial on the use of the CSPA digital literacy assessment. Skills SA welcomes feedback on the digital literacy assessment, via UANAdvice@sa.gov.au.

Evidence required for the suitability and support needs assessment

Evidence gathered through the training providers' own pre-enrolment practices must demonstrate that the UAN assessment of suitability and support needs was completed and informed support needs and actions.

Examples of evidence that training providers could include:

- student answers to interview questions
- questionnaires
- self-assessment tools

- records of formal or informal discussions following information sessions
- a suitability assessment from an industry immersion day
- employment engagement records (if an enterprise training provider)
- expression of interest (EOI) forms.

Evidence from the suitability and support needs assessment provides the basis for early referral to fee-free SWS and vocational bridging units.

Support needs – condition of access

Training providers must determine if support needs identified through the suitability and support needs assessment will be a condition of access to subsidised training for their students.

Training providers are responsible for informing students of this condition of access:

- during the UAN process
- when they are completing the participant agreement
- when completing enrolment processes for the establishment of a training account.

Training providers must not open a training account if a student does not agree to accept and engage with the supports as a condition of access.

Suitability and support needs resources

Suitability and support needs assessment guide

Skills SA has developed a suitability and support needs assessment guide template training providers can use. However, ticking boxes within this guide is not evidence of undertaking the suitability and support needs assessment.

When using the guide template to record the outcome of each suitability and support area, training providers must ensure the guide template or the training provider's UAN procedure includes for all 7 areas:

- the specific questions the student will be asked by staff
- documentation of the student's answers
- the findings and what support and/or actions are required.

Suitability and support needs video

Skills SA has developed a suitability and [support needs video](#) that explains:

- the purpose of the assessment
- each of the 7 areas
- best practice in assessment
- common mistakes in undertaking the assessment
- the relationship between suitability and support areas
- the use of the suitability and support needs assessment guide template.

3. Literacy and numeracy assessments

Literacy and numeracy exemption

Training providers are not required to assess a student's literacy and numeracy capabilities under the following circumstances:

Skill sets

1. If the student is enrolling in a subsidised skill set.

Industry currency

2. If the student:

- **is currently** working in an industry aligned to their qualification of choice, **and**
- has an AQF Certificate IV or higher qualification in an industry aligned to the qualification of choice (regardless of when the AQF qualification was achieved).

Example:

Daniel wants to enrol in the Diploma in Sports Management.

Daniel is currently working as the Corporate Cup Recruitment and Training Manager (this is an industry aligned to the Diploma in Sports Management).

Daniel holds an AQF Certificate IV in Fitness, achieved 15 years ago.

Daniel does not have to undertake a literacy and numeracy assessment, unless his training provider requires it.

3. If the student is:

- **not currently** working in an industry aligned to their qualification of choice, **but**
- has an AQF Certificate IV or higher qualification in an industry aligned to the qualification of choice, **achieved within the last 5 years.**

Example:

Emma wants to enrol in the Diploma of Laboratory Technology.

Emma is currently working as a personal care worker (this is not an industry aligned to the Diploma of Laboratory Technology).

Emma holds an AQF Certificate IV in Laboratory Techniques, achieved 4 years ago.

Emma does not have to undertake a literacy and numeracy assessment, unless her training provider requires it.

Please note:

- Training providers determine whether a student's AQF qualification is aligned to the qualification of choice and need to be able to explain their decision if audited by Skills SA.
- There is no exemption, modification or third-party arrangement allowed for the UAN suitability and support needs assessment. The training provider must conduct this assessment.

Skills SA minimum literacy and numeracy requirement

The Skills SA minimum literacy and numeracy requirement for South Australian subsidised students is:

- Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) exit level 2 in reading and numeracy,
- assessed through an approved ACER literacy and numeracy assessment,
- under the Skills SA ACER license.

The two ACER literacy and numeracy assessment tools a training provider can use to assess students' reading and numeracy capabilities include:

- the Snapshot Reading and Numeracy Indicator (SRNI)
- the Core Skills Profile for Adults (CSPA).

Training providers can choose to assess a student's reading and numeracy capabilities using the SRNI assessment tool. If the SRNI result indicates the student is not ACSF exit level 2 in reading and/or numeracy, the training provider must ensure the student undertakes the CSPA assessment in reading and/or numeracy.

Refer to Appendix 1 for important information on supervision and conducting literacy and numeracy assessments.

ACER reading and numeracy practice assessment

Training providers can assist students to prepare for the SRNI or CSPA by providing access to an ACER reading and numeracy practice assessment.

Training providers have reported when students undertake a practice assessment before they start the UAN process, it helps them to put the assessment into perspective, perform better and feel less anxiety.

Students can undertake a practice assessment at home without supervision. Practice assessments build confidence by ensuring students know ahead of time what to expect and by giving them a sense of their own capabilities in basic reading and numeracy.

The two practice assessments available for students are:

- a practice assessment issued to students under the training provider's ACER login
- a practice assessment available on the Skills SA provider website at [Training Provider Centre | Assessing literacy and numeracy](#) (scroll down until you get to the ACER practice assessment).

Practice assessments give students:

- an idea of the questions they will be asked
- how to navigate between questions
- how to use the tool
- what questions they answered correctly.

The Snapshot Reading and Numeracy Indicator (SRNI) assessment tool

The SRNI is a short static assessment tool that provides an **indication** of whether the student is at the required minimum of ACSF exit level 2 in reading and numeracy. The SRNI does not assess above ACSF exit level 2 or assess writing.



The SRNI includes 15 reading and 15 numeracy questions and, on average, takes students 15-20 minutes to complete.

On completion of an SRNI, training providers will receive a simple report which identifies whether the student requires further assessment. A finding of *further assessment* means a student's assessment result indicates they are not at ACSF exit level 2.

Training providers must require students who return an SRNI result of *further assessment* to undertake the CSPA for a more in-depth assessment of their reading and/or numeracy capabilities, or both.

Students who refuse to undertake the CSPA further assessment must wait 3 months before they can retake the SRNI with the training provider. Students returning to training providers under 3 months must be reassessed using the CSPA. Training providers must clearly explain this to all students prior to a student undertaking the SRNI.

Any modifications to this 3-month re-sit rule must be approved in writing by Skills SA.

Students who return a SRNI finding of no further assessment can continue in the enrolment process.

SRNI results that do not require further assessment are valid for 12 months with the training provider which conducted the SRNI. These results can be re-used during a UAN for a different course or if the student is transitioning to a superseded equivalent/non-equivalent or replacement qualification with the same training provider.

There may be circumstances where an SRNI result that did not require further assessment can be re-used after 12 months. For example, if the student was seeking to enrol in a Certificate IV qualification and:

- they had completed a Certificate III 18 months ago; and
- have been working in an industry aligned to both the Certificate III and Certificate IV.

Any modification to the 12-month rule needs to be approved in writing by Skills SA before the modification is put in place. For further information, please contact Skills SA at UANAdvice@sa.gov.au.

The Core Skills Profile for Adults (CSPA) assessment tool

This tool is made up of three assessments – reading, numeracy and writing.

- The CSPA **reading** tool can identify whether a student is at ACSF exit level 1, 2, 3 or 4 (the tool does not assess beyond ACSF exit level 4).
- The CSPA **numeracy** tool can identify whether a student is at ACSF exit level 1, 2, 3 or 4 (the tool does not assess beyond ACSF exit level 4).
- The CSPA **writing** assessment can identify whether a student is at ACSF exit level 1, 2 or 3 (the tool does not assess beyond ACSF exit level 3).

The CSPA reading and numeracy assessments are computer adaptive, meaning each student response will prompt questions that are based on the capabilities the student is demonstrating.

Each CSPA assessment takes students, on average, 30 minutes to complete.

Training providers will use the CSPA:

- with students who have **an SRNI result of further assessment is needed for either reading or numeracy**
- **instead of the SRNI as the initial assessment tool**, or if the training provider requires a higher exit level for reading or numeracy than 2, or wants to assess writing (refer to *Literacy and numeracy additional options*).

All 3 CSPA assessments are automatically scored. The CSPA tool provides a detailed report for each assessment that analyses the outcome for every question or prompt and assigns:

- an ACSF exit level
- a scaled score.

How to read the CSPA assessment results

Training provider staff read the ACSF exit level appearing at the top of a CSPA assessment report to check if it has met the Skills SA minimum. Refer to the example provided below.



Core Skills Profile for Adults

Individual Candidate Report for Professionals

Username:	Date: 04-04-2024
Name:	Unique ID:
Skill: Numeracy	Key Tag:
ACSF level estimate: working at level 3 / exit level 2	Scale score estimate: 102

A CSPA assessment result below ACSF exit level 2 in reading and/or numeracy, or below a higher level required by the training provider, **must** be interpreted by a Skills SA approved CSPA interpreter, and a CSPA interpretation report completed.

Reading, numeracy and writing results from the CSPA are valid for 12 months from the date completed, but only with the training provider who conducted the CSPA assessment. During this time, CSPA assessment results may be re-used during the UAN for a different course or if the student is transitioning to a superseded equivalent/non-equivalent or replacement qualification with that training provider.

Preparing Students for the CSPA assessment

Preparing students for the CSPA assessment is important to ensure students can perform to their best. It is in the interests of the student and training provider for the student to have access to a practice assessment (see ACER numeracy and literacy practice assessment on page 12) if the student has not completed the SRNI first, to enable them to become familiar with the tool.



Training providers are encouraged to:

- consider the length of the CSPA assessments in comparison to the SRNI and whether to structure breaks between CSPA assessments, including on the same or different days
- advise students undertaking a CSPA assessment for writing there are things they can do to improve their results, including:
 - drafting their answers first on paper or on the assessment screen to enable them to look for spelling, grammar and punctuation errors they can correct before submission
 - checking their answer covers everything the writing task requires before submission, including providing a sample size of at least a couple of paragraphs to ensure the answer includes enough evidence of their writing abilities to be assessed.

Literacy and numeracy additional options

There are circumstances where a training provider may want to assess above the Skills SA minimum:

1.

Set a higher ACSF exit level for reading or numeracy

For example, a training provider may set a higher ACSF exit level of 3 for reading and 4 for numeracy in HLT54121 Diploma of Nursing, because of training package or industry requirements.

2.

Assess writing using the CSPA writing assessment

- Set a ACSF exit level. An exit level must be set for students to access free foundation skills supports.
- Not set a ACSF exit level and instead use the writing assessment to provide an insight into a student's writing capabilities. If no level is set students cannot access free foundation skills supports.

Student access to free foundation skills supports for writing requires the training provider to set an ACSF exit level for writing and organise a CSPA interpretation. Any supports for writing prescribed in the CSPA interpretation report become a condition of access for the student.

CSPA results that meet Skills SA's or the training provider's own ACSF exit levels are valid for 12 months with the training provider that conducted the CSPA. These results can be re-used during a UAN for a different course or if the student is transitioning to a superseded equivalent/non-equivalent or replacement qualification with the same training provider.

There may be circumstances where a student's CSPA assessment outcome (if no CSPA interpretation was needed) can be used after 12 months. For example, if a student was seeking to enrol in a Certificate IV qualification, had completed a Certificate III 18 months ago and has been working in an industry aligned to both the Certificate III and Certificate IV.

Any modification to the 12-month rule needs to be approved in writing by Skills SA before the modification is put in place. For further information, please contact Skills SA at UANAdvice@sa.gov.au.

Literacy and numeracy resources

For help in deciding which ACER literacy and numeracy assessments are suitable for the training product, client group and mode of delivery, please send an email to UANAdvice@sa.gov.au.

The [Literacy and Numeracy Capabilities for Subsidised Courses](#) is a resource document only. Skills SA require both reading and numeracy to be assessed and set a minimum of ACSF exit level 2 for both.

As a resource document it can assist training providers with appropriate language to use to discuss with students of the literacy and numeracy capabilities their course requires prior to training, or which they will develop by the end of training. Training providers can use the information in this resource document to inform their decision to assess writing and/or set a higher ACSF exit level for reading or numeracy.



Please note:

- It is important to tell students at every opportunity that the ACER literacy and numeracy assessments are not tests that they can pass or fail - the assessments are there to make sure students receive support if they need it.
 - Students who experience difficulty with the literacy and numeracy demands of their course can be asked by their training provider to complete either the SRNI or CSPA at any time. This option allows students' literacy and numeracy capabilities to be assessed and supported as needed at any time throughout the course.
-

4. CSPA interpretation process

When a CSPA interpretation is needed

If a student has not met the minimum ACSF exit level(s):

- set by Skills SA (ACSF exit level 2 in reading and numeracy) in the CSPA; or
- set by the training provider (for reading and numeracy or optional writing)

then the training provider must organise for the student's CSPA assessment results to be interpreted by a qualified and Skills SA-approved CSPA interpreter.

Requesting a CSPA interpretation

When requesting a CSPA interpretation report, training providers **must** ensure the following have been given to the CSPA interpreter to allow a customised foundation skills recommendation for the student:



- Information and findings from the suitability and support needs assessment
- Confirmation that English is not the student's first language where relevant to the assessment results
- CSPA assessment results
- The ACSF exit level required if higher than minimum 2 in reading and numeracy
- The ACSF exit level required if writing was assessed
- Information on any barriers to learning
- Information on whether the learner is a school student or apprentice/trainee
- Information on what in-house literacy and numeracy support the training provider has available for their students.

Prior to finalising the CSPA interpretation, the CSPA interpreter and the training provider **must** discuss the interpretation findings, including the best ways to provide supports if there are gaps. Supports can be provided before or during the course, or some combination of both.

Where a CSPA interpreter advises a training provider that the findings indicate the student is not proficient in English, the training provider must contact Skills SA via the UANAdvice@sa.gov.au inbox for assistance and cc in the CSPA interpreter. Skills SA will work with the training provider and their CSPA interpreter on the best approach to support the student's needs and provide advice on how to complete the CSPA interpretation report.

Where there are no concerns relating to English language proficiency, the training provider and CSPA interpreter will discuss what impact any gaps may have on the student in their qualification, the size of the gaps, and the best methods of foundation skills support. Examples of foundation skills support include:

- up to 5 foundation skills (FSK) bridging units
- an FSK qualification if the student needs more than 5 FSK bridging units
- the training provider's in-house literacy and numeracy support

- non-accredited funded foundation skills tutor service support
- a combination of bridging units, in-house or tutor service support.

Please note: for VETRO students, refer to the VETRO UAN Guidelines for information about the CSPA interpretation report process. School students are only able to access foundation skills supports through their home school.

CSPA interpretation report

The screenshot shows the top section of the 'CSPA Interpretation Report' form. It has a purple and pink gradient header with the title 'CSPA Interpretation Report'. Below the header, there is a breadcrumb trail: 'Toolkit > CSPA Interpretation Report'. A light blue bar contains a document icon and the word 'ARTICLE', with a 'View All Tools' link on the right. Below this is a red pill-shaped button labeled 'READING, WRITING & NUMERACY ASSESSMENTS'. The main heading is 'Core Skills Profile for Adults (CSPA)- Interpretation Report'. The text explains that an interpretation is only needed if a student did not meet the minimum ACSF Exit Level(s) specified by Skills SA (ACSF exit level 2 in reading and numeracy) or the Training Provider's own ACSF exit levels. It then lists the qualifications and experience required for the interpreter, including AQF Certificate IV or higher, 2 years' experience, and knowledge of the UAN and VETRO processes. Finally, it states that the form is used to record the findings of the interpretation process.

CSPA Interpretation Report

Toolkit > CSPA Interpretation Report

ARTICLE [View All Tools](#)

READING, WRITING & NUMERACY ASSESSMENTS

Core Skills Profile for Adults (CSPA)- Interpretation Report

An interpretation of CSPA assessment results is only needed where a student did not meet the minimum ACSF Exit Level(s) specified by Skills SA (ACSF exit level 2 in reading and numeracy) or the Training Provider's own ACSF exit levels.

The interpretation of CSPA assessment results must only be undertaken by literacy and numeracy trainers and assessors, who are approved by Skills SA and hold, at a minimum:

- literacy and numeracy trainer and assessor qualification at AQF Certificate IV or higher AQF qualification in English language and/or literacy and/or numeracy; and
- 2 years' full time or equivalent part-time experience in training and assessing literacy and numeracy in an adult education environment; and
- trainer and assessor qualification requirements as specified by the *2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)* or its successor; and
- current in-depth knowledge of the requirements of the UAN and VETRO processes.

This CSPA Interpretation Report form is used to record the findings of the interpretation process.

The CSPA interpretation report is an online form prescribed by Skills SA. It documents the findings from the interpretation of a student's CSPA assessment results by a qualified and approved CSPA interpreter.

Any foundation skills support identified as being required in the CSPA interpretation report is a condition of access to subsidy for the student. The training provider is responsible for discussing any literacy and numeracy supports with the student.

Training providers are responsible for informing students prescribed foundation skills are a condition of access:

- during the UAN process
- when they are completing the participant agreement
- when completing enrolment processes for the establishment of a training account.

CSPA interpretation reports are valid for 12 months from their date of issue, only for the course the interpretation relates to and with the training provider that conducted the CSPA reading/numeracy/writing assessment.

If a student refuses to undertake the foundation skills support prescribed in a CSPA interpretation report, a training account must not be opened. A refusal means the student must wait a minimum of 3 months before they can retake a CSPA reading and numeracy assessment with the same training provider, to demonstrate they are at ACSF exit level 2 in both reading and numeracy.

CSPA interpretation report and the participant agreement form



The Skills SA participant agreement, which all students must agree to and sign, includes a statement that the student agrees to complete any required foundation skills as a condition of subsidy.

Where a CSPA interpretation report identifies the student must access foundation skills supports, the training provider of the vocational qualification must explain the process for access to the student and reiterate these are a condition of access to subsidy. This applies whether the student requires access to foundation or vocational skills bridging units, foundation skills tutor support, or in-house support.

Training providers are responsible for this explanation regardless of whether the training provider delivers the foundation or vocational skills bridging units, or the foundation skills will be delivered by a Skills SA approved flexible foundation skills bridging unit (FSK BU) or tutor service provider.

Training providers must:

- facilitate access to the foundation skills required
- inform students who do not agree to or adhere to their required foundation skills support that they are not entitled to access the subsidy, and close the training account for the vocational course
- ensure they explain to the student that their active engagement with prescribed foundation skills support is monitored by Skills SA
- explain to the student that foundation skills can be undertaken and completed:
 - before their vocational course; or
 - embedded in the vocational course delivery; or
 - out of class and alongside delivery of the vocational course
 - and must be completed **prior to the completion** of their vocational qualification.
- ensure the student understands the training provider must monitor the student to ensure they commence and complete the foundation skills training as agreed, regardless of who delivers the prescribed foundation skills training.

CSPA interpreter skills, experience and qualifications

The interpretation of CSPA assessment results must only be undertaken by literacy and numeracy trainers and assessors, who are approved by Skills SA and hold, at a minimum:

- literacy and numeracy trainer and assessor qualification at AQF Certificate IV or higher AQF qualification in English language and/or literacy and/or numeracy - for more information, please see [CSPA approval process](#); and
- 2 years' full-time or equivalent part-time experience in training and assessing literacy and numeracy in an adult education environment; and
- trainer and assessor qualification requirements as specified by the *2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)* or its successor; and
- current in-depth knowledge of the requirements of the UAN and VETRO processes.

For assistance in determining whether a practitioner meets these minimum standards and to gain Skills SA approval for an individual to commence undertaking CSPA interpretations please email

UANAdvice@sa.gov.au

Training providers without a literacy and numeracy skills trainer and assessor on staff may enter a third-party arrangement with a training provider or qualified practitioner who can provide this expertise. Please note, training providers do not have to seek approval from Skills SA to enter this type of third-party arrangement.

Training providers can refer to the Skills SA [Assessing literacy and numeracy page](#) for contact information for Skills SA approved CSPA interpretation service providers.

Payment for a valid CSPA interpretation report

In recognition of the specialist skills and their time involved in the interpretation process, Skills SA will pay training providers a flat rate of \$200 (plus GST) upon submission of a valid CSPA interpretation report by a Skills SA approved CSPA interpreter.

To be eligible for payment, a report must be completed using the prescribed Skills SA CSPA interpretation form and include at least 1 of the following actions to address the identified need:

- In-house support delivered by the training provider's own staff that will address minor gaps.
- Referral to the non-accredited foundation skills tutor service funded by Skills SA.
- Up to a maximum of 5 subsidised foundation skills bridging units from the FSK training package.
- Any combination of the above.
- Referral to a subsidised foundation skills qualification (fee-free).

Skills SA issues all subsidised training providers with contractual documentation (a 'Funded Activities Annexure – CSPA Interpretation Reports') enabling payments to be made.

Once the Funded Activities Annexure is executed, payments to training providers will be transferred automatically in the month following the quarter during which any valid reports were received. The quarters are: Q3 (January to March), Q4 (April to June), Q1 (July to September), and Q2 (October to December).

Regardless of who completes the CSPA interpretation, the training provider who is conducting the UAN process with a student will receive payment under the executed contract arrangements.

When using another organisation to complete interpretations, the training provider must pass on the payment in full to the organisation who completed the task on their behalf.

5. Foundation Skills Supports

Foundation skills support entitlement

Students with evidence of literacy and or numeracy gaps from the CSPA reading or numeracy or writing assessment are entitled to:

- up to 5 fee-free foundation skills bridging units attached to the vocational qualification
- a fee-free foundation skills qualification
- access to the fee-free foundation skills tutor service if the gaps are minimal, or
- in-house literacy and numeracy support the training provider has available for their students.

Access to foundation skills qualifications

Students are entitled to access a foundation skills qualification where the need is evidenced through a CSPA interpretation report. This includes students who:

- applied for a vocational qualification but need more than 5 foundation skills bridging units
- applied for a vocational qualification delivered under a training contract but need more than 5 foundation skills bridging units
- applied for a foundation skills qualification directly and are below ACSF exit level 2 in reading or numeracy or writing.

Only students undertaking a training contract may undertake a foundation skills course at the same time as the vocational course.

Please note: If a student needs more than 5 FSK bridging units and is referred to a foundation skills course, the foundation skills service provider will:

- determine which foundation skills bridging units the student will undertake
- ensure the student is only required to undertake the number of units needed to address their foundation skills gap
- close the foundation skills course training account when the student has completed the required units.

Responsibility for facilitation, enrolment and completion of foundation skills

Training providers

On receipt of a CSPA interpretation report identifying the need for foundation skills bridging units or foundation skills tutor support, training providers must give the student either the:

- [Skills SA Foundation Skills Bridging Units Service Fact Sheet](#), or
- [Skills SA Foundation Skills Tutor Service Fact Sheet and Consent Form](#)

These fact sheets include:

- contact details for the foundation skills service providers the training provider is referring the student to
- information about how the foundation skills service provider's enrolment process will work, who can help the student with enrolment, what to expect, and the responsibilities of the student and their training provider
- a consent form the training provider must get the student to complete for the foundation skills tutor service.

A list of Skills SA approved flexible foundation skills bridging unit service providers who can deliver foundation skills bridging units and foundation skills qualifications flexibly can be found at <https://providers.skills.sa.gov.au/file/downloads/flexible-delivery-options-and-providers-matrix>.

A list of Skills SA approved non-accredited foundation skills tutor service providers can be found at <https://providers.skills.sa.gov.au/assessing-literacy-numeracy>.

To avoid unnecessary duplication of evidence and to streamline the enrolment process into Skills SA approved foundation skills services, training providers referring to these services must give the foundation skills service provider the following information for each student:

- Suitability and support needs assessment
- SRNI/CSPA results
- CSPA interpretation report
- Valid Unique Student Identifier (USI)
- Skills SA participant ID
- Signed consent to disclose/exchange personal information form if referring to foundation skills tutor support services, and
- The following written statement confirming evidence of eligibility:
Our RTO has collected information and/or sighted identity documentation to confirm this student's eligibility for government subsidised training. To the best of our knowledge, the student meets all participant eligibility criteria specified in Item 8 of the [Funded Activities Annexure – STL Delivery](#). Our RTO has a signed participant agreement form.

The above statement is accepted by Skills SA in lieu of the student or referring training provider needing to provide the foundation skills service providers (FSK BU or tutor service) with documentation to confirm the student's eligibility to access and be enrolled in subsidised foundation skills.

Skills SA approved foundation skills service providers

Skills SA approved foundation skills service providers will support the student to complete their foundation skills enrolment, establish their training start date and answer any questions or address any concerns.

The foundation skills service provider will confirm with the student they will:

- advise the training provider when the student has enrolled and keep the training provider updated on the student's attendance, participation and completion
- offer support to the student as needed to overcome any barriers impacting on their foundation skills training
- inform the student what actions they will take if the student is not attending or participating as agreed.

The foundation skills service provider will establish an FSK qualification training account for students referred from the vocational training provider for FSK bridging units or a FSK course and close this training account when all the required FSK units of competency/FSK course requirements have been completed.

The foundation skills service provider has the right to refuse to accept a student referred by an RTO for FSK bridging units, foundation skills course or tutor support who has low levels of English language capabilities. In this instance the service provider will advise the RTO via email and cc in the UANAdvice@sa.gov.au inbox. Skills SA will work with the referring RTO and their CSPA interpreter on the best approach to supporting the student's needs.

Delivery of foundation skills bridging units

If Foundation Skills Training Package on scope

Where the training provider of the vocational qualification also has the FSK training package on their scope of registration, they must facilitate access to the required foundation skills bridging units by attaching these units to the student's vocational qualification training account.

If Foundation Skills Training Package not on scope

Where the training provider of the vocational qualification (the enrolling training provider) does not have the FSK training package on their scope of registration, they must facilitate the student's access to the required foundation skills bridging units as per the above information.

Who can deliver foundation skills bridging units

If the training provider has FSK training package on scope, foundation skills bridging units can be integrated into the delivery of the student's vocational qualification and delivered by vocational trainers and assessors who, at a minimum:

- hold trainer and assessor qualification requirements as specified by the *Outcome Standards – Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025*, or its successor; and
- hold TAESS00026 Foundation Skills Integration Skill Set, and who have regular access to a literacy and numeracy trainer and assessor; or
- are undertaking TAESS00026 Foundation Skills Integration Skill Set and who are under the direct supervision of a literacy and numeracy trainer and assessor.

Foundation skills bridging units not delivered through integration into the delivery of a vocational qualification must be delivered by a literacy and numeracy trainer and assessor (as defined below under 'Who can deliver foundation skills qualifications'). They may deliver using a methodology to suit the individual and the circumstances.

Who can deliver foundation skills qualifications

Foundation skills qualifications may only be delivered by literacy and numeracy trainers and assessors, who hold, at a minimum:

- literacy and numeracy trainer and assessor qualification at AQF Certificate IV level, or higher AQF qualification in English language, and/or literacy and/or numeracy; and
- 2 years' full-time or equivalent part-time experience in training and assessing literacy and numeracy in an adult education environment; and
- trainer and assessor qualification requirements as specified by the *Outcome Standards – Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025*, or its successor.

For assistance in determining whether an individual meets these minimum standards, please email UANAdvice@sa.gov.au

6. UAN Frequently Asked Questions

UAN modifications

Skills SA recognises there are circumstances that may require some modification to the UAN process to ensure it is equitable for all students. This may include students in remote/regional locations, First Nation students, prisoners, or students with disability.

Training providers must contact Skills SA to discuss possible options where they believe a modification is required.

Prior to implementing any modification, training providers must submit a written request to UANAdvice@sa.gov.au for approval. In the request, training providers must outline the proposed modification, why it is needed and whether this reason impacts on the inherent requirements for the course.

Training providers must retain written approval of any UAN modification Skills SA approves in the case of Skills SA UAN compliance audits.

Training contracts

Skills SA strongly encourages training providers to complete the UAN process before establishing a training account for apprentices and trainees. This ensures early supports are provided and limits the risk of a training provider discovering significant issues later that may impact retention and completion.

However, apprentices and trainees can commence their subsidised course prior to completing the UAN if there is an urgent requirement by the employer to do so. In this circumstance the training provider must complete the UAN process:

- within 6 weeks of the training account being created for metropolitan-based trainees and apprentices; or
- within 12 weeks of the training account being created for non-metropolitan-based trainees and apprentices.

Where access to SWS is identified as a support, training providers must organise a referral as soon as possible to support barriers or issues that impact retention and training success.

Where foundation skills support is identified as being required, training providers need to discuss with their foundation skills provider flexible options for the delivery of foundation skills bridging units, foundation skills qualifications and non-accredited foundation skills tutor support. Using flexibilities available in the delivery of foundation skills provides options for regional students and those undertaking their training over multiple years under training contract arrangements.

The training provider is responsible for ensuring the UAN process is completed and must contact Skills SA at UANAdvice@sa.gov.au if it is evident these time frames will not be met.

Superseded and replacement qualifications

Existing students with a current training account who are being moved into an equivalent/ non-equivalent replacement qualification with their existing training provider are not required to undertake the UAN again. Based on their existing knowledge of the student, the training provider may, at their discretion, reassess any aspect of the UAN to ensure additional supports are made available if required.

Transitioning between two training providers

Students may need to be transitioned from one training provider to another through a jointly managed, provider-to-provider process due to:

- a training provider closure
- a training provider exiting delivery of a qualification
- multiple training providers working together on a project.

In these circumstances, the training provider who conducted the original UAN must provide the receiving training provider with a copy of all UAN records. This includes the evidence that informed the outcome of the suitability and support needs assessment, the SRNI and any CSPA assessment results reports and/or CSPA interpretation reports.

The receiving training provider must review the records to determine whether they are satisfied with the findings and can meet any identified needs prior to establishing a training account for the transitioning student.

If the receiving training provider is not satisfied with the UAN process used and/or believes the documentation does not meet the UAN guidelines, they can request the student retake all or part of the UAN process as a condition of access to subsidy.

Vocational bridging units

Students are entitled to a maximum of 5 bridging units per subsidised qualification.

Bridging units may be either foundation skills or vocational or a combination of both.

Vocational bridging units are accredited units of competency that address identified gaps in underpinning technical skills or knowledge for the subsidised qualification of choice.

Vocational bridging units:

- may not be used for gaps in skills or knowledge that are prerequisite(s) under training package rules
- cannot include units of competency that are electives for the subsidised qualification under the training package rules
- are delivered by the training provider and must be on the training provider's FAA scope of delivery.

Entitlement to vocational bridging units is based on evidence from the suitability and support needs assessment and where prescribed by the training provider, are a condition of access to subsidised training.

Unlike foundation skills bridging units, vocational bridging units are not available on a fee-free basis and will require a co-contribution, unless otherwise exempted (for example, the student is or has been under the Guardianship of the Minister).

7. UAN help

UAN advice email inbox

Skills SA has a dedicated UAN advice inbox - UANAdvice@sa.gov.au for all training providers to request assistance, advice or support in understanding and implementing the UAN.

Skills SA can help with understanding UAN guidelines, using published UAN resources and problem-solving UAN issues during implementation.

The Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER) literacy and numeracy assessment tools

ACER literacy and numeracy tools are validated for use across a broad Australian demographic who are proficient in English.

Skills SA require all training providers to assess the literacy and numeracy capabilities of all students, proficient in English, using an ACER literacy and numeracy assessment under Skills SA's licence.

Skills SA does not accept any other literacy and numeracy assessment, or literacy and numeracy assessment results completed under another license.

Skills SA's license for the ACER literacy and numeracy tools must not be used by training providers to assess students who are not eligible or entitled to access subsidised training in South Australia.

ACER's intellectual property

The intellectual property for assessment items/questions in the ACER assessment tools are owned by ACER. Training providers must not reproduce or distribute reproduced printed or electronic versions of the assessment items/questions, as this is a breach of copyright laws in Australia. If Skills SA suspects a training provider has breached ACER's intellectual property rights, Skills SA will report this suspected breach to ACER.

ACER reserves the right to take legal action against a training provider who reproduces or distributes reproduced versions of any of the assessment items/questions from the ACER assessment tools and suspend their access to the ACER assessment tools under the Skill SA licence.

ACER's assessment declaration and privacy statement

ACER requires that all students undertaking the online literacy and numeracy assessment to declare they have answered and entered the answers to the questions themselves and understand their privacy rights prior to submitting their answers.

If Skills SA suspects a training provider provided the student with answers to the assessment questions, or entered any answers on behalf of the student, and/or completed the assessment declaration and privacy statement on behalf of the student, Skills SA will report the falsification of the statement and invalidation of the assessment to ACER.

ACER reserves the right to remove the training provider's access to the ACER assessment tools under the Skills SA licence in these circumstances.

The ACER CSPA helpdesk

Training providers experiencing technical difficulties with the ACER CSPA assessment tool should contact the help desk:
Email cspa@acer.org Phone (03) 9277 5312



ACER reports are available through a training provider's ACER login in the OARS platform, including group reports for CSPA 2020, CSPA SRNI, CSPA SRNI (v2) and the CSPA writing assessment.

Please note: Training providers cannot use their Skills SA login to assign literacy and numeracy assessments for their fee-for-service students. ACER assessments issued under a training provider's Skills SA login can only be undertaken for South Australian subsidised students.

ACER resources

ACER resources are available through a training provider's ACER login in the OARS platform, including:

- ACER administration guide (this provides information about the key administrative functions of the OARS platform, including producing and viewing a range of reports)
- ACER assessment guide (this provides detailed information on the literacy and numeracy assessments and reports)
- explanations of each assessment
- literacy and numeracy videos
- research development articles
- resources for educators and students (e.g. building strength in numeracy).

APPENDIX 1

Supervision of ACER literacy and numeracy assessments

Under the FAA, the training provider retains full responsibility and accountability for ensuring supervision of literacy and numeracy assessments comply with the requirements outlined in Appendix 1. This applies regardless of whether the supervision is undertaken by the training provider's staff or their agent and whether the assessment is conducted face to face or virtually.

Please note, training providers do not have to seek approval from Skills SA to enter a third-party arrangement for the supervision of the literacy and numeracy assessments.

When conducting a virtual group literacy and numeracy assessment session, training providers must ensure students' right to privacy is maintained, by establishing 'break-out rooms' when discussing results of literacy and numeracy assessments.

Training providers are responsible for ensuring the following requirements:

Prior to commencing the literacy and numeracy assessment

It is important the assessment process is equitable for every student and their performance reflects their true capabilities.

- ✓ Ensure any English as a second language student is proficient in reading, writing, speaking and listening in English through the suitability and support needs assessment
- ✓ Provide the student with an opportunity to use the ACER literacy and numeracy practice assessment
- ✓ Encourage student participation and reiterate the assessment is not a pass/fail but a way to ensure they receive support if they need it
- ✓ Remind the student to take their time, read questions carefully or more than once, and take the assessment seriously
- ✓ Ensure the student knows how to navigate the assessment and access the inbuilt calculator
- ✓ Ensure reasonable adjustments are available to support any student with disability disclosed during the suitability and support needs assessment*
- ✓ Ensure the student knows they can reschedule their assessment if on the day they are unwell or have limited time available or otherwise don't feel ready.

Check for and remove/disable any items not permitted during the literacy and numeracy assessment, including:

- ✗ Books, dictionaries, rulers, protractors/mathematics templates or translators
- ✗ Mobile phones or any other devices that connect to the internet, e.g. smart watches, ear buds or any other wearables
- ✗ Taking photographs or video of school enrolled students
- ✗ Use of the web browser's 'read aloud' function*

During the literacy and numeracy assessment

It is important the assessment process does not result in invalidating the student's result or undermining their access to support when they genuinely need it.

- ✓ The student must access the online literacy and numeracy assessment issued to them by the training provider, and only in the actual or virtual presence of the training provider's staff or agent.
- ✓ Clarify general instructions with the student about the assessment platform, including:
 - how to change an answer
 - how to navigate the platform (but not doing it for them)
 - how to use aspects of the platform such as built-in calculator or magnification
 - how to read all the available text for a question by scrolling, if some is not visible.
- ✓ Actively monitor student conduct to ensure there is no talking or collaborating between students or any use of items not permitted.
- ✓ Advise the student to leave a question they are unsure about and move on to the next.
- ✓ Remind the student they can review any unanswered questions before they finish.
- ✓ Provide general encouragement to continue with the assessment.
- ✓ Remind the student they can take a break or save their assessment and come back another day to complete it.
- ✓ Remind the student they can use pen and paper during the assessment to make notes and calculations to help them work through answering a question.
- ✓ Remind the student there is no time limit and therefore no need to rush.
- ✓ Monitor the student's wellbeing and the length of time they are taking for signs the student may have low levels of capability and is becoming stressed.
- ✓ Support the student to stop the assessment if it is negatively impacting on their wellbeing.

Supervisors are not permitted to:

- ✗ Enter an answer on behalf of the student into the online assessment.
- ✗ Read any question aloud to the student.
- ✗ Give hints or examples for any question in the online assessment.
- ✗ Indicate to the student whether answers are correct or incorrect in the online assessment.
- ✗ Navigate through the assessment platform for the student or in any way manipulate the mouse, keyboard or screen on behalf of the student*

**Reasonable adjustments literacy and numeracy assessment conditions for students with disability disclosed through the suitability and support needs assessment, must be approved by Skills SA prior to the student undertaking the literacy and numeracy assessment.*

Responding to plagiarism

Training providers must refer to their own internal policies to determine what action they will take in relation to any incidence of suspected or proven plagiarism during any literacy and numeracy assessment.

Where plagiarism is suspected or proven, the training provider has the right to determine whether they will permit the student to retake the literacy and numeracy assessment. Reassessment in the instance of plagiarism must use the CSPA reading, numeracy or writing assessment and:

- the individual must be supervised one-to-one, and in person only
- the training provider will determine what combination of reading, numeracy and writing assessments will be retaken, based on the circumstances
- where writing is being reassessed, the written pieces produced, regardless of the result, must be interpreted.

The original writing results must be provided to the literacy and numeracy specialist for comparison, to assist in determining whether the new written pieces reflect the individual's actual capabilities.