

Guide to Designing RAC Instruments: A Harmonized Approach to the Recognition of Acquired Competencies



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of Acquired Competencies**

**Ministère de l'Éducation,
du Loisir et du Sport**

**Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur,
de la Recherche, de la Science
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Coordination	<i>Sonia Fradette</i> Coordinator, recognition of acquired competencies Direction de la formation professionnelle Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport
Design and development	<i>Sonia Fradette</i> Coordinator, recognition of acquired competencies Direction de la formation professionnelle <i>Jean-François Pouliot</i> Education consultant <i>Gilles Tremblay</i> Education consultant
Special collaboration	<i>Karel Dufour</i> Coordinator, recognition of acquired competencies Direction des programmes techniques et de la formation continue Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie
Collaboration	<i>Chantal Fontaine</i> Commission scolaire de Saint-Hyacinthe <i>Andrée Langevin</i> Cégep Marie-Victorin <i>Hélène Lebreux</i> Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles <i>Ronald Morel</i> Commission scolaire de la Seigneurie-des-Mille-Îles <i>Diane Pepin</i> Cégep régional de Lanaudière
Document design	<i>Sara-Ève Giroux Beaumont</i> Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport <i>Manon Claude</i> Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie
Secretarial support	<i>Maureen Whalen</i> Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport
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INTRODUCTION

This guide is intended for all those in the education system who are involved in developing local or ministerial instruments used for the recognition of acquired competencies (RAC). When the Ministère produces these instruments, its role is to provide quality control throughout the development process. It is also responsible for seeking out the advice of partners on certain parts of the RAC materials and for implementing and field-testing these materials, if applicable, in the vocational and technical training network.

The development process presented in this guide is part of the harmonized approach implemented in vocational and technical training in the wake of the *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training*¹ and of orientations that focused primarily on renewing the system for recognizing acquired competencies. With this in mind, this guide reviews the basic principles of the development process as well as the background and characteristics of the harmonized approach.² This document also examines the concept of “essential elements of the competency,” upon which the whole process is based. The concepts of “integration” and “inclusion” of competencies are also explained because of their potential impact on the development of RAC instruments. Lastly, this guide explores the features of a RAC assessment and presents the development process and the roles of each member on the production team.

This guide is divided into five sections, each covering one of the five steps in the development process:

- identifying the essential elements of each competency in a program of study
- designing and producing self-assessment forms
- determining assessment options for recognition
- designing and producing assessment forms
- producing the companion guide

Each section contains information on the various tasks and activities required to produce the specific instrument as well as examples illustrating the different steps and checklists. Note that some programs of study are not available in English; examples have therefore been translated to help the reader better understand the situation being explained. The appendices contain templates and other reference tools.

Lastly, this guide draws upon projects carried out with various vocational and technical training institutions that agreed to contribute to developing ministerial RAC instruments. Several examples in this guide come from these projects. In addition, a number of local representatives who worked on these projects participated in the consultation sessions which led to this final, official version of the guide.

¹ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training* (Québec: Ministère de l'Éducation, 2002).

² The harmonized approach is described in detail in the following reference document: Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, *Recognition of Prior Learning and Competencies in Vocational and Technical Training, General and Technical Frameworks* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2005), 5-9. Translator's Note: In 2008, Recognition for Prior Learning and Competencies (RPLC) was replaced by Recognition of Acquired Competencies (RAC). Also note that although the basic principles of this document still apply, an update is anticipated as the text does not reflect the RAC process and terminology currently in use.

Principles and steps involved in designing RAC instruments

The design process described in this guide is based on the major principles underlying the recognition of acquired competencies as well as on these four guidelines:

- The first guideline refers to the main characteristics of the harmonized approach, which was implemented in vocational and technical training in the wake of the orientations of the *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training*. Each of these characteristics has a very specific scope and meaning, which are explained in the *General Framework* and reviewed below.
- The second guideline revolves around the concept of “essential elements of the competency,” which refers to the specific requirements associated with RAC and the process for developing assessment instruments.
- The third guideline deals with the integration and inclusion of program competencies in a RAC context.
- The fourth guideline concerns the features of an assessment process that is appropriate to RAC.

Characteristics of the harmonized approach

The harmonized approach revolves around three focuses:

Developing a personalized, accessible approach

This approach focuses above all on the needs of individuals. It is intended to increase access to RAC services in all educational institutions. Because individuals have a right to receive recognition for prior learning, they should not have to first adapt to an organization, its culture or system in order to avail themselves of this service—it should be the other way around. Thus, the desired approach should be flexible and simple, while continuing to be both rigorous and effective. Furthermore, such personalized services should be available in all educational institutions, regardless of where people live, their level of education, or whether or not they wish to pursue their studies.

Implementing a harmonized, integrated approach

Both harmonization and integration must occur in several ways and at several levels. The term *harmonized approach* refers to the need to develop a process that, if not identical, is at least similar from one level of instruction to another and uses the same types of instruments throughout. The fact that programs are competency-based at both the secondary and college levels makes it easier to harmonize recognition between these levels. However, collaborative mechanisms must also be designed to respond to requests for academic and professional recognition that come from industry and the labour market. In continuing education and training and lifelong learning, this means that a joint school-industry system must be devised to effectively meet needs in terms of prior learning recognition, career development and access to further training for individuals who have similar job functions.

In other words, there must be “harmonization among levels of education with respect to terms and conditions, services and recognition granted, and harmonization among the different mechanisms of recognition in order to facilitate reciprocity between the labour market and educational institutions.”³

The term *integrated approach* implies that all the aspects of an application for recognition must be taken into account, including the need for further study and opportunities for personal and career development associated with continuing education and training and lifelong learning. In this context, innovative approaches must therefore be found to provide adults who seek prior learning recognition with formats that are suited to their situation, learning style and type of training needed. Distance education, the use of information and communications technologies, self-directed study and part-time training are all formats that should be considered. What is important is to be able to customize a plan for further study to an individual’s situation by applying follow-up measures that are adapted to the extracurricular and experiential nature of learning previously acquired by that person.

Using a comprehensive, seamless approach

The term *comprehensive, seamless approach* describes the process suggested to those who wish to receive recognition for prior learning. This approach must take into consideration all the needs associated with an individual’s request, however diverse these needs may be (e.g. need for recognition of learning associated with several programs at the same level of instruction or at different levels, possibility of recognizing learning partially or fully with respect to one or several competencies of a program or of different programs). The comprehensive approach defined here reflects the education system’s concern for meeting individuals’ needs for prior learning recognition above and beyond organizational and administrative constraints and institutional differences. The expression refers also to the fact that schools should not restrict RAC services to individuals who are interested in pursuing their studies and obtaining a diploma. Here, once again, the focus must be on individuals and their needs as well as their personal or career plans. Thus, people should be able to obtain recognition for prior learning simply because they wish to have a record of their competencies with respect to basic education, they want to know how they fare with respect to certain job requirements, or they want an indication of their level of learning or competencies.

Definition of the concept of “essential elements of the competency”

RAC instruments are always developed using the same reference tool, that is, the applicable program of study. However, since these instruments must be adapted to the particular context of RAC, which is one of assessment, they must be free from the constraints and features that are specific to the program of study and to a formal school setting.

RAC straddles two worlds, each with its own recognition system: the world of work and businesses on the one hand, and that of education and educational institutions on the other. Competencies are viewed very differently in each of these worlds and neither defines them in an exclusive way. In education, competencies are *developed*; in the workplace, they are *applied*. The first social responsibility of the education system is to help students develop competencies while the focus of the workplace is to have employees optimize their available resources and competencies.

When it comes to analyzing the essential elements of a program’s competencies, understanding the difference between “developing competencies” and “applying competencies” can be useful. Given that education focuses on developing competencies in students, the programs refer to competencies in terms of objectives and standards, the different key features of the competency that can guide a future learning process, and appropriate performance criteria that support an evaluation process adapted to, even

³ Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training, 23.

integrated into, the learning process.⁴ In RAC, the emphasis is on the expected outcomes of the training rather than on the learning process. Focus is also on the essential, most meaningful elements of the competencies because the competencies are considered from the perspective of the candidates' ability to apply them.

Therefore, “essential elements of a competency” can be defined as follows:

The “essential elements of a competency” guide and support the entire process for developing RAC instruments so that only those program elements that appear crucial to applying the competency are selected as a frame of reference.

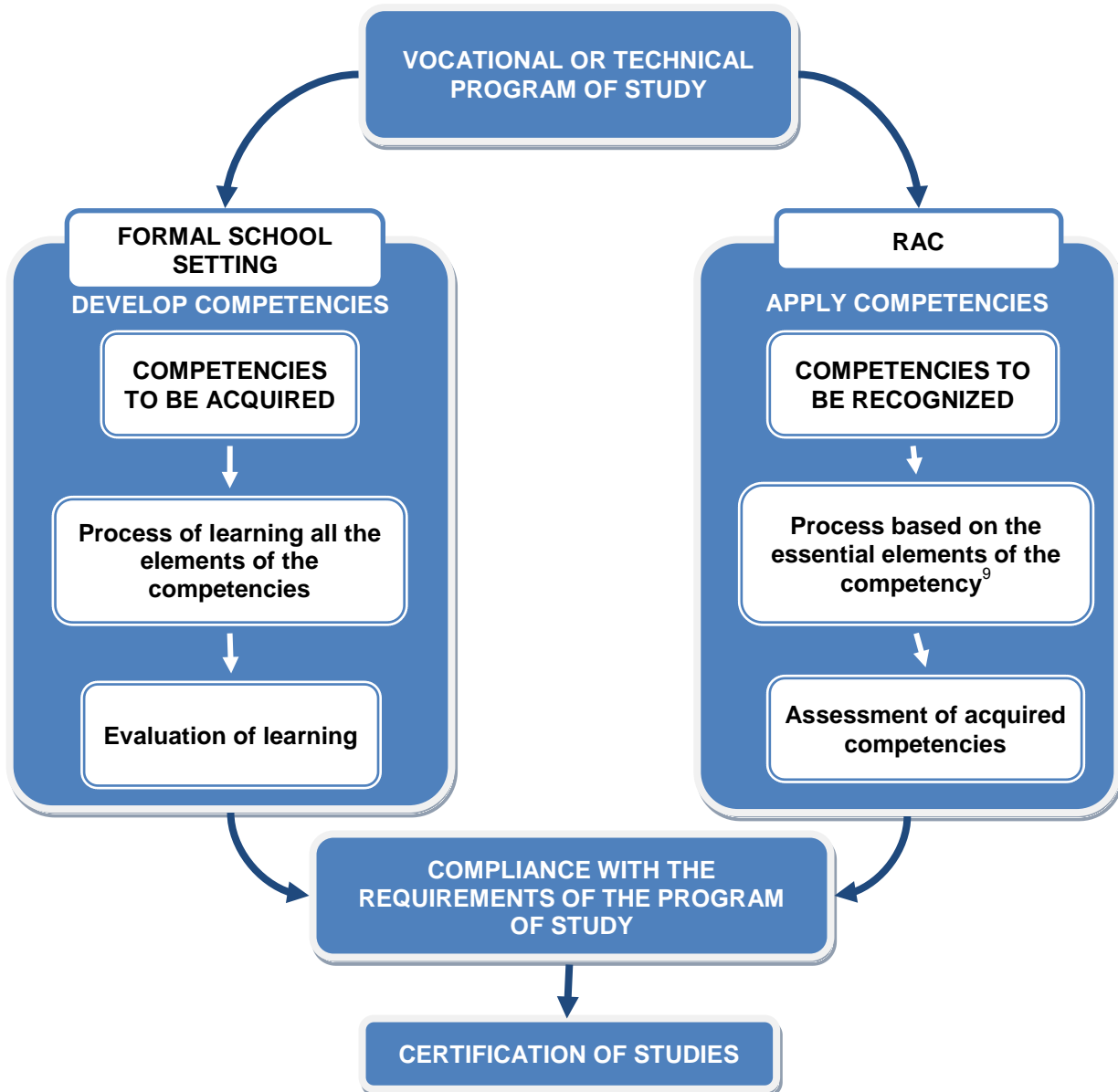
The essential elements of a competency are key because, in RAC, an individual's competencies must be identified, assessed and certified independently from the circumstances (places, times and means of learning) in which they were acquired. These circumstances can vary and bear no resemblance to traditional schooling. This is why the elements of the competency in a program of study quite often reveal the difference between formal and experiential learning. In the first instance, the indicators and criteria are selected based on an overall analysis of the program of study and the assurance that all the elements of the competency have been taught. In the second instance, an equitable process must ensure that the elements essential to applying a competency have been learnt and acquired.

For all these reasons, right from the beginning, RAC instruments have been developed so as to ensure that the essential elements of each program competency are not directly related to the context of formal learning. The concept of essential elements is so critical in a RAC context precisely because programs of study are designed to encourage the integration of learning or the acquisition of competencies in order of increasing complexity.

The following diagram illustrates this difference in approach as it applies to vocational and technical training.

⁴ The Ministère defines its development process for vocational and technical training programs as follows: “In vocational and technical training, this approach essentially consists in defining the competencies inherent in the practice of a trade or occupation and formulating them as objectives in a program of study.” Source: Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Program Development: Vocational Training – Program Design and Development Guide* (Québec: Ministère de l'Éducation, 2004), 5.

Diagram illustrating the difference in the approaches used in a formal school setting and in RAC



⁵ The “essential elements of a competency” guide and support the entire process for developing RAC instruments so that only those program elements that appear crucial to applying the competency are selected as a frame of reference.

Integration and inclusion of competencies

When designing RAC instruments, it is important to take into account how a competency-based program, or part of a program, is structured. The possibility that certain competencies could be integrated into or included in other competencies must be kept in mind. Depending on the case, this could have major practical implications for the different steps involved in developing and organizing the RAC process.

Before delving deeper into the concepts of integration and inclusion, it is perhaps best to begin with a definition of "integration of competencies."

There are a number of definitions for "integration," some general and others quite technical and specific to disciplines, fields of professional activity or areas of social intervention. In the third edition of his *Dictionnaire actuel de l'éducation*, Renald Legendre has more than ten entries for integration, including integration of learning, integration of teaching and integration of subject matter. What becomes obvious is that integration can be regarded in terms of the learner, curriculum organization and the pedagogical strategies employed.

In a RAC context, "integration of competencies" refers to the way in which a competency-based program is structured and how its components are organized and articulated. Note that integration of competencies should not be confused with integration of knowledge or learning.

In a general sense, the term "integration" is defined as:

The action of bringing together various elements to create a harmonious and greater whole; to integrate is to combine parts in such a way that the resulting whole is greater than the sum of its parts.⁶

In a more specialized sense, the term "integration" means:

Insertion into the whole of a new element which incorporates harmoniously into that whole; result of that process.⁷

As such, "integration of competencies" should be reserved for designating a specific form of cumulative progression in which certain elements of one or more program competencies are incorporated into one or more other competencies to create a harmonious whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

In this context, the term "integrative competency" can be used to designate a competency that integrates other competencies by incorporating a certain number of their elements in such a way that acquiring the competency necessarily involves new learning. In other words, acquiring an integrative competency involves more than just acquiring each of the elements or parts incorporated into it.

For example, in Computer Science Technology (420.A0), *Install a computer network*⁸ (0186) integrates a substantial number of elements of other competencies as part of a long-term installation project. These elements are therefore integrated in accordance with the features of the specific installation project and it is precisely the ability to apply these elements that constitutes the new learning in the program of study.

And now what is meant by "inclusion of competencies" and how is it different from integration?

⁶ J.A.Gibbons, quoted in Renald Legendre, *Dictionnaire actuel de l'éducation*, 3rd ed. (Montréal: Guérin, 2005), 784 [translation]. In subsequent references, this work will be cited as Legendre, *Dictionnaire*.

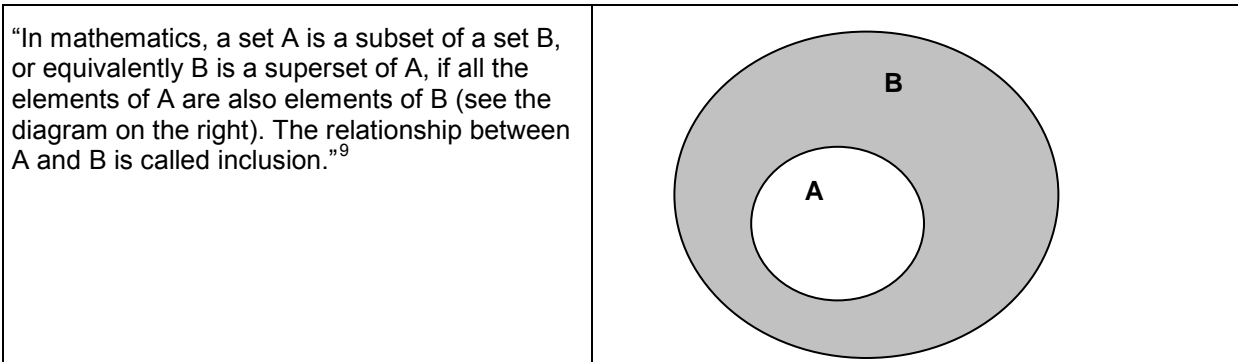
⁷ Legendre, *Dictionnaire*, 784 [translation].

⁸ It should be noted that competencies are not always worded exactly in the same way.

According to the *Robert* dictionary, “inclusion” is a relationship between two classes, between two wholes, one of which is included in the other. The adjective “inclusive” is that which contains something within itself.

Thus, this definition breaks away from that of integration, in that inclusion involves grouping competencies into one competency without there having to be any new learning.

The mathematical concept of inclusion illustrates this type of articulation.



The term “inclusive competency” is used for a competency that subsumes other competencies (called “included competencies”) in a progressive fashion without requiring any new learning. Included competencies are like nested dolls. For example, in Welding and Fitting (5695), the competencies *Produce basic assemblies*, *Produce simple assemblies* and *Produce moderately complex assemblies* are subsumed in *Produce complex assemblies*, thereby making it an inclusive competency.

Inclusion must never be looked at in terms of degree of integration because it expresses a reality that is **structurally different** from that of integration.

Integration and inclusion provide two different ways of articulating competencies that will prove very useful in the RAC development process.

⁹ Wikipedia, accessed December 17, 2014, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subset>.

Features of a RAC assessment

The RAC assessment process must be based on the same fundamental values as those applicable to the evaluation of scholastic learning. In its *Policy on the Evaluation of Learning*, the Ministère indicates certain general principles that must be applied in any situation involving the recognition of acquired competencies:

- The approach to recognition of prior learning is based on the values of justice, equality and equity and the tools used are reliable, valid and rigorous.
- Prior learning is usually recognized in accordance with the requirements of the various education programs or programs of study.
- Recognition of prior learning must never result in a lowering of standards. The Ministère plans on upholding the quality and value of official certification documents.
- In order to take into account the specific context of recognition of prior learning, it is possible and desirable for the manner and conditions of evaluation to be adapted.¹⁰

Before examining the adaptations required by the specific RAC context, it is important to review the essential features of all assessment instruments, whether the learning is scholastic or experiential.

Features of all assessment instruments

For an assessment instrument to have credibility, it must have three features: **validity**, **reliability** and **feasibility**. When these three essential features, different yet complementary, are present, informed decisions may be made based on that instrument. The following definitions clarify the meaning of each of these terms.

- **Validity**

In his *Dictionnaire actuel de l'éducation*,¹¹ Renald Legendre provides a general definition of validity with which evaluation specialists appear to agree:

Ability of an instrument to actually measure what it is supposed to measure, according to its intended use. Ability of an examination or test to measure what it claims to measure.

Gilbert De Landsheere, in his *Dictionnaire de l'évaluation et de la recherche en éducation*,¹² corroborates this definition by stating that the verb "to validate" means:

To show proof that a test and, more generally, any examination provides a correct evaluation of what it claims to measure or predict.

- **Reliability**

This is how that same specialist, Gilbert De Landsheere, defines reliability:

The measurements of the same thing carried out under the same conditions with the same instrument must be reliable, in other words, consistent. If the results vary

¹⁰ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Policy on the Evaluation of Learning: General Education in the Youth Sector, General Education in the Adult Sector, Vocational Training* (Québec: Ministère de l'Éducation, 2003), 24.

¹¹ Legendre, *Dictionnaire* 1436 [translation].

¹² Gilbert De Landsheere, *Dictionnaire de l'évaluation et de la recherche en éducation*, 2nd ed. (Paris: PUF, 1992), 322 [translation]. In subsequent references, this work will be cited as De Landsheere, *Dictionnaire*.

significantly, for example if the same thing is rated excellent one day and poor the next, the instrument lacks both reliability and validity. However, reliability alone does not guarantee validity. For example, a container that is supposed to hold one litre but actually holds 1.5 litres will give measures that are reliable but are not valid in terms of being one-litre measurements.¹³

Renald Legendre sums it up perfectly by stating:

Reliability is therefore an instrument's ability to measure with the same accuracy each time it is administered to equivalent subjects under similar conditions.¹⁴

- **Feasibility**

The two authors quoted above agree on the following definition of feasibility:

Characteristic of something that is achievable, given the human, material, pedagogical, technical or other resources.¹⁵

Features of assessment instruments as applied in the RAC context

Assessment instruments must have the three above features if informed decisions are to be made. It is therefore important to look at how these features are applied in the RAC context. According to Solange Cantin:

In the context of the recognition of experiential learning, given that the school system is not there to guarantee that the assessment has a certain credibility, credibility will rest to a large extent on the value of the procedure used and the instruments themselves.¹⁶

The following observations are directly inspired by the *Guide to Competency Evaluation and Examination Development for the Certification of Studies*.¹⁷

- **Validity in the RAC context**

An assessment instrument is valid if it assesses what it is intended to assess, all that it is supposed to assess and only what it is supposed to assess. It does this when:

- the selected assessment strategy or strategies represent the best way of gathering information about the assessment indicators and criteria
- the selected situation corresponds to the requirements of the competency (context in which it is carried out, elements of the competency and performance or participation criteria)

If the RAC assessment does not allow a decision to be made as to whether or not to recognize the competency or, in the case of a competency that is not recognized, the assessment does not make it possible to diagnose what elements are missing for this competency to be acquired, then the validity of the information gathered and of the instruments should be called into question.

¹³ De Landsheere, Dictionnaire, 137 [translation].

¹⁴ Legendre, Dictionnaire, 669 [translation].

¹⁵ Legendre, Dictionnaire, 666; De Landsheere Dictionnaire, 237 [translation].

¹⁶ Solange Cantin, Guide d'élaboration d'épreuves locales pour la mesure des acquis extrascolaires au collégial (Montréal: Fédération des cégeps, 1989), 12.

¹⁷ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, Guide to Competency Evaluation and Examination Development for the Certification of *Studies* (Québec: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2009), 8-9.

- **Reliability in the RAC context**

Reliability concerns the consistency of results. This implies that the results obtained would be the same if the assessment were administered at another time, in another place or by someone else. Therefore, the guidelines and framework for the assessment situation must be clear and precise.

The assessment situation must always take into account the context in which the competencies are demonstrated and the requirements indicated in the assessment criteria.

Finally, for assessment conditions to be comparable, the tasks or activities to be carried out must be at the same level of difficulty and complexity as that required at the end of a formal learning process.

- **Feasibility in the RAC context**

Feasibility implies that candidates should be offered means to demonstrate their acquired competencies on the basis of sufficient available resources: realistic time allotment, replicable conditions, the necessary human and material resources, realistic demands in terms of the travel of the assessors and the candidates, etc. Feasibility also requires that the safety and confidentiality constraints of the workplaces be respected.

Features of RAC assessment

RAC assessment is based on the general principles stated above and on the applicable program of study. It has the following features:

- The assessment is multidimensional.
- The interpretation is criterion-referenced.
- The grading varies in accordance with the rules governing assessment and certification stipulated in the basic school regulation in effect.
- The assessment decision never leads to failure.
- The competency is either recognized or not. Where a competency is not recognized, the assessment report must indicate the candidate's weaknesses or gaps so that a plan for acquiring the missing competencies or elements of a competency can be suggested.

Essential features of RAC assessment

Essential features	Description
Multidimensional assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment is multidimensional because a competency is multidimensional by definition, calling upon an integrated set of resources and being based on knowledge, skills, attitudes, strategies, perceptions, etc. During an assessment, the assessor must be able to see these varied resources being combined and used in a functional and operational way. In RAC, assessment is facilitated by the fact that only those elements essential to demonstrating the competency are chosen and integrated into the instrument. In developing assessment situations or selecting assessment options for recognition, performance situations must be chosen that involve multidimensional tasks (complete tasks of sufficient complexity). The chosen assessment situations must also involve realistic and meaningful activities directly linked to the occupational context concerned.
Criterion-referenced interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The results are interpreted based on the assessment criteria for the elements to be assessed. The degree to which the assessment criteria must be met and the competency acquired must be the same as that required by the program of study. For a competency to be recognized, all of the essential elements of a competency must be assessed and deemed to have been acquired.
Grading in accordance with the assessment and certification rules of the applicable certification system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the candidate demonstrates proficiency in a competency, the competency will be officially recognized in the form of a grade, percentage, pass/fail decision or in some other form, in accordance with the assessment and certification rules of the applicable certification system.
Assessment result: Competency recognized or recommendations for further study for the elements that were not acquired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAC assessment never leads to failure because a validation interview occurs before the actual assessment. A jury of content specialists interviews the candidate in order to determine whether there is sufficient evidence to presume that a competency has been acquired or sufficiently developed. If there is not, the jury may recommend that the candidate enroll directly in a training course. If only certain elements of a competency are missing, the jury may suggest further study as a prerequisite to assessment. For this reason, recognition of acquired competencies does not lead to failure, but rather to partial or full recognition of the competency in question. Within such a context, the assessment must serve to assess the level of proficiency demonstrated, to fully or partially recognize the competency and, in the case of partial recognition, to identify the weaknesses or gaps present and to suggest a plan for further study to acquire the missing competencies or elements of competencies. This part of the assessment process is included in the assessment situation because each of the elements to be assessed and the assessment criteria make it possible to target the competency or elements of the competency to be acquired.

The development process and roles of the members of the production team

The instruments to be developed in line with the harmonized approach include four essential tools:

- self-assessment form
- assessment options for recognition
- assessment form
- companion guide

Therefore, the entire development process is aimed at producing these instruments and involves the following five steps:

- Step 1: Identifying the essential elements of a competency
- Step 2: Designing and producing the self-assessment forms
- Step 3: Determining the assessment options for recognition
- Step 4: Designing and producing the assessment forms
- Step 5: Producing the companion guide

Copyright

As the Ministère is responsible for developing RAC instruments within the framework of the harmonized approach, the Québec government is the sole holder of the copyright for all documents prepared under the instrument development agreements. This is why the various templates must be used and the rules for recording and identifying files must be followed for all its productions.

Roles of the members of the production team

The development process requires collaboration among the various specialists who are called upon to play different roles. Depending on the size and nature of the project and the expertise and availability of the people assigned to it, these roles can be varied and other resource persons can be called upon to assist. In most cases, the basic team is composed of the following:

- a project coordinator (an employee of the Ministère)
- a methodology expert in RAC instrument development
- a project adviser
- two content specialists

The Ministère's project coordinator

The Ministère's project coordinator oversees the planning, overall process and carrying out of the project. He or she prepares an agreement that includes the production specifications, ensures that the specifications in the agreement are followed and, if necessary, indicates any modifications that are required. The project coordinator also monitors the work and may do so by delegating the task to someone with expertise in developing RAC instruments, known as the methodology expert.

Methodology expert

The methodology expert helps train the members of the production team, advises them and supports them throughout the process.

Project adviser

The mandated institution is responsible for carrying out the required work in accordance with the specifications stated in its agreement. The institution therefore designates a project adviser, who will be responsible for implementing the agreement and coordinating the work of the production team.

Content specialists

Two specialists in the trade or occupation from the mandated institution help develop the various instruments for a given program of study.

It is important that the mandated institution designate content specialists who are, on the one hand, keenly interested in RAC or, ideally, who have expertise in the given field and who, on the other hand, have expertise in training and assessment for a number of competencies associated with the program of study.

Some important points to keep in mind

Definition of the concept of “essential elements of the competency”
The “essential elements of a competency” guide and support the entire process for developing RAC instruments so that only those program elements that appear crucial to applying the competency are selected as a frame of reference.
The articulation of certain competencies within a program of study is based on two distinct concepts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The integration of competencies, which applies when these competencies form a harmonious whole (<i>integrative competency</i>) that is greater than the sum of the elements or parts of the competencies integrated into it.- The inclusion of competencies, which means that one competency (called <i>inclusive</i>) can include one or more other competencies (called <i>included</i>) without the whole involving any new learning.
Features of RAC assessment
<p>RAC assessment has the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The assessment is multidimensional.- The interpretation is criterion-referenced.- The grading varies in accordance with the rules governing assessment and certification stipulated in the basic school regulation in effect.- The assessment decision never leads to failure.- The competency is either recognized or not. Where a competency is not recognized, the assessment report must state where the candidate has weaknesses or gaps so that a plan for acquiring the missing competencies or elements of a competency can be suggested.

1

Step One: Identifying the essential elements of a competency

Before going further, it must be stressed that the development process is **dynamic**, allowing the production team to move back and forth between the steps. The steps must never be viewed as a linear sequence where the decisions made at a given point in time are final and can never be changed. Instead, moving back and forth provides an opportunity for the production team to reflect and re-examine decisions made in previous steps, thus creating a more consistent and cohesive project.

As each program of study has its specific features, the suggested process could be adapted to promote consistency in the instruments and speed up the work. For example, after identifying the essential elements of each competency, the team could choose to develop the self-assessment forms, assessment options for recognition and assessment forms for competencies within the same field of application.

As mentioned earlier, in RAC, the program of study is the frame of reference for developing assessment instruments.

The purpose of Step One is to enable production team members to arrive at a consensus on their view of the program of study, its key principles and their understanding of its competencies. This means that team members should develop a common understanding of the program in order to create a frame of reference that will serve as a basis for planning and developing the necessary RAC instruments.

This step comprises two activities:

- The team members analyze the program of study, keeping in mind the essential elements of the competency.
- The team members then prepare a summary of the essential elements of each competency, thus translating their common understanding of the program of study into concrete terms. These summaries will become the *information on the competency* (see section 1.2 below).

Keep in mind that, in **vocational training**, different programs of study were developed in different eras and reflect different stages in the evolution of the competency-based approach in Québec. Thus, certain concepts are recent (achievement context, elements of the competency, competency-related knowledge and know-how, guidelines, etc.), while others have vanished and are found only in the old versions of programs. A table of correspondences between the concepts prior to June 2003 and the concepts introduced since then illustrates these changes (see Appendix I).

In **technical training**, the concepts have changed little since the competency-based approach was implemented in colleges. Technical programs are competency-based and formulated in terms of objectives and standards. Once the Minister has approved a program, it is up to the colleges to determine the learning activities aimed at achieving the objectives and standards, in other words, to define the courses in terms of subject, content, weighting and type of training activity (laboratories, workshops, work placements, etc.).

The newer terms and concepts have been used to present the RAC instruments in this guide. The same terms and concepts (statement of the competency, elements of the competency, achievement context, performance criteria) have been used for both vocational and technical training in this guide. Therefore, production teams working on older versions of vocational training programs must ensure that they fully understand the changes that have occurred and make the required adaptations.

Note that there is no difference between a behavioural competency in vocational training and a competency translated into objectives and standards in technical training, except in how the teaching is organized. In secondary school, the competency corresponds to a training module, whereas in college, the objectives and standards do not necessarily correspond to a “course.” This may create an extra challenge when analyzing a ministerial college program because certain content specialists who teach might refer only to their particular course when examining a competency.

1.1 Analyzing a program of study

The production team’s first task is to arrive at a common understanding of the program of study. First, each team member reads the program systematically. The program’s sections (Program Goals, Educational Aims, List of Competencies, Grid of Competencies) and various headings (Statement of the Competency, Elements of the Competency, Achievement Context and Performance Criteria) must be examined from the RAC perspective. Consulting an information source such as the job analysis could also be useful as this source presents an overall view of the tasks and activities involved in practising the occupation. If applicable, team members also need to find out if certain rules must be followed in the workplace, for example, if certain rules related to health and safety, physical well-being, hygiene and cleanliness must be followed because of the level of risk present.

Thus, team members should be able to gain a deeper understanding of the program and reach a preliminary consensus on their vision of the program and its competencies.

The next task involves drawing up a summary of the essential elements of each competency. This task will allow team members to validate their consensus. However, team members should do some research as a group on the elements that are essential for developing proficiency in each competency. In fact, the essential elements of a competency are key as they enable team members to agree upon a shared perception and **interpretation** of the program that are consistent with RAC requirements.

Note that interpretation does not mean changing or revising the program! Rather, interpretation consists in separating the elements that appear to be essential in applying the program from those that are of a pedagogical nature or associated with a formal school setting. At the college level, the local aspect of a program must never be a factor, which is why locally developed course plans must never be used for the analysis.

At first glance, it may appear that two contradictory principles are simultaneously at play:

- The first principle is that RAC instruments are always developed using the same reference tool—the **program of study**.
- The second principle is that RAC instruments **must** be adapted to the extracurricular and generally experiential nature¹⁸ of learning acquired by individuals; in other words, RAC materials must be free of the purely academic constraints and particularities of materials used in a formal school setting.

When the difference between RAC assessment and the evaluation of learning in a school setting is properly understood, it becomes clear that these principles are in no way contradictory.

¹⁸ For a definition of the terms “extracurricular” and “experiential,” see Appendix 1 of the brief by the Conseil supérieur de l’éducation (CSE) entitled *La reconnaissance des acquis, une responsabilité politique et sociale*, quoted above. For questions regarding RAC terminology, the CSE refers readers to Francine Landry, *Vocabulaire de la connaissance des acquis*, Montréal, Fédération des cégeps, 1987. The author specifies that “extracurricular” and “experiential” are not synonymous. “Extracurricular” refers to the place or context in which the learning occurred, highlighting the fact that learning was acquired outside the school system. The term “experiential” emphasizes the way in which learning took place, where direct contact played an important role.

In a school setting, vocational and technical programs of study often require students to **re-apply** what was learned for one competency to another with a view to acquiring different knowledge and developing proficiency.

Because RAC materials must be free of the constraints and idiosyncrasies of academia, emphasis must be on the essential elements of a competency. The competencies that an individual has acquired are identified, assessed and recognized independently of the circumstances (where, when and how) in which that learning was acquired. Also, the circumstances and, more specifically, the ways in which learning was acquired are varied and unlike traditional schooling.

In school, the focus is on **developing competencies**, which is why some elements of a competency in a program of study may refer to the learning process, and some performance criteria, to the integration of learning.

In RAC, the focus is on **applying competencies**, and therefore on the expected **outcomes** of the training and on the **essential and most meaningful elements** of the competency.

The following two examples illustrate the difference between the two approaches and highlight the type of choices that must be made when identifying the essential elements of a competency.

Example 1: Foundry (5203)	300433
<i>To interpret drawings</i>	
<p>The program indicates that there are three “Elements of the Competency”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply the basic rules of technical drawing. • Identify certain construction elements. • Interpret the general drawing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – of a moulding process – of a welding process <p>The production team decided that the first element was not an essential element, reasoning that one did not have to be a technical drawer to be able to interpret a drawing. The team thus decided that the competency had been formulated for development purposes and that the first element was of a pedagogical nature.</p>	

Example 2: Prehospital Emergency Care (181.A0)	052E
<i>Use patient assessment methods</i>	
<p>The program indicates that there are four “Elements of the Competency”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform the preliminary operations for the primary exam. • Conduct a primary exam. • Conduct a secondary exam. • Assess the patient’s functional autonomy. <p>The fourth element was not selected because it is not a standard patient assessment method in prehospital care, but is considered an asset to an inexperienced practitioner’s observation skills.</p>	

1.2 Preparing the *information on the competency*

As mentioned earlier, the results of the program analysis can serve to design and develop a summary of the essential elements of each competency, which is referred to as *information on the competency* in the RAC materials. This information consists of a short text written by the production team primarily for individuals who wish to have their competencies recognized. The information is intended to help them grasp the nature of the competency and the requirements involved in having it recognized.

This additional information is needed because the statement of the competency does not always specify the essential elements of the competency and is not always easily understood. Thus, the production team must formulate a summary of the elements that best characterize the competency. In certain cases, the team must also take into account the terminology currently being used in the workplace.

This exercise in design and development provides an excellent opportunity for the production team to gain an unequivocal understanding of each competency, based on the consensus previously reached on the overall vision of the program. At this stage, it is essential that the production team move back and forth between the results of the program analysis and the preparation of the information on each competency. This work is also the starting point for the research and reflection that will be required for the team to identify the essential elements of the competencies.

The *information on the competency* must be worded so that it can be easily understood by the targeted clientele and must also meet the following requirements:

- The essential elements of the competency must be reflected.
- The focus must be on applying the competency and not on developing it.
- Clear and easily understood expressions that are reflective of the workplace must be used, including, if needed, terms normally used in the trade or occupation.
- Action verbs must be used and adverbs avoided as much as possible.
- A single sentence of 20 to 30 words, rarely more than 50, must be formulated.

Lastly, the *information on the competency* is formulated differently if the competency is behavioural or translated into objectives and standards than if it is situational.

1.2.1 Procedure for behavioural competencies and competencies translated into objectives and standards

To formulate information on a behavioural competency or on one that is translated into objectives and standards, the production team must be able to correctly decode the program and restate the information from a RAC perspective. Since the focus must be on the **expected outcomes** of the training and on the **essential** and **most meaningful elements** of the competencies, a number of characteristics must be taken into account: the wording of the statement (clarity and scope), the importance of certain elements of the competency, the details provided by the achievement context, the importance of different items of knowledge and know-how targeted by the competency (*cognitive competency*) and the links that may exist between certain competences (*integrative competency* and *inclusive competency*). Since a large number of possibilities exist, some examples have been provided.

Specifically, 12 examples have been given to illustrate the challenges that may arise in formulating the *information on the competency*. The solution adopted has been underlined.

Example 1: Masonry: Bricklaying (5803)*Build and repair structures with precast masonry units*

778793

A statement of the competency may not be explicit enough and additional information may be needed, as follows:

Information on the competency

Build and repair structures with precast masonry units (glass blocks, cut stones, etc.) of various shapes and dimensions.

Example 2: Computer Science Technology (420.A0)*Research information*

016U

With respect to the scope of the competency, a statement may not contain all the information needed to identify the importance of the actions required by the competency. Therefore, the information should include the expected outcomes of these actions, as follows:

Information on the competency

Research relevant computer-related information and record the results.

Example 3: Carpentry (5819)*Use hand tools and portable electric tools to join materials*

761665

In some cases, a statement may refer to two training objectives. The analysis revealed that this competency focused more on using tools than on mounting an assembly. Consequently, the information was formulated as follows:

Information on the competency

Mark, cut and join pieces of wood using carpentry tools.

Example 4: Computer Science Technology (420.A0)*Ensure the quality of an application*

0177

The information may also indicate the tool or means that should be used and provide a more explicit statement about the outcome of the task, as follows:

Information on the competency

Validate the quality of an application using test cases.

Example 5: Business Management (410.D0) <i>Sell products and services by means of representatives</i>		01UA
<p>Sometimes a statement may be so comprehensive that the essential elements of the competency need to be illustrated by describing a <u>sequence of actions</u>. In this case, the elements of the competency were restated:</p>		
<p>Elements of the Competency (excerpt from the program)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To plan representation activities. • To solicit potential clients. • To present and propose products and services. • To close the sale. • To provide service after the sale. • To produce reports. • To follow market evolution. 		
<p>Information on the competency</p>		<p>Plan representation activities, attract potential customers, offer them products or services, close the sale, ensure after-sales service and prepare the sales reports.</p>

Example 6: Industrial Construction and Maintenance Mechanics (5760) <i>Work with tubes, pipes and hoses</i>		898303
<p>The <u>sequence of actions</u> may also include a description of the <u>expected outcome of the task</u>. (In this example, note the easily understood vocabulary and terms used in the trade.)</p>		
<p>Information on the competency</p>		<p>Select and prepare (measure, cut, flare, etc.) pipes, hoses, fittings, fasteners and sealers in order to <u>fit</u> and <u>assemble functional circuits</u>.</p>

Example 7: Carpentry (5819) <i>Build wood stairs</i>		761818
<p>Information taken from the Achievement Context may also be used and the expected outcome of the task may be specified.</p>		
<p>Achievement Context (excerpt from the program)</p> <p>L-shaped staircase, <u>with a landing</u>.</p>		
<p>Information on the competency</p>		<p>Build an L-shaped, wood staircase <u>with a landing</u> and two flights of stairs (e.g. steps, landing).</p>

Example 8: Business Management (410.D0) <i>Research opportunities for international trade</i>		01UF
<p><u>Information</u> from the Achievement Context may also be used to indicate where the sequence of actions begins.</p> <p>Achievement Context (excerpts from the program)</p> <p>Based on an appropriate market study</p> <p>Based on government regulations for international business and pertinent reference manuals in both English and French</p>		
Information on the competency		Prepare a foreign marketing strategy, <u>using market studies and government regulations for international trade.</u>

Examples 9 and 10: Business Management (410.D0) and Welding and Fitting (5695)		
<p>Some cognitive competencies have statements that include verbs of a satisfactory taxonomic level but give little indication of the expected outcome of the task. In these cases, a description should be provided of one or more of the activities in which the knowledge is used, as follows:</p>		
<i>To use legal resources that apply to commercial activities</i>		01TY
Information on the competency		<u>Recognize workplace situations for which the company is liable and consult appropriate resources that specify the rules of law and the consequences of failure to comply with them.</u>
<p>In this example of a cognitive competency, the information indicates the knowledge required and where it is applied in practising the occupation:</p>		
<i>Apply concepts of metallurgy</i>		801743
Information on the competency		<u>Recognize metals and alloys. Describe the effects of heat (e.g. expansion and contraction) on metals as well as the different thermal treatments used in welding.</u>

Example 11: Welding and Fitting (5695)

An **inclusive competency** includes other competencies of the program but does not involve using new resources.

In such a case, and in the spirit of equity, the *information on the competency* must reflect that inclusion. In Welding and Fitting (5695), this question specifically concerned the four “assembly” competencies. The program presents these competencies in order of increasing complexity: *basic assemblies*, *simple assemblies*, *assemblies of medium complexity* and *complex assemblies*.

Basing themselves on the program’s requirements and this order of increasing complexity, the production team wrote four different texts that give clear directions on the number of parts to assemble, the shape of these components, the type of assembly to be produced, the references to be used and the jig.

<i>Produce basic assemblies</i>		801844
Information on the competency	Using drawings and specifications for an assembly with five to six parts, assemble (position, tack weld and weld) mild steel plates using the indicated welding procedure and following the proper order of assembly.	
<i>Produce simple assemblies</i>		801884
Information on the competency	Using drawings and specifications for an assembly with seven to eight parts (HSS and L types), assemble (position, tack weld and weld) prepared parts (cut along straight lines and angles, bent and drilled) using the indicated welding procedure and following the proper order of assembly.	
<i>Produce assemblies of medium complexity</i>		801935
Information on the competency	Using drawings and specifications for an assembly with 10 to 15 parts (HSS, W, C and S types), assemble (position, tack weld and weld) prepared parts (bolted, cut along straight lines and angles, bent and drilled) using the indicated welding procedures and following the proper order of assembly.	
<i>Produce complex assemblies</i>		801958
Information on the competency	Using drawings and specifications for an assembly with 15 to 20 parts (HSS, W, C and S types), make a jig and assemble (position, tack weld and weld) prepared parts (cut along curved lines and angles, arched, threaded and drilled) using the indicated welding procedures and following the proper order of assembly.	

Example 12: Computer Science Technology (420.A0)*Install a computer network*

0186

An **integrative competency** incorporates certain elements of the program's other competencies and involves using new resources. The above competency is an example. It is placed at the end of the program and integrates a good number of elements from other competencies in the context of a long-term installation project. It is precisely the ability to use these elements in accordance with the requirements for carrying out the project that constitutes the new learning. The production team thus decided to reflect the scope of the competency over time when formulating the statement, as follows:

Information on the competency

Install a computer network, from the installation scenario to the verification of the effectiveness of the installation.

1.2.2 Procedure for situational competencies

Some competencies have specific options for recognition stated in the *Administrative Guide for the Certification of Studies and Management of Ministerial Examinations: General Education, Youth Sector; General Education, Adult Sector; Vocational Training*¹⁹ (certification rules). These competencies must be considered separately. This is the case for the competencies *Determine their suitability for the occupation and the training process*, *Use job search techniques* and *Enter the work force*. Information on situational competencies (in vocational training only) must reflect the philosophy associated with this type of competency.

In effect, a situational competency promotes “the development of competencies with a significant socioaffective component, such as interpersonal communication and a concern for professional conduct. They focus more closely on personal development and take into consideration profound dimensions of an individual's personality.”²⁰

Example: Secretarial Studies (5712)*Understand and identify with various management approaches to quality*

960091

This aspect of personal development was taken into account in the verb chosen.

Information on the competency

Reflect on how they ensure quality in an office setting.

¹⁹ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport. *Administrative Guide for the Certification of Studies and Management of Ministerial Examinations: General Education, Youth Sector; General Education, Adult Sector; Vocational Training* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2013).

²⁰ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Program Development: Vocational Training, Program Design and Development Guide* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2004), 35.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

The development process described in this guide must be **dynamic**. There should be some back and forth between the steps to encourage ongoing reflection and allow certain decisions made in previous steps to be re-examined. The goal is to increase the consistency and cohesiveness of the project.

Determining the essential elements of a competency involves:

- reading the Statement of the Competency in the program of study
- reading the Elements of the Competency and the Performance Criteria
- taking into account the initial conditions set forth in the Achievement Context
- determining the importance to be accorded to certain rules, such as those related to health and safety, physical well-being, hygiene and cleanliness, that must be followed because of the level of risk present

Then:

- determining which elements of the competency are associated with a school setting
- keeping only those elements that are deemed essential to developing proficiency in the competency
- taking into account any important aspects highlighted by the Performance Criteria

Some practical tips before continuing on to the next step

The production team may find it helpful to draw on the work that was done in the first step when planning the second, which consists in producing self-assessment forms for each program competency. It is important to first establish the order in which the different competencies will be addressed. To do this, the team should take into account different factors observed during the discussions that led to the formulation of the information on the competencies. For example:

- During these discussions, **consensus was probably more easily reached during the analysis of certain competencies**. It thus makes sense to begin with the self-assessment forms for these competencies.
- In order to facilitate discussion and promote consistency, **some of the other competencies that fall under the same theme** could be covered together.
- It could also be helpful to group together any competencies that are structured on the same model (specific competencies are often constructed in this way).

Designing and producing self-assessment forms

The second step consists in designing and producing self-assessment forms. Before starting, it is important to review the definition of a self-assessment form, its essential features, components and purpose.

2.1 Definition and features of the self-assessment form

In the RAC process, the self-assessment form enables individuals to take stock of what they have learned with respect to a given competency. By reading the self-assessment forms that correspond to the competencies of one or more programs within a given level of education or at different levels, a person may choose which competencies to have recognized. This possibility illustrates one of the advantages of a harmonized approach, in that the same type of instrument may be used throughout the entire education system.

Essential features of the self-assessment forms

Self-assessment forms are:

- based on the competencies defined by the Ministère in its programs of study
- made up of statements that represent all of the essential elements of a competency
- written by RAC specialists or their equivalents and by content specialists
- validated by representatives in the field and in the education community

Components of the self-assessment form

Each self-assessment form contains:

- the code and statement of the competency as it appears in the program of study
- descriptive statements corresponding to the essential elements of the competency
- spaces where candidates can enter the result of their self-assessment
- the assessment options for recognition that allow candidates to demonstrate whether they possess the knowledge and skills required by the competency
- basic information on the assessment options for recognition
- a space where candidates can indicate the option they feel best reflects their situation

Purpose of the self-assessment form

The self-assessment form allows candidates to:

- assess themselves with respect to the essential elements of a competency
- obtain information on the aspects that will be assessed in order for them to receive recognition for a competency
- determine how they fare in relation to the requirements of a competency, and prepare for the assessment
- identify any further study needed to acquire the competency
- prepare for the validation interview

Self-assessment forms are also useful to those in charge of RAC services and to content specialists in preparing the validation interviews that are part of the recognition process.

2.2 Formulating descriptive statements for the essential elements of each competency

The production team will use the *information on the competency* to formulate descriptive statements for the essential elements of each competency. This requires determining whether the information in the program about the competency (Elements of the Competency, Achievement Context, Performance Criteria) satisfactorily meets RAC requirements or applies only to a formal school setting. Only the information that is essential for assessing experiential learning should be retained. Thus, the production team must:

- refer back to the reflection that took place earlier when developing the *information on the competency* and to the choices made regarding the essential elements of each competency
- keep in mind that this is an assessment context and take into account any information pertaining to assessment in the program of study itself (Achievement Context and Performance Criteria)
- note that the procedure for formulating descriptive statements for the essential elements is different for behavioural competencies, situational competences and competencies translated into objectives and standards

For **vocational training**, a self-assessment form is developed for each competency in the program of study with the exception of *Determine their suitability for the occupation and the training process*, *Use job search techniques* and *Enter the work force*. These competencies have specific assessment options for recognition which are presented in the *Administrative Guide for the Certification of Studies and Management of Ministerial Examinations*.

The production team must, however, check to see if the competency *Determine their suitability for the occupation and the training process* deviates from the standard version and, if so, the team must develop a self-assessment form for any additional elements (see Appendix IV for the standard version of this competency).

For **technical training**, a self-assessment form is developed for each competency in the program-specific component of the program of study, except for the competency *Analyze the occupation/job function*. This competency is found in all programs of study and its formulation is almost identical in all of them (see Appendix III for the standard version of this competency). This is why the team should use the model self-assessment form in Appendix IV and base the recognition of the competency on the conclusions drawn from the validation interview and a completed assessment form. If, however, any additions have been made to the standard version of this competency, the team must add these essential elements to the model self-assessment form as well as to the assessment form.

2.2.1 Steps for behavioural competencies and competencies translated into objectives and standards

The following are the main principles and rules for developing the statements that appear under *Description of the Competency* in the self-assessment form for behavioural competencies and competencies translated into objectives and standards:

- Use as many statements as needed to completely describe the competency by constantly referring to its essential elements. There is no set number of statements that should be formulated. What matters is that the self-assessment form enables candidates to assess themselves, identify the resources to be used in applying the competency, uncover any gaps and, if they wish, prepare for a future assessment.
- Choose a verb of the correct taxonomic level so that candidates can rank themselves in terms of the level of difficulty. The verb choice will vary, depending on whether the descriptive statement involves applying knowledge (theoretical elements), skills (practical elements) or attitudes and behaviours. For theoretical elements, the descriptive statement must be formulated by clearly stating the expected level of conceptualization and by referring to the recognized taxonomies of the cognitive domain. For practical elements, the statement is formulated in terms of actions to carry out or measures to take. As for attitudes and behaviours, the taxonomic levels are more difficult to define; therefore, care must

be taken to include a direct or indirect object that clearly states the attitude or behaviour to demonstrate. The following are some suggestions for verbs that involve **applying**:

- **theoretical elements** (knowledge): analyze, specify, indicate, distinguish, define, determine, identify, evaluate, find, recognize, explain, describe, choose, relate, diagnose, etc.
 - **practical elements** (skills): apply, use, carry out, produce, draw, calculate, solve, cut, bend, drill, weld, prepare, identify, assemble, correct, file, make, repair, maintain, replace, dismantle, etc.
 - **attitudes and behaviours**: question, demonstrate, motivate, support, engage, share, adopt, prove, etc.
- Use only one verb in the imperative form per statement, being careful to describe the expected outcome of the competency. Two verbs will usually lead to ambiguity. For example, Write a business letter is unequivocal while Write and lay out a business letter is not.

Self-assessment forms are based on the candidate's ability to apply resources and *achieve expected outcomes*. Thus, if the expected outcomes result from the same action, the statements must distinguish these outcomes.

Example:

1. Send information by e-mail:
 - with attachments
 - to several recipients, using an address book

On the other hand, if the actions lead to the same outcome, the actions must be distinguished:

2. For monitoring a budget:
 - calculate the differences between the budgeted and actual amounts
 - identify any significant differences

Below are eight examples of statements that appear in self-assessment forms for behavioural competencies or competencies translated into objectives and standards. The left column shows the competency as stated in the program of study and the right column shows the description in the self-assessment form. Explanations are also given about some of the choices made in formulating the descriptive statements. Note that the suggested solutions have been underlined.

Example 1: Masonry: Bricklaying (5803)*Prepare and spread mortars*

778712

In this example of a self-assessment form:

- the first statement under *Description of the Competency* takes into account the last item in the *Achievement Context* and the first Performance Criterion of the first element to make it crystal clear that quantities of ingredients and mixing techniques apply to all types of mortar
- the manual and mechanical techniques have been separated in the second descriptive statement of the self-assessment form so that any gaps in training can be easily identified
- the third descriptive statement in the self-assessment form fully illustrates the production team's reflection and efforts to make the text more understandable by indicating what the adjective "functional" signifies in terms of meaning and scope
- the occupational health and safety rules have been included in a descriptive statement in the self-assessment form because they apply to the competency as a whole

Program Objective		RAC Self-Assessment Form
Statement of the Competency	Achievement Context	<i>Prepare and spread mortars.</i>
<i>Prepare and spread mortars</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given an order • Using a mixer • For bricks and blocks • Given manufacturers' instructions • <u>For all mortars and bonding agents</u> with the exception of refractory mortars and refractory bonding agents 	
Elements of the Competency	Performance Criteria	Description of the Competency
1. <i>Mix the mortar.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Quantity of water</u> required for optimal mixing • Observance of standards in effect • Correct mixing technique (<u>manual or mechanical</u>) 	1. <u>Measure the quantities of ingredients in accordance with the type of mortar.</u>
2. <i>Spread the mortar.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Functional</u> layout of work area • Correct technique (<u>blocks and bricks</u>) • Smooth, precise handling of trowel 	2. Mix the ingredients to obtain the proper consistency (workability) for the type of material (blocks, brick, stone, etc.): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>manual mixing</u> • <u>mechanical mixing</u>
3. <i>Clean the tools and equipment.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order and cleanliness of the work area <p>And for the competency as a whole:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper use of tools and equipment • <u>Observance of health and safety rules</u> • Economical use of materials 	3. Prepare the work area <u>to make it easier to spread the mortar.</u> 4. Spread the mortar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>on blocks</u> • <u>on bricks</u> 5. Clean the tools and equipment. 6. Observe health and safety rules throughout all activities.

Example 2: Hairdressing (5745)*Set hair*

918073

In this example of a self-assessment form:

- Specifications A, D, and F were not incorporated into the *Description of the Competency* because they were either part of the essential elements of other program competencies or were not considered essential
- the vocabulary used in the first descriptive statement has been simplified in comparison with the third performance criterion in Specification B
- the last two descriptive statements have been formulated so as to be more explicit than the performance criteria

Program Objective		RAC Self-Assessment Form
Statement of the Competency Set hair General performance criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observance of the rules of hygiene, health and safety • Adoption of professional attitudes and behaviour • Observance of technique for setting hair • Observance of time limit • Clear concern for client's well-being 		Set hair
Specifications	Performance Criteria	Description of the Competency
A. <i>Seat the client.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper set-up of work station in advance • Client comfortably seated 	
B. <i>Choose the hair style.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate understanding of client's expectations • Appropriate suggestions • Choice of style consistent with client's <u>morphology and physiognomy</u> 	1. Choose the hairstyle best suited <u>to the shape of the face</u> .
C. <i>Choose the type of rollers and products.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate choice of type and size of rollers • Choice of products consistent with type of rollers used • Clear explanation of choices 	2. Choose the type of hair rollers and products.
D. <i>Prepare the hair.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dryness of hair consistent with result sought • Application of a sufficient quantity of products • Uniform distribution of products • Consideration of hair stream 	
E. <i>Wind the hair on the rollers.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper choice of width and thickness of strands • Technique consistent with style chosen 	3. Place the rollers to achieve the desired effect.
F. <i>Dry the hair.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start up of hair dryer in advance • Client comfortably seated • Thorough drying 	
G. <i>Arrange the hair.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of rollers consistent with style • Choice and application of a technique consistent with the style 	4. Apply hair products. 5. Arrange the hair by adjusting volumes and finishing touches.
H. <i>Finish the job.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall examination of volumes • Application of hairspray if necessary • Clear concern for client's satisfaction 	

Example 3: Machining Techniques (5723)*Avoid occupational health and safety risks*

872041

The *Description of the Competency* in this RAC self-assessment form is a good illustration of the team's reflection on the essential elements of the competency because:

- a descriptive statement was not developed for the first competency in the RAC form even though the applicable knowledge and skills are not included elsewhere in the program
- the first two descriptive statements restate two Performance Criteria under the second element of the competency and the two other criteria under this second element were not retained
- the third and fourth descriptive statements are slight reformulations of the Performance Criteria under the third element of the competency
- only one of the Performance Criteria under the last element was retained in the self-assessment form

Program Objective		RAC Self-Assessment Form
Statement of the Competency	Achievement Context	Avoid occupational health and safety risks
<i>Avoid occupational health and safety risks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in a mechanical manufacturing shop • Given workplace situations presenting health and safety risks • Using relevant documentation 	
Elements of the Competency	Performance Criteria	Description of the Competency
1. <i>Identify the aspects of health and safety legislation that apply to work in mechanical manufacturing shops.</i> 2. <i>Recognize the risks present in a machine shop and their effects on health and safety.</i> 3. <i>Determine means of preventing accidents.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper identification of information • Relevant associations made between sections of the law and regulations and activities performed in the workplace • Recognition of the rights and obligations of the parties involved • Recognition of the main causes of stress • <u>Recognition of the risks inherent in the trade</u> • <u>Accurate interpretation of WHMIS data sheets</u> • Accurate identification of the effects of each type of stress and risk on health and safety • Choice of relevant methods for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – setting up the shop and the work station – <u>performing trade-related operations</u> – <u>handling loads</u> – <u>using hazardous materials</u> • <u>Proper choice of personal safety gear</u> 	1. <u>Recognize the risks associated with practising the occupation.</u> 2. Identify WHMIS symbols. 3. <u>Determine safety measures for:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using equipment • performing trade-related operations • handling loads • using hazardous materials 4. <u>Choose the appropriate personal safety gear for the task to be carried out.</u>

Elements of the Competency	Performance Criteria	Description of the Competency
4. <i>Determine what to do in an emergency situation.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Choice of appropriate strategy</u> • Recognition of the seriousness of the situation on the basis of signs and symptoms • Judgment of the need to intervene or ask for help • Determination of the basic first aid required 	5. <u>Choose intervention measures appropriate to the seriousness of the situation.</u>
5. <i>Convey information on health and safety to colleagues.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate choice of information • Proper choice of means of conveying the information • Clarity and coherence of information conveyed • Persuasive message 	

Example 4: Business Management (410.D0) <i>To use current software applications for business management tasks</i> 01TU		
<p>This example illustrates the problems that can arise when the competency is presented in components.²¹ The third element of the competency gives no details on the type of documents to be produced and the information required to formulate the statements for the <i>Description of the Competency</i> came from the Performance Criteria. The example presents only the statements in the self-assessment form that relate to the third element of the competency.</p>		
Program Objective		RAC Self-Assessment Form
Elements of the Competency	Performance Criteria	Description of the Competency
2. [...]		1 [...]
3. <i>To produce documents.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear definition of the expected result • Planning for an appropriate data organization for the support type and users • Layout of administrative texts and documents according to established presentation standards • Layout of tables containing text, numerical data and calculation formulas according to established presentation standards • Efficient use of database features • Layout of a multimedia presentation according to established standards • Methodical verification of results • Correct application of computer security measures 	2. Input an administrative document on a computer (e.g. letter, memo, minutes), using <u>word processing</u> software. 3. Produce a table using a <u>spreadsheet</u> (spreadsheet software) by including formulas (e.g. sales statistics). 4. Produce a simple electronic document using <u>presentation software</u> (e.g. presentation of a new product). 5. Modify data in an existing <u>computerized database</u> (e.g. a database of suppliers).
4. [...]		6. [...]

²¹ For information on the concept of component, see page 30 of *Program Development: Vocational Training, Program Design and Development* and page 29 of *Program development: Technical Training, Program Design and Development Guide, Ministerial Portion of the Program-Specific Component*.

Example 5: Early Childhood Education (322.A0)*To identify a child's needs with respect to his or her overall development*

0192

This example is typical of a cognitive competency. The descriptive statement in the self-assessment form has used the outcomes of the action as expressed in the Performance Criteria under the first element. Action verbs were used to present these criteria in the descriptive statements. The first item in the Achievement Context was also taken into consideration. Lastly, examples of behaviours or skills were given to illustrate each aspect of the child's development.

Program Objective		RAC Self-Assessment Form
Statement of the Competency	Achievement Context	
<i>To assess a child's needs with respect to his or her overall development.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a variety of workplace situations with groups of children of different ages: infants, toddlers, <u>preschoolers and school-age children</u> [...] 	<i>To identify a child's needs with respect to his or her overall development</i>
Elements of the Competency	Performance Criteria	Description of the Competency
1. To observe the child's behaviours in terms of his or her overall development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record of the child's behaviour with respect to his or her <u>psychomotor and sensory</u> development Record of the child's expression of his or her <u>emotions</u> Record of the child's <u>social skills</u> Record of the child's <u>language skills</u> Record of the child's <u>cognitive</u> behaviour and dispositions with respect to <u>moral</u> judgment Record of the child's <u>sexual</u> behaviour Relevance of the observations made Demonstration of objectivity with respect to the observations 	<p>Identify the observable behaviours of the child with respect to the following aspects of his or her development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>psychomotor and sensory</u> (body image, lateral preference, fine motor skills, gross motor skills, etc.) preschool school-age <u>intellectual</u> (creativity, knowledge, stages of cognitive development, etc.) preschool school-age <u>language</u> (form, content, use, comprehension, expression, etc.) preschool school-age <u>social and affective</u> (relationship with peers and adults, attachment, confidence, autonomy, etc.) <u>moral</u> (reasoning, integration of rules, self-evaluation, etc.) preschool school-age <u>sexual</u> (questions, desires, impulses, identity, etc.)

Example 6: Carpentry (5819)*Do planning calculations*

761683

In this next example of a cognitive competency, the information in the Achievement Context has been used to write the *Description of the Competency*, providing instructions, specific details, and the tools and reference documents to use. Additional information has also been given within parentheses to better contextualize the tasks.

Program Objective		RAC Self-Assessment Form
Statement of the Competency	Achievement Context	<i>Do planning calculations</i>
<i>To do planning calculations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given actual data Given <u>drawings and specifications</u> Using a <u>calculator</u> Using a <u>conversion table</u> 	
Elements of the Competency	Performance Criteria	Description of the Competency
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Perform basic operations.</i> 2. <i>Calculate ratios and proportions.</i> 3. <i>Calculate perimeters, angles, volumes, surfaces and diagonals.</i> 4. <i>Calculate the quantities of materials needed to do a job.</i> 5. <i>Dimension materials for a construction job.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct use and conversion of units of measurement in the Imperial and metric systems Accurate calculations and conversions Logical reasoning Appropriate choice of variable to be isolated Appropriate use of the rule of three Accurate calculation of percentages Appropriate choice of calculation method Correct use of unit of measurement Accurate interpretation of information in drawing Correct reasoning Accurate quantities Accurate needs analysis Accurate calculation of data <p>For the competency as a whole:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate choice of operations Accurate calculations Logical approach Proper planning 	<p><u>Referring to a set of residential building plans and specifications, and using a calculator and conversion table:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Convert measurements:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> from Imperial units (foot, inch) to metric units (metre, millimetre) from metric units (metre, millimetre) to Imperial units (foot, inch) 2. <u>Do squaring calculations (diagonal measurements, right angle).</u> 3. <u>Do planning calculations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> surface areas (e.g. <u>floors, walls</u>) volumes (e.g. <u>concrete, earth</u>) angles (e.g. <u>roof, walls</u>) perimeters (e.g. <u>rectangle</u>, circle, <u>triangle</u>) quantities of materials waste percentages

Example 7: Welding and Fitting (5695) <i>Produce assemblies of medium complexity</i> 801935 <i>Produce complex assemblies</i> 801958	
<p>The self-assessment forms for inclusive and included competencies must make it clear that the included competency is incorporated into the inclusive competency. The descriptive statements reflect that the four assembly competencies build on each other in terms of increasing complexity (the number of parts to assemble, the way they are made, the type of assembly to produce, the references to use and the jig). The following are the last two descriptive statements. Note that making a jig increases the complexity.</p>	
<i>Produce assemblies of medium complexity (801935)</i>	<i>Produce complex assemblies (801958)</i>
Description of the Competency	Description of the Competency
Lay out the parts in accordance with the plans.	Make a jig.
Use jigs.	Lay out the parts in accordance with the plans.
Assemble and tack weld the parts in the proper order.	Assemble and tack weld the parts in the proper order.
Check that the assembly complies with the requirements.	Check that the assembly complies with the requirements.
Weld the parts using the indicated process.	Weld the parts using the indicated process.
Evaluate the quality of the assembly.	Evaluate the quality of the assembly.
Apply safety rules for tack welding and welding operations.	Apply safety rules for tack welding and welding operations.

Example 8: Home Care Assistance (5817) <i>Provide basic care and assistance in a home care setting</i> 751698	
<p>In this example, the competency integrates the learning from a number of the program's general competencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a holistic approach when considering the needs of different types of clientele. • Prevent infections and contamination. • Adopt behaviours consistent with professional decorum and workplace ethics. • Establish a helping relationship. • Interact as part of a team. • Consider the manifestations of physical illnesses and disabilities as well as the specific needs of affected clients. • Adopt relational approaches with clients with mental health problems, cognitive deficits or intellectual disabilities. • Perform basic care procedures. <p>These general competencies are used according to the situation (essentially the client's needs and care plan objectives) and, as a result, the expected outcome for the competency varies. However, it is precisely the ability to adapt to different situations that constitutes the core of the competency and gives this competency its integrative nature.</p> <p>This example also reflects the synthesis arrived at by the production team in determining the essential elements of the competency and in describing the competency in simple terms.</p>	

Program Objective		RAC Self-Assessment Form
Statement of the Competency	Achievement Context	
<i>Provide basic care and assistance in a home care setting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In different living environments and home care settings • Based on the care plan and instructions • Using available materials and equipment 	<i>Provide basic care and assistance in a home-care setting</i>
Elements of the Competency	Performance Criteria	Description of the Competency
<p>1. <i>Become familiar with the information in the care plan.</i></p> <p>2. <i>Plan the tasks to perform.</i></p> <p>3. <i>Establish contact with the client.</i></p> <p>4. <i>Provide basic care related to everyday domestic activities.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate use of information sources • Relevance of information gathered on the client's health condition and the services offered • Clarification of tasks to perform • Thorough, relevant note-taking • Consideration of information in the care plan and instructions regarding the work to be carried out • Appropriate establishment of priorities according to the timetable • Appropriate choice and preparation of materials, equipment and workspace required • Reassuring introduction • Attentive listening • Marked interest in getting to know the client • Use of techniques relevant to building a helping relationship • Compliance with the care plan and instructions • Appropriate use of materials and equipment • Consideration of the level of assistance required by the client • Consideration of the client's physical and emotional condition • Respect for the client's privacy, preferences and lifestyle habits • Appropriate choice of means of promoting or maintaining the client's autonomy • Observance of principles for moving clients safely • Observance of hygiene and asepsis rules • Proper application of basic care and services • Effective time management • Adequate use of relational approaches that facilitate the provision of care and services 	<p>While adopting professional behaviours with clients and the team:</p> <p>Plan the work, in accordance with the <u>care plan and instructions</u>.</p> <p><u>Adapt</u> own communication techniques in order to establish a relationship with the client and his or her loved ones.</p> <p>For the provision of basic care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide basic care and services, <u>in accordance with the situation and procedures</u> • apply principles for moving clients safely • observe rules of hygiene and asepsis • observe occupational health and safety rules

5. <i>Observe clients, their environment and their lifestyle habits.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discreet demonstration of vigilance, attention and insight • Relevant, accurate observations made • Precise, objective reporting of observations made to the persons concerned at the right time 	
6. <i>Maintain and tidy up the materials, equipment and work areas used.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observance of hygiene and asepsis rules • Storage respecting the client's habits and safety 	
7. <i>Share their observations during case discussions.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of the objectives of the care plan • Consideration of the client's health condition, lifestyle habits and resources • Rigorous preparation of their presentation • Clear, relevant information provided • Relevance of questions and comments concerning the client • Clear, respectful assertion of their point of view 	For communicating with the team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in team discussions • propose ways to improve problematic situations
8. <i>Suggest modifications that could improve the client's situation.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant proposals related to the client's needs • Realistic proposals considering the client's abilities, preferences and lifestyle <p>For the competency as a whole:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of the client as a whole • Observance of rules of occupational health and safety and protocol • Adoption of attitudes and behaviours consistent with the facility's professional values and documents related to ethics • Consideration of the client's family and social context • Adoption of attitudes that promote teamwork • Demonstration of an attitude receptive to comments • Observance of personal and professional limits • Compliance with the facility's policies, instructions and modes of operation 	

2.2.2 Procedure for situational competencies

Situational competencies are found in vocational training programs and specific assessment options for recognition have been established for some of them. For competencies with **no** specific assessment options for recognition, the self-assessment form should propose a process equivalent to that provided for the development or acquisition of the target competency in the program of study in basic education.

The self-assessment form must allow candidates to assess themselves in terms of their personal development and not in terms of their ability to perform a task. It is important to remember that the descriptive statements formulated for a situational competency must respect the philosophy behind this type of competency and that the situation itself often provides the information needed to formulate the statements.

The following are the main principles and rules for developing the descriptive statements for a situational competency that appear in the RAC self-assessment form:

- Use as many statements as needed to completely describe the competency by constantly reflecting on its essential elements. There is no rule governing the number of statements that need to be formulated.
- Avoid formulations that will lead to an assessment of expected outcomes that would be identical for all candidates. In fact, in the case of a situational competency, the descriptive statements must focus on a process (often a process of reflection) and not on expected outcomes.
- Use one verb per statement; the verb must express **flexibility** with regard to the expected outcome and not refer to a task whose expected outcome is measured by performance. This is why verbs such as *reflect*, *consider*, *explain*, *explore*, *propose*, *discuss* and *communicate* should be used.
- Use possessive pronouns to make the process of reflection evident.
- Do not include any assessment criteria in the descriptive statements.

Below are three examples of descriptive statements for a situational competency:

Example 1: Secretarial Studies (5712)	960112
<i>Communicate in an office setting</i>	
<p>The aim of this competency is to raise awareness of the communication process, the advantages of good communication and the importance of resolving problems within a team or with clients, not to assess the individual's ability to communicate on a linguistic, relational or other level. Consequently, the verbs and possessive pronouns focus on personal reflection or research:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine your personal strengths and weaknesses with regard to the way you communicate. • Suggest steps to take to improve the way you communicate. • Explain the effects of effective or ineffective communication on teamwork. • Explain how effective communication helps resolve problems (e.g. teamwork, customer relations). 	
Example 2: Accounting (5731)	961102
<i>Interact in a variety of professional situations</i>	
<p>The following example from a self-assessment form is another excellent illustration of how to take into consideration the personal development that is inherent in a situational competency:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize your strengths and weaknesses with respect to work-related communications with regard to communications in professional situations. • Identify means of improving your communication with colleagues and clients. • Assess your attitudes and behaviours in a work team. • Determine means of solving problems in tense workplace situations. 	
Example 3: Masonry: Bricklaying (5803)	778821
<i>Become familiar with the work and techniques related to refractory materials</i>	
<p>This competency targets familiarity with the nature of the labour market in the refractory field and the technical principles for laying different refractory elements or materials. It does not target specific techniques for laying this material. The statements in the self-assessment form take this into account:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the current labour market with regard to activities related to refractory materials. • Explain the main techniques for laying refractory products. 	

2.3 Checklist for self-assessment forms

The following is a list of points to help production teams take a critical look at their work.

Checklist for self-assessment forms
<p>General aspects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The statement of the competency and the competency code match those indicated in the program.• The self-assessment form follows the current template. <p>Specific aspects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The summary of the essential elements of the competency (<i>information on the competency</i>) is representative of the meaning and scope attributed to this competency in the program of study.• The descriptive statements chosen accurately reflect the elements considered essential to applying the competency.• Each descriptive statement:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– has only one verb and it is in the imperative– respects the taxonomic level– contains no assessment criteria• The descriptive statements allow the candidates to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– assess themselves in relation to the requirements of the competency– prepare themselves for the subsequent steps in the process– easily see where they will require further study to acquire one or more elements of the competency that are lacking <p>Vocabulary and formulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The vocabulary used can be easily understood by the candidates.• The statements are formulated in a clear and meaningful way and allow individuals to make an informed decision about whether or not to continue with the RAC process.• The statements, and especially the verb choices, accurately reflect the level of difficulty and complexity required by the competency.

Once the self-assessment forms have been designed and developed, the assessment options for recognition must be determined. But first, what exactly is an assessment option for recognition?

3.1 Definition, features and requirements of assessment options for recognition

The assessment options for recognition refer to the statements on the self-assessment forms and outline the different ways in which candidates can provide evidence of the knowledge and skills they have acquired with respect to a given competency. In other words, as the expression *assessment option for recognition* indicates, if candidates are able to satisfy one of the options suggested, they may obtain recognition for that competency.

Because there are many different ways in which an individual can acquire a competency, assessment options for recognition must be:

- varied, in order to take into account the diversity of experiences in which individuals acquire learning
- flexible, in order to take into account organizational constraints during assessment
- reliable, in order to maintain the credibility of diplomas and respect the principle of equity

This is why candidates must have a choice of **at least two** assessment options for recognition.

One of the assessment options for recognition applies to all competencies, i.e. proof of successful completion of a course or program. This option is based on the third guiding principle of RAC, that is, individuals should not be obliged to seek recognition again for competencies or prior learning that have been properly assessed and certified by an official system.

Standard assessment options for recognition

There are **eight** standard assessment options for recognition, seven of which concern experiential learning:

- proof of successful completion of a course or program
- certification issued by a government body or recognized organization
- document issued by an employer
- individual assignment
- participation in an interview
- performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace
- performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution
- performance of a task recorded on video

Each standard assessment option for recognition has its own features and requirements. Before presenting these, it is important to note the following:

- An assessment option may comprise only one standard assessment option for recognition, e.g. *Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace*.
- Often, two standard assessment options may need to be combined, e.g. *Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution* and *Participation in an interview*.

- In certain rare cases, three standard assessment options for recognition may be required, e.g. *Certification issued by a government body or recognized organization*, *Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace* and *Participation in an interview*.
- Certain assessment options for recognition cannot stand alone because they do not provide enough of a guarantee that the competency has been acquired, e.g. *Document issued by an employer*.
- For reasons of feasibility and accessibility, no more than three standard assessment options should ever be combined.

Proof of successful completion of a course or program is always included as an assessment option for recognition. The training must be relevant, have been assessed and certified in an educational institution recognized by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS), by the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie (MESRST) or in an educational institution outside Québec, provided that the proof of successful completion has been validated by a body accredited to do so in Québec.²²

Certification issued by a government body or recognized organization (other than by MELS or MESRST) may follow successful completion of a course or a successful assessment. It differs from the above assessment option because the production team must identify the principal certifications that exist and determine their relevance with respect to RAC requirements.

A **document issued by an employer** is used to obtain information on the tasks and activities carried out by the candidate. It is particularly useful as a source of information on how the candidate has been applying the competency over a long period of time or as a description of the candidate's responsibilities, or to reduce the duration of the RAC assessment. This assessment option therefore plays a supporting role and must be used in conjunction with another standard assessment option in order to eliminate bias, to guarantee the reliability and validity of the assessment and to avoid penalizing candidates who cannot provide such proof.

An **individual assignment** can involve carrying out a task, producing a part or writing a personal reflection or an argumentative or explanatory text. The task may have already been carried out, in whole or in part, or is to be carried out. Because it is not performed in the presence of an assessor, it must be authenticated, which means that another standard assessment option for recognition must also be used.

Participation in an interview makes it possible to verify how the candidate applies his or her knowledge in carrying out certain activities. The interview can also be used to obtain explanations or justifications of the candidate's choices or decisions, or to check the candidate's ability to transfer learning.

Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace is the assessment option that most closely approximates a workplace situation. However, carrying out the task must not impose any unusual constraints on the employer and it may also be necessary to comply with requirements related to personal safety or confidentiality of information.

Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution is similar to the above option. The assessment activity must approximate a workplace situation as closely as possible, without any "academic bias."

Performance of a task recorded on video allows a task to be observed after it is carried out. The task must lend itself to the use of media and the assessment must be supported by guarantees of reliability. This assessment option requires the consent of the people being filmed.

²² Subject to the *legislative* framework for each level of education.

3.2 Determining assessment options for recognition

The process for determining assessment options for recognition comprises two steps.

First, a systematic approach must be adopted. Given that all the descriptive statements in the self-assessment form need to be assessed, they must each be studied and the standard assessment option or options that could be used for each statement must be identified. For example, a statement of a cognitive nature requires an assessment option that will determine if the candidate is able to apply knowledge. In this case, participation in an interview or an individual assignment might be suitable options. Statements of a practical nature call for adapted assessment options, such as the performance of a task in the presence of an assessor or performance of a task recorded on video.

Second, an overall approach must be adopted and decisions must be made concerning the most appropriate assessment option or combination of options **for each** descriptive statement in the self-assessment form. A variety of options should also be proposed so that candidates can choose from flexible and accessible options. Thus, several factors must be considered: time allotted for the assessment, location and feasibility of the assessment, reliability of results, scope of the competency, variety and equity of the options offered to the candidate, etc.

In deciding the suggested **time allotment** for the assessment, balance must sometimes be achieved between the requirements of the competency and time and **feasibility** constraints. For example, in Machining Techniques (5723), the competency *Mass-produce parts using conventional machining techniques* (872255) involves planning and organizing the work **and** mass-producing parts. Thus, the production team selected two assessment options: *Participation in an interview*, to assess the candidate's ability to plan and organize his or her work **and** *Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace*, for the production activities. One hour was allotted for the workplace assessment even though doing the work in the plant usually takes longer.

In terms of the **location** for the assessment, if the performance of a task were selected as one of the possible options, it would need to be determined where the candidate could demonstrate the competency: in the workplace, at the educational institution, or both, keeping in mind that the **feasibility** criteria must also be taken into account. For example, the competency *Give a standard permanent* (918127) in Hairdressing (5745) can be assessed equally well at an educational institution or in the workplace. On the other hand, *Manage their time and ensure the quality of their work* (017Y) in Computer Science Technology (420.A0) cannot be assessed in the workplace because it is difficult to schedule times for these aspects to be observed.

Feasibility constraints are often present. Availability of time, transportation options and material and financial resources must also be taken into account. This is even more applicable when the occupation has a wide geographical spread such as in Adventure Tourism (414.B0), where guides work in a variety of natural environments and are often far from educational institutions. Feasibility also requires that safety and confidentiality considerations associated with the workplace be taken into account.

The assessment must be authentic and **reliable** and that is why, as mentioned above, a document issued by an employer cannot be accepted as a stand-alone assessment option for recognition. It must be accompanied by another assessment option that provides the opportunity for direct observation, such as *Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace* or *Participation in an interview*.

The same applies to *Individual assignment*, which cannot be selected as the sole assessment option because a candidate could have asked someone else to do the work. This is why candidates are often asked to modify or finish their assignment or to provide explanations about it in the presence of an assessor. For example, in Business Management (410.DO), the competency *Use up-to-date economic information in commercial management tasks* (01U9) has *Individual assignment* and *Participation in an interview* as the assessment options for recognition.

Determining assessment options for recognition requires respecting the **scope** of the competency. Thus, a combination of standard assessment options should be adopted if the scope of the competency is more general, but should not be adopted if the competency targets the acquisition of basic knowledge and skills. For example, the competency *Communicate in the workplace* (936282) in General Building Maintenance (5711) has the standard assessment option *Participation in an interview*. In this case, the production team agreed that it was not necessary to combine several different assessment activities because the targeted knowledge and skills were, in essence, quite simple. Such was not the case for the competency *Communicate in the workplace* (0197) in Early Childhood Education (322.A0), which has two combinations of standard assessment options:

- 1) *Performance of a task recorded on video – Participation in an interview – Individual assignment.*
- 2) *Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace – Participation in an interview – Individual assignment.* In this case, the knowledge and skills must be applied in complex and varied communications contexts—with children, parents and colleagues. Several assessment activities must therefore be combined.

To offer the candidate the most realistic choice possible, a **variety** of assessment options should be provided. An example of this is found in Welding and Fitting (5695) where the competency *Weld steel parts using the SMAW process* (801807) has the following assessment options:

- proof of successful completion of a course or program
- **certification issued by a government body or recognized organization**
- performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace
- performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution

Furthermore, different standard assessment options should always be combined with a view to providing **equivalency** and **equity**. Here is an example where **two** assessment options were deemed necessary:

- 1) *Document issued by an employer – Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution.*
- 2) *Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution.*

In the first option, the task to be carried out after receipt of the document issued by the employer has less **time allotted to it** than does the second option. Otherwise, what would be the point of the candidate's asking his or her employer for a document?

Note that in vocational training, assessment options for recognition do not need to be determined for the competencies *Determine their suitability for the trade and training process*, *Enter the workforce* and *Use job-search techniques*²³ as these competencies have specific assessment options set out in the *Administrative Guide for the Certification of Studies and Management of Ministerial Examinations* in the chapter on recognition of acquired competencies. The production team should, however, ensure that assessment options for recognition are determined for any additions made to these competencies and where a self-assessment form has been produced.

In technical training, the assessment option for recognition for the competency *Analyze the occupation* is *Participation in an interview* because this competency is assessed in the validation interview on the basis of the candidate's file. If any additions have been made to this competency, the production team must ensure that another assessment option does not need to be combined with *Participation in an interview*.

²³ It should be noted that there *may* be variations in how these competencies appear.

3.3 Presentation of the assessment options for recognition

Once the assessment options for recognition have been determined, they must be correctly inserted into the template for the self-assessment form. The assessment option *Proof of successful completion of a course or program* always appears first, then the other options are presented according to the amount of work required of the candidate. Section 3.1 of this guide presented the eight standard assessment options for recognition in order of the simplest to the most demanding for candidates. The following is an example of how the options could appear:

- Proof of successful completion of a course or program
- Document issued by an employer and performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace
- Document issued by an employer and performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution
- Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace
- Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution

If two or three standard assessment options are used within the same assessment option for recognition, the production team must list them in the order in which they are to take place within the assessment activity. For example, if the assessment option is stated as *Individual assignment – Participation in an interview*, this means that the interview will take place after the individual assignment and should, among other things, serve to validate the authenticity of the individual assignment.

3.4 Writing the Explanation of Assessment Options for Recognition

Once the list of assessment options for recognition for a given competency has been completed, explanations must be provided so that the candidate is aware of the choices available and is given more details about the context, the aim of the task, the subject of the interview or the main assessment criteria.

A model explanation is provided for each standard assessment option for recognition. Where options are combined, the explanations can be based on the models below.

Example 1: Civil Engineering Technology (221.B0)	
<i>Establish professional relationships</i> 01XA	
O3	<p>To obtain recognition for the competency ESTABLISH PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• perform an individual assignment that involves:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- a situation experienced in your workplace where you had to adapt how you speak- a written job-related communication (e.g. a construction site memo)- a description of situations in which you had to defend opinions and manage issues <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• participate in an interview on your ability to manage your professional relationships

Example 2: Professional Cooking (5311)	
<i>Adopt preventive measures in matters of health and safety</i> 904552	
O2	<p>To obtain recognition for the competency ADOPT PREVENTIVE MEASURES IN MATTERS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• participate in an interview on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- the identification of potential hazards

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the selection of appropriate preventive measures - the determination of what to do in an emergency situation <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perform a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace that involves applying safe work practices when performing everyday cooking tasks
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Example 3: Hotel Reception (5783) <i>Perform reception-related tasks in a computerized hotel environment</i> 901715	
O3	<p>To obtain recognition for the competency PERFORM RECEPTION-RELATED TASKS IN A COMPUTERIZED HOTEL ENVIRONMENT, you must perform a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution that involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recording e-mail reservation requests • recording transactions and corrections • using the Internet and reference materials to respond to requests for information • coordinating check-ins and check-outs

Exceptionally, **additional information** may also be provided, especially if *Individual assignment* or *Performance of a task recorded on video* is selected as assessment options.

Candidates are given this additional information at the validation interview because they will be carrying out either of these tasks on their own; therefore, they must know exactly what is expected of them ahead of time. This information should be appended to the *Companion Guide*.

The additional information concerns the instructions for carrying out the task, the content of the task or the nature of the expected outcomes. It must be written in appropriate and accessible language. The following are two examples of additional information concerning these two standard assessment options for recognition.

Examples of additional information

For the performance of a task recorded on video:

Example 1: Hairdressing (5245) <i>Give a standard haircut to a female client</i> 918108	
O2	<p>The competency may be recognized upon presentation of a video recording in which you give a standard (basic) haircut adapted to the face shape and hair of a female client whose hair needs to be cut at least 3.5 cm for the change to be noticeable.</p> <p>In the video recording, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe the cut you are doing and the technique you are using • justify your choice of instruments; show a close-up of the client's wet hair • position yourself so that you can be seen using the technique for giving a standard haircut to a female client • after finishing the cut, lift the hair to show the angles of the cut, the overall harmony and the uniformity of the lengths • present a close up of the client's combed hair to demonstrate the movement and attractiveness of the hair after it has been set

For an individual assignment:

Example 2: Business Management (410.D0)	
<i>Research and analyze commercial data</i>	
<i>01TW</i>	
O2	<p>Individual assignment – Participation in an interview – Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace</p> <p>Individual assignment</p> <p>You are to present marketing research that you have already conducted as part of your work. You must have written part of the report and indicated your contribution to the research and the writing of the report.</p> <p>Ideally, this document must cover the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• research objectives• instruments used to collect the data, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- survey questionnaire- individual or group interview checklist- observation checklist• research report• recommendations <p>The document presented may be accompanied by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• completed questionnaires• data files• query files• any other relevant information <p>Keep a copy of the document to bring to the interview.</p>

Finally, the additional information must clearly describe the instructions for carrying out the task, the content or the nature of the expected productions. It must also be consistent with the assessment form.

3.5 Checklist for assessment options for recognition

The following is a list of points to help production teams take a critical look at their work.

Checklist for assessment options for recognition
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The assessment option <i>Proof of successful completion of a course or program</i> appears first in the list of assessment options.• The assessment options make it possible to assess each descriptive statement in the self-assessment form in order to verify that the competency has been acquired.• The assessment options are appropriate, given the candidate's profile and where and how the learning took place.• The assessment options make it possible to validate the authenticity of the expected productions or

supporting documents.

- The assessment options proposed are equivalent to one another.
- The assessment options are reasonable given certain practical constraints such as the time allotted to assessments, the financial resources needed for certain assessments or demonstrations, and the staff, materials, equipment and travel required.
- A sufficient number of assessment options for recognition are proposed.
- There are no combinations with more than three standard assessment options for recognition.
- The assessment options are presented in order of the amount of work required of the candidate.
- The Ministère template is used to present the assessment options as well as the explanations accompanying these options.
- The vocabulary used is appropriate and accessible to the clientele.

The fourth step of the development process involves designing and producing the assessment forms. To that end, this section will begin with a review of the nature of assessment forms, their role within the harmonized approach and their main features.

4.1 Definition, features and purpose of the assessment forms

The third instrument in the harmonized approach is the assessment form. The assessment form, designed specifically for content specialists, is used to assess the essential elements of a competency. All of the elements that appear on the self-assessment form must be assessed. In addition, each assessment form must be adapted to the different assessment options for recognition suggested for a given competency; in other words, there is an assessment form for each corresponding assessment option for recognition.

Essential features of the assessment form

The essential features of the assessment form reflect its dual purpose, which is:

- to make it possible to render a decision as to whether to grant full or partial recognition for a competency
- if the competency is partially recognized, to identify any further study required in order to attain the level of proficiency required by the competency

Purpose of the assessment form

The assessment form enables the assessor and the person in charge to:

- obtain information on how to prepare and conduct the assessment
- be guided with respect to the elements to be assessed
- clarify the criteria to use in assessing elements
- record the results of the assessment and the decision concerning recognition

4.2 Principles underlying RAC assessment

The following are the most important principles that must be applied to a RAC assessment.

- **First**

The credibility of any assessment instrument, regardless of whether the learning was acquired in a formal school setting or elsewhere, is predicated on the same three features: **validity**, **reliability** and **feasibility**. An instrument is **valid** only if it assesses what it is intended to assess and fulfils the functions for which it was designed. In concrete terms, this means that a RAC instrument must make it possible to render a decision as to whether or not to recognize the competency and, if it is not recognized, to identify what elements are missing for the candidate to acquire this competency.

Reliability is the instrument's ability to measure with the same degree of accuracy equivalent things in similar conditions. This supposes, among other things, that the instructions and framework for the assessment situation are clear and precise. The tasks or activities indicated in the assessment options for recognition must also be at the same level of difficulty and complexity as that required at the end of

a formal learning process. The goal is to achieve consistent results; therefore, all necessary measures are taken to reduce inaccuracies, margins of error, subjectivity, etc.

Lastly, **feasibility** means that when options are designed and selected for candidates to demonstrate their competencies, resources must be available and sufficient with respect to realistic time allotment for the assessment, conditions that can be replicated, availability of human and material resources, realistic travel requirements for those concerned, etc.

- **Second**

One of the principles of RAC is that requirements regarding the quality and value of official school diplomas must never be lowered. Therefore, the standards for determining the degree to which a candidate has met the assessment criteria and developed proficiency in a competency must be the same as those set out in the program of study.

4.3 Features of RAC assessment

Due to the specific RAC context, **certain adaptations must be made to the assessment options and processes**. The principal adaptations required concern the following features of RAC assessment:

- Assessment is multidimensional because a competency, by definition, is multidimensional as well. Thus, situations that comprise multidimensional tasks (complete tasks with a satisfactory level of complexity) must be used when developing assessment situations or selecting assessment options for recognition. The situations must also involve realistic and meaningful activities that are directly connected with the workplace situation concerned.
- The interpretation of results is criterion-based because it relies on indicators and assessment criteria. Also, the assessment must focus on all of the elements considered essential to applying the competency. Therefore, proficiency must be developed in all these elements in order for a competency to be recognized.
- The grading varies in accordance with the rules governing the evaluation and certification of learning stipulated in the school regulations in effect.
- Assessment for the purpose of recognizing acquired competencies never leads to failure: a competency is either fully or partially recognized. When a competency is partially recognized, the assessment must enable a precise diagnosis to be made of the weaknesses and gaps for which a plan for further study must be proposed so that the candidate can acquire any missing elements of the competency.

For the competency to be recognized—and this rule applies to both vocational and technical training—the candidate must attain the minimum performance standard for each of the elements being verified. Any elements for which the candidate does not attain the minimum performance will require further study.

However, the certification rules, which differ according to the level of education, do have an impact on the way the decision is rendered in RAC. This is why these differences are reflected in the templates for the assessment forms.

4.4 Prerequisites for developing assessment forms

When formulating assessment situations for the different assessment option for recognition, it is important to follow certain principles and properly map out the parameters of the work to be done.

- To guarantee that the entire process is **coherent**, the production team must have on hand the program of study, as well as the self-assessment form and assessment options for recognition for each competency.
- An assessment form must be developed for each assessment option for recognition, except for *Proof of successful completion of a course or program* where the template for either vocational or technical training needs to be completed.
- In vocational training, assessment forms do not need to be produced for the competencies *Determine their suitability for the occupation and the training process*, *Enter the work force* and *Use job search techniques* as a Decision Form template for them has been included in the appendices to the companion guide. However, if any additions have been made to the standard version of the competency *Determine their suitability for the occupation and the training process* (as mentioned in section 2.2), an assessment form must be produced for the addition.
- In technical training, an assessment form is not required for the competency *Analyze the occupation/job function* unless additions have been made to the standard version (as mentioned in section 2.2).
- The self-assessment forms may be modified. For example, statements that appear to be more or less pertinent could be changed. This back-and-forth is indispensable and, as mentioned before, is an integral part of the process.
- The assessment form must always be addressed to the assessors as they are the only ones using them.

4.5 Formulation of assessment situations

Assessment situations are formulated for the different assessment options for recognition on the basis of the above principles.

This step consists in pinpointing the key components of the assessment situation selected for each competency during the production of the self-assessment forms and the identification of the assessment options for recognition. The goal is to review all the decisions made in the previous steps, ensuring consistency and giving them a concrete form. It is also an opportunity to validate the **feasibility** of the options selected and to ensure that the choices made are consistent and relevant.

The following explanations are intended to help the production team formulate assessment situations whose main components can then be recorded on the assessment forms.

First, each statement in each self-assessment form is associated with the standard assessment options for recognition determined in the previous step. Beside each statement in the self-assessment form, the production team writes the standard assessment option for recognition associated with it. This will provide an initial overview that can be used to start formulating an assessment situation that will allow the team to coordinate the different assessment options selected, to plan how much time will be needed, to validate that the candidate can actually achieve the expected outcomes, etc.

In the following example from Computer Science Technology (420.A0), *Participation in an interview* is the standard assessment option for recognition that has been associated with three of the seven statements in the self-assessment form for the competency *Install hardware and software on a computer (016R)*.

Description of the Competency	Assessment situation
1. <i>Identify the features and functions of processors, memories, buses, motherboards and clocks.</i>	Participation in an interview
2. <i>Ensure the security of the workstation and its data (e.g. static, electricity, appropriate utilities, saving and restoring initial configuration).</i>	Participation in an interview
3. <i>Install hardware such as memory cards and internal peripherals on a workstation.</i>	Performance of a task
4. <i>Uninstall hardware such as memory cards and internal peripherals on a workstation.</i>	Performance of a task
5. <i>Install software on a workstation.</i>	Performance of a task
6. <i>Uninstall software on a workstation.</i>	Performance of a task
7. <i>Document the installation and uninstallation.</i>	Participation in an interview

If a linear progression had been followed, the interview would have taken place at two different times. However, it became apparent that only one interview needed to be conducted, after task 6, thereby making the assessment activity more flexible and feasible.

The production team was thus able to develop an assessment situation, to question the relevance of each of the standard assessment options for recognition, to validate them and to change the order in which the assessment steps would be carried out.

Developing an assessment situation may sometimes lead to rethinking the choice of standard assessment options for recognition. Such was the case for the competency *Perform lubrication operations (898262)* in Industrial Construction and Maintenance Mechanics (5760). This competency involves the lubrication of three systems (manual, semiautomatic and automatic) and the necessary adjustments required to carry out the operation for each type of system. The task to be carried out by the candidate focused on all three systems.

When the self-assessment form was drawn up, two assessment options for recognition were identified:

- Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace
- Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution

It then became apparent that the task would be too weighty and require a great deal of time. The production team thought it would be possible to replace one part of the task with an interview without reducing the rigour and validity of the assessment while at the same time cutting down the time allotted.

After discussion, the team agreed that the task would focus on the essential elements of the competency, that is, the lubrication of manual systems, and that the interview would cover the lubrication of automatic and semiautomatic systems, which refer to pre-established procedures.

This is why, when the assessment form was developed, the assessment options were changed and replaced by the following:

- Participation in an interview and performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace
- Participation in an interview and performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution

4.6 Instructions for developing assessment forms

In order for the process of designing and producing assessment forms to be more systematic, templates have been made available. Production teams can use these templates to follow the procedure for formulating different assessment situations, ensuring that the forms are consistent with the requirements and features of a RAC assessment.

The following is a brief presentation of the content of assessment forms and some instructions for completing the different sections of these forms.

4.7 Presentation of the content of the assessment forms

The assessment forms are structured as follows:

- general information
- procedure for the assessment activity
This section can be divided into three subsections:
 - before the assessment
 - during the assessment
 - after the assessment
- materials required (optional section)
- elements to be assessed, assessment criteria and justifications
- result
- assessment report and summary (technical training)
- recommendations, if further study is required

4.7.1 General information

The statement of the competency, its code and the numbered assessment option (e.g. O1, O2) are entered in the template.

Spaces are provided for the candidate's name, the date of the assessment, the signature of the assessor and other administrative information. A separate space is provided for the decision.

4.7.2. Procedure for the assessment activity

This section may be divided into three subsections, depending on the assessment: **before** the assessment, **during** the assessment and **after** the assessment.

The subsection entitled **before the assessment** provides instructions on what the assessor needs to do prior to meeting with the candidate. The instructions should be clear and concise, using an action verb.

For example, one of the assessment options for recognition for the competency *Use the basic functions of word processing software (960056)* in Secretarial Studies (5712) is *Individual assignment and performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution*. Before the task, the assessor is instructed to use the electronic file submitted by the candidate to assess the content of the documents and to indicate any errors on the paper copy.

Likewise, in Business Management (410.D0), the assessment form for *Individual assignment, performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace and participation in an interview*

for the competency *Form a sales team (01U4)* indicates what the assessor is expected to do for each of the elements to be assessed:

- Element 1: prepare a scenario
- Elements 2, 3 and 5: verify the relevance of the document in relation to the competency
- Element 4: prepare a simulation activity

Recommendations are also given to the assessor to follow **during the task** in the presence of the candidate. Candidates must be provided with accurate information so that they have a clear understanding of the task to be performed and the expected outcomes. For example, in Welding and Fitting (5695), for the competency *Produce basic assemblies (801884)*, this subsection contains the following information: Ask the candidate to produce a basic assembly using prepared parts (e.g. seven or eight folded parts drilled with straight lines and angles), referring to assembly drawings, specifications and welding processes.

The assessor can also be given instructions regarding key moments of the assessment. Thus, in Business Management (410.D0), the assessment form for the assessment option *Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace and participation in an interview* for the competency *Sell products and services in a commercial establishment (01U2)* states that, during the task, the assessor is to observe the candidate selling items to one or more clients of the establishment in which he or she works. If the real-life sales situation is insufficient to assess all the elements, the assessor is to simulate a meeting with a fictional client.

For certain standard assessment options for recognition, the time allotted for the task must also be specified if the assessor must be there with the candidate. This applies only to *Participation in an interview*, *Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace* and *Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution*.

Knowing the time allotted enables the assessor to inform the candidate and also allows those in charge to better plan the assessment session.

The subsection entitled **after the task** provides any other instructions considered necessary.

4.7.3 Materials required

This section must be completed for the assessment options *Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution*, *Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace* and *Participation in an interview*. It provides a list of the materials and equipment required for the assessment activity to proceed properly.

When a task must be performed in the workplace, the list must be replaced by general instructions on personal protective equipment, essential safety devices and the materials required. Common sense dictates that the candidate will use the materials and equipment available at the workplace.

4.7.4 Elements to be assessed and assessment criteria

Keep in mind that, in principle, the descriptive statements in the self-assessment form correspond to the essential elements of the competency. Before these descriptive statements can be rewritten for an assessment context, each statement must be considered important enough to require a RAC assessment (see section 2.2 of this guide).

A descriptive statement selected for assessment becomes an *element to be assessed* and must be translated from a **descriptive** context to an **assessment** context. This means that the action verb must be replaced by a noun (e.g. replace *produce* by *production*, *choose* by *choice*). Using a noun emphasizes

the final expected outcome that will demonstrate proficiency in the competency and serves as a reminder that, if the candidate does not satisfactorily achieve this expected outcome, further study will be required.

A descriptive statement may sometimes become one or more elements to be assessed.

If a statement from the self-assessment form is not used to create an element to be assessed, that statement must be removed from the form or combined with another one.

The elements to be assessed must also be **put in order** for the assessment activity. This order may differ from the order in which the statements appear in the self-assessment form, as seen in section 4.5.

The elements to be assessed must be developed into **assessment criteria**. This activity is both difficult and delicate and it first requires a clear understanding of what an assessment criterion is:

An assessment criterion is a reference point, an indicator that makes it possible to qualify or quantify a reality and which is used to make a judgment and determine if the expected outcome has been attained.²⁴

Therefore, to correctly formulate a certain number of assessment criteria for each element, some observable reference points, i.e. **indicators**, must be found for each element and then a **qualifier** must be attached to each of these indicators so that a judgment can be made on the element being assessed.

An **indicator** indicates which aspect, part or component of the element is to be assessed. This element must then be broken down into different parts, aspects or areas that will become observable measurable indicators.

An indicator alone cannot lead to a judgment. An indicator points to (indicates) a facet, an **observable measurable** part of what needs to be assessed. Its role is to make the process objective. To arrive at a judgment, which is the final result of any assessment, that element must be qualifiable or quantifiable or be given a specific meaning or value; in other words, it must be turned into a **criterion**. While an indicator points to the presence of a subject or a situation, a criterion makes it possible to assess the nature and the quantitative and qualitative attributes of that subject or situation. The indicator points to a reality while the criterion gives it a specific meaning or value.

In general, an element to be assessed should have more than **one** assessment criterion but no more than **five** criteria. The following example illustrates how the assessment criteria for each element to be assessed should be stated.

²⁴ This borrows from the different definitions of assessment criterion proposed by Renald Legendre on page 314 of his *Dictionnaire*. Also, Gilbert De Landsheere, on page 69 of his *Dictionnaire*, defines a criterion as a "characteristic of a person or thing by which that person or thing is judged." [translation]

Secretarial Studies (5712) <i>Produce and receive business correspondence in English</i>		960146
Elements to be assessed		Result Yes No
Writing a two-paged business letter: <u>In the documents submitted</u>		
1. Appropriate wording of the various parts of the letter:		
– introduction		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
– body text		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
– conclusion		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
– closing		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Presentation of ideas in a logical order		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Appropriate phrases for the type of letter		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Tolerance: 1 error		
4. Presence of links between paragraphs		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Observance of spelling, grammar and punctuation rules		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Tolerance: 1 error		

Here, the indicators selected to reflect the reality of writing a business letter were:

- the **structure** of the letter:
 - the various parts of the letter (criterion 1)
 - the order of the ideas in the letter (criterion 2)
 - the links between the paragraphs (criterion 4)
- the **style** of the phrases (criterion 3)
- the **quality** of English (criterion 5)

A qualifier has been associated with each of these indicators so that a judgment can be made. The following qualities, which are in line with the program of study, were selected to assess the candidate's business letter:

- the **presence** or **absence** as well as the **appropriateness** or **inappropriateness** of the different parts used to structure the letter (criterion 1)
- the **logical** or **illogical** sequence of the different ideas contained in the letter (criterion 2)
- the **appropriateness** or **inappropriateness** of the phrasing for a business letter (criterion 3)
- the **presence** or **absence** of links between the paragraphs (criterion 4)
- the **observance** of the rules of written English (criterion 5)

Exceptionally, certain statements in the self-assessment form will include assessment criteria, in particular when occupational health and safety rules and the rules governing asepsis, hygiene and cleanliness (see section 2.2.1) are involved. If all the statements in the self-assessment form are targeted and included in a heading or specific statement,²⁵ an assessment criterion must be formulated.

²⁵ For example, "Observing health and safety rules" (heading) or "Apply hygiene and cleanliness rules throughout the process of handling and preserving food" (specific statement).

In some cases, a **tolerance** may be specified for an assessment criterion. Tolerance is defined as a “margin of error deemed acceptable in the demonstration of the competency,”²⁶ and is determined by taking into account the level of difficulty of the expected outcome. A tolerance is expressed quantitatively in the form of a measurement or a number. Here are two examples:

- The competency *To build wood stairs (761818)* in Carpentry (5819) allows for a tolerance of **± 1/8 inch** on the total length for the assessment criterion *Accurate marking of the stringer*.
- The competency *To perform basic driving techniques (860346)* in Trucking (5791) allows for a tolerance of **three** errors for the assessment criterion *Correct synchronization of gear changes*.

At the college level, a **weighting** and a **minimum performance standard** must be indicated for each element to be assessed. The weighting specifies the relative importance of each element. The minimum performance standard specifies the number of marks that must be obtained.

Each assessment criterion must be verified, which is why the assessment form template includes a space for the result of the assessment and another for the explanation of that result. Assessors will provide explanations if more information is needed on the behaviours or performance observed.

4.7.5 Result and assessment report

In vocational training, the “Elements to be Assessed” section ends with the total number of criteria being assessed.

In technical training, the assessment form contains a section entitled “Assessment Report” that indicates whether or not the candidate has met the criteria for each of the elements assessed. This section must be completed by referring to information gathered earlier in the process.

4.7.6 Recommendations for further study

This section is reserved for the assessor’s recommendations when the candidate requires more training to acquire the competency: content of the required training (related to the elements of the competency that have not been acquired), suggestions regarding the means of learning (on-the-job training, customized training, training at an educational institution, online training, distance training, etc.) and the suggested time frame.

²⁶ Québec, Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport. *Reference Framework for Planning Learning and Evaluation Activities: Vocational Training* (Québec: Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2005), 26.

4.8 Checklist for assessment forms

The following is a list of points to help production teams take a critical look at their work.

Checklist for assessment forms
<p>Overall aspects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The assessment forms comply with the prescribed rules.• All the instructions in the different sections of the assessment form are intended for the assessors. <p>General information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The statement of the competency and its code as well as the assessment option for recognition and its number are indicated clearly.• The assessment options for recognition are listed in the same order as the assessment situations. <p>Procedure for the assessment activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The instructions for the assessors are clear and precise, indicating exactly what they need to do before, during and after the assessment.• A time allotment has been suggested for the following standard assessment options for recognition: <i>Participation in an interview, Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace and Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor at the educational institution</i>. <p>Materials</p> <p>Depending on the standard assessment option selected, a list of the materials required for the assessment activity may or may not be included.</p> <p>Elements to be assessed and assessment criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each element to be assessed is individually assessed and allows training needs to be clearly identified.• Each element has been reformulated based on the statement in the self-assessment form and begins with a noun.• The various elements to be assessed are listed in the same order as in the assessment situation.• Each element to be assessed has a sufficient number of assessment criteria.• All the assessment criteria provide observable and verifiable reference points.• All the assessment criteria allow the expected behaviour or performance to be assessed because they include adjectives that describe the required qualities of a production or describe how the task should be carried out.• The statements in the self-assessment form that pertain to occupational health and safety rules and rules governing asepsis, hygiene and cleanliness have been translated into elements to be assessed and have assessment criteria.• Any tolerances indicated are relevant and consistent with the requirements of the program of study.• In vocational training, the section entitled “Elements to be assessed” ends with the total number of criteria being assessed.• In technical training, a weighting and minimum performance standard have been assigned to each element to be assessed.• In technical training, all the required information is transferred to the Assessment Report.

5.1 Role and function of the companion guide

The companion guide is part of the series of documents required for the RAC process and is intended for RAC counsellors and assessors.

This document contains all of the information required to organize and manage RAC services for a program of study. The companion guide's primary role is to briefly present and explain the methodological choices made in developing RAC instruments. It also contains practical suggestions such as grouping certain assessment activities in order to save time on assessment.

The guide also allows the person in charge of RAC to plan the assessment by taking into account each candidate's competency profile as well as the human resources at the service's disposal. Lastly, the guide includes information on certification for the official recognition of competencies.

5.2 Contents of the companion guide and information to be entered

The template for the companion guide contains common sections that review the principles and characteristics of the RAC approach as well as sections to be completed according to the specific program of study.

For the most part, the template is completed using information taken from the program of study, the self-assessment forms, the assessment options for recognition and the assessment forms.

The companion guide consists of various sections and appendices:

- introduction
- general information
- framework:
 - presentation of the statements of competency from the program of study
 - details on identifying the essential elements of certain competencies in the program of study
- assessment options for recognition:
 - presentation of assessment options for recognition and suggested time allotments for assessments taking place in the presence of an assessor
 - presentation of specific options for recognition
 - details on determining the assessment options for recognition
- assessment:
 - details on integrative and inclusive competencies
 - details on organizing the assessment and general considerations
 - sequence and grouping of assessment activities
- appendices

5.2.1 Introduction

This part of the template appears in all companion guides.

5.2.2 General information

This part of the template presents the general approach and methodological principles of RAC, as well as the standard eight assessment options for recognition, as outlined in section 3.1 of this Guide to designing RAC instruments.

5.2.3 Framework

This section of the companion guide may have one or two parts.

The **first part is common to all programs** and lists the statements of the competencies specific to the program of study. In vocational training, all the competencies and their codes are indicated, while in technical training, all the competencies of the program-specific training modules and their codes are included.

The content of the **second part**, “Details on the essential elements of certain competencies in the program of study” is based on discussions about the most meaningful elements of the competencies.

In reflecting on the essential elements of the competencies, the production team becomes familiar with the program of study and was able to pinpoint exactly how these essential elements could be expressed in an assessment process that is based on applying competencies. It is important that these discussions and ensuing decisions be shared because they explain the essential elements of the competencies and are the foundation of the assessment instruments developed.

The production team refers to the self-assessment forms where highlights of this decision-making process can be recorded in the table provided for that purpose. Only important choices are explained.

The following excerpt is from the table presenting the details on the essential elements of certain competencies in *Prehospital Emergency Care (181.A0)*.

CODE	COMPETENCY	DETAILS
052E	<i>Use patient assessment methods</i>	Element 4, <i>Assess the patient’s functional autonomy</i> , was not selected because it is not a routine clinical condition assessment method in prehospital care. Rather, this element of the competency is considered an asset to a practitioner’s observation skills.
052T	<i>Intervene on the scene of a disaster or an antisocial act or in specific situations</i>	Element 7, <i>Report on the intervention</i> , was not selected because it is assessed in competencies 052L <i>To intervene with patients requiring medical care</i> and 052P <i>To intervene with patients in trauma situations</i> . Element 8, <i>Clean the vehicle and equipment</i> , was not selected because it is assessed in competency 052N <i>To use an ambulance in intervention situations</i> .

5.2.4 Assessment options for recognition

This section of the companion guide is divided into three parts.

The **first part** is intended to facilitate the organization of the assessment. It presents, in table form, the various assessment options for recognition determined for each competency as well as the suggested

time allotments for assessments taking place in the presence of an assessor and recorded in the assessment forms.

The **second part** appears in vocational training RAC companion guides and covers competencies that do not have a self-assessment or assessment form. A table presents the code, the statement of the competency and the description of the specific assessment option for recognition that appears in the current school year's edition of the *Administrative Guide for the Certification of Studies and Management of Ministerial Examinations*.

In technical training, the competency *Analyze the job function*²⁷ may have a specific assessment option for recognition. If so, a table must be completed.

There is a template decision form to be completed for these competencies in both vocational and technical training.

The **third part** presents details on determining the assessment options for recognition for both vocational and technical training. It is often a good idea to provide explanations on how the assessment options were determined in order to justify why they are needed, especially when the reasons are not immediately evident. For example, an explanation could be given as to why certain assessment options for recognition were not selected by indicating how they would not have satisfied RAC requirements. These explanations can be based on the different factors that guided the decision-making process (see section 3.2 of this guide), such as the time allotted for the task, where it will take place, its feasibility, the reliability of the results, the scope of the competency, and the diversity and equity of the options provided to the candidate.

The production team will fill in the table by indicating the key facts in determining the assessment options for recognition. Once again, only important choices should be explained.

The following is an excerpt from the table for Professional Sales (5821):

Code	Statement of the Competency	Explanation of choices and additional information
948512	<i>Become familiar with the laws and regulations governing professional sales</i>	Individual assignment and Participation in an interview This competency focuses on the various laws related to the practice of the occupation. It is not necessary to know the laws by heart, but rather to be able to refer to different sources of information when necessary. The candidate can thus carry out a research project using the Internet or any other reference document

²⁷ This competency can have different formulations such as “analyze the job function,” “analyze the occupation” or “analyze the occupation of, e.g. graphic designer”

This is an excerpt from Prehospital Emergency Care (181.A0):

Code	Competency	Explanation of the instrument
052G	<i>Communicate in helping relationships</i>	<p>Performance of a task in the presence of an assessor in the workplace</p> <p>The nature of these competencies makes them ideal for assessment in the workplace, except for competencies 052G and 052M.</p> <p>For competency 052G, only those elements that call upon the ability to establish initial contact with the patient and establish a relationship of trust regardless of the health problem involved are assessed in the workplace. As the second part of the task involves a specified patient condition (needs psychological help) that requires specific communications skills, it is carried out using simulation exercises.</p> <p>For competency 052M, only those elements concerning communication and collaboration in a work team and in interdisciplinary situations (especially with the teammate and staff in a hospital) are assessed in the workplace.</p>
052M	<i>Communicate in the workplace</i>	
052N	<i>Use an ambulance in intervention situations</i>	

5.2.5 Organization of the assessment

This section of the companion guide is divided into **three** parts.

The **first part** presents an analysis of the program of study and any integrative and inclusive competencies. The production team must complete the tables on the inclusive and included competencies and on the integrative and integrated competencies, if applicable. These tables will help RAC counsellors and assessors make decisions concerning the choice and sequence of assessment situations and the transmission of results.

Remember that “integrative competency” harmoniously incorporates a certain number of elements from other competencies (called “integrated competencies”) by transforming them and requiring new learning.

Also keep in mind that an “inclusive competency” may contain one or more other competencies (called “included competencies”) without requiring any new learning.

Consequently, if an inclusive competency is recognized, then so are the included competencies. But recognizing an integrative competency does not automatically result in the integrated competencies being recognized.

The following is an excerpt from the table of integrative competencies for Prehospital Emergency Care (181.A0):

Integrative competency		Integrated competency	
052L	<i>Intervene with patients requiring medical care</i>	052E	<i>Use patient assessment methods</i> All the elements of competency 052E are assessed in competency 052L with regard to the medical aspects.
052P	<i>Intervene with patients in trauma situations</i>	052E	<i>Use patient assessment methods</i> All the elements of competency 052E are assessed in competency 052P with regard to the traumatic aspects.

The **second part** of this section presents a table specifying any special conditions that affect how the assessment of some of the competencies will be organized.

The following contains examples from Pharmacy Technical Assistance (5802), *Montage structural et architectural* (5299)²⁸ and Prehospital Emergency Care (281.A0):

Code	Competency	Organizational aspects
253552 5802	<i>Apply principles and techniques of hygiene and asepsis</i>	For the task involving the application of techniques of asepsis, choose recognized procedures and an appropriate sequence for putting on protective clothing, antiseptic washing of hands, putting on sterile gloves, maintaining the materials, equipment and work area, and handling sterile materials, equipment and products.
302674 5299	<i>Set up and use scaffolding</i>	An additional person must be on hand to help the candidate handle the scaffolding components. The scaffolding must be erected to a minimum height of 6.5 metres (20 feet). The two types of fixed scaffolding, metal frame and tube, can be used for the task.
302686 5299	<i>Rig and handle components</i>	It is important that the load used for the task be of an irregular shape so that the centre of gravity will not be located directly at the centre of this load. It is up to the assessor to choose an electric or a pneumatic winch for the portion of the task that involves installing a winch.
052N 281.A0	<i>Use an ambulance in intervention situations</i>	To carry out RAC assessment activities that involve a task performed at an educational institution (O3), you will need an ambulance. Negotiate an agreement to that effect with the appropriate organization.

The **third part** concerns the sequence and grouping of assessment activities. Because assessment activities can be adjusted according to the candidate's competency profile, the candidate's potential for success can be maximized. Thus, as much as possible, the order in which the competencies are

²⁸ As there is no English version of this program, its title and code remain unchanged.

assessed should take into account the amount of work required from the candidate and the complementarity of competencies. Grouping together assessment activities makes it possible to reduce the amount of time needed for the assessment as well as the costs involved.

Depending on the candidate's profile and the characteristics of the program of study, the sequence and grouping of the assessment activities are based on factors such as the following:

- Carrying out simultaneous assessment activities when a candidate performs occupational tasks or the fact that the expected outcome for one competency is useful in assessing another competency:
Thus, in *Masonry: Bricklaying* (5803), the competency *Prepare and spread mortars* (778712) can be assessed at the same time as *Lay blocks and bricks to the line* (778738).
- The specific work environments:
For example, assessments for the *Production horticole* (5210)²⁹ program are carried out according to the seasons. Thus, in spring, the competencies *Propagate plants from seed* (203522) and *Propagate from parent plants* (203534) are assessed; in summer, *Establish a plant cultivation in the field* (203584), *Maintain herbaceous plants in the field* (203604) and *Maintain woody plants in the field* (203613) are assessed; and in the fall, *Make compost with organic waste* (203622) and *Harvest and preserve horticultural products* (203634) are assessed.
- Similarity of areas of expertise:
For example, in Early Childhood Education (322.A0), the competencies *Intervene with respect to a child's health* (0195) and *Promote good nutrition* (0196) can be assessed together as they involve a child's basic needs.
- Practical aspects of the assessment for the candidate:
In Hairdressing (5745), the same recording of a task on video can be used to assess the competencies *Give a standard haircut to a female client* (918108) and *Give a standard permanent* (918127).
- Identical assessment options for recognition:
In Business Management (410.D0), the standard assessment option for recognition *Participation in an interview* appears repeatedly. Therefore, depending on the requirements of the different assessment forms, a number of aspects could be verified at the same time by asking the candidate appropriate questions.

The production team will complete this third part in the form of a table or a text, explaining its choices as needed.

²⁹ As there is no English version of this program, its title and code remain unchanged.

The following is an excerpt from the table of suggestions concerning the sequence and grouping of assessment activities for Professional Sales (5821):

Code	Competency	Explanation of choices and additional information
948436	<i>Establish professional relationships in the workplace</i>	<p>This competency must be evaluated in two parts:</p> <p>Part I: Two tasks to be performed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Task I: The candidate must adapt his or her behaviour to the type of customer during a sales-related simulation. – Task II: The candidate must use a word processing software program to write and format a letter whose topic is related to sales. <p>Part II: Interview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The interview must cover communication within a team and conflict resolution.
948443	<i>Interpret consumer behaviour</i>	<p>This competency must be evaluated in two parts:</p> <p>Part I: Interview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The interview will concern the different factors that influence a customer's reasons for purchase. <p>Part II: Task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – We suggest that this part be evaluated at the same time as Competency 5, <i>Sell products and services</i>. In this way, the candidate must adapt his or her behaviour to the type of customer during the sale of a product or service.

Here is an example with suggestions regarding the sequence and grouping of assessment activities for Prehospital Emergency Care (181.A0):

Grouping of assessment activities:

- 052A – Analyze the job function
- 052B – Develop an integrated view of the human body and its functions
- 052D – Move patients

Competencies 052A and 052D are centred on the practical while competency 052B, which is more cognitive, will no doubt require different preparation. In addition, acquiring competency 052B will make it easier for the candidate to apply the subsequent competencies.

Note: To replicate a workplace situation as faithfully as possible and to facilitate the organization of the assessment activity, element 052D-2 *Carry out the procedures associated with the methods and techniques for moving patients in accordance with the situation and the patient's condition* should be assessed in conjunction with the intervention competencies forming part of the fifth grouping.

5.2.6 Appendices to the companion guide

The companion guide includes appendices that cover the following, among others:

- the preparation and recording of data for the validation interview
- the validation interview report
- the necessary decision forms
- additional information on the explanations for the standard assessment options for recognition *Individual assignment* and *Performance of a task recorded on video*

Some templates exist for the appendices.

The purpose of the appendix on the **preparation and recording of data for the validation interview** is to provide assessors with forms on which they can record the questions to be asked, the answers obtained and comments on each of the competencies. These forms also provide space for recommendations on assessment options for recognition, training needs and the suggested learning and means of learning.

The appendix on the **validation interview report** groups together the recommendations for each of the competencies and is intended primarily for RAC counsellors.

The appendix on the **decision forms** contains the decision forms for the competencies with specific options for recognition or for included competencies.

The appendix on the **additional information on the explanations** for the standard assessment options for recognition *Individual assignment* and *Performance of a task recorded on video* contains instructions for carrying out the assessment and the content and the nature of the expected productions. It is based on the assessment form.

CONCLUSION

This guide is intended to help members of the production teams responsible for designing RAC instruments to meet the challenges that they will face.

These challenges include developing expertise in measuring and assessing competencies acquired outside a formal school setting as well as becoming comfortable with a dynamic approach that involves going back and forth between each stage of the development process. Ultimately, however, no recipe or procedure employed without discernment can guarantee the coherence and credibility of the expected productions.

The greatest challenge probably lies in achieving a good understanding of the recognition of acquired competencies. This challenge stems from the fact that the recognition of acquired competencies straddles two worlds: the world of work and businesses and that of education and educational institutions. This situation may create confusion because even if RAC has a place in both worlds, it does not belong exclusively to either; it retains its distinctiveness and its own characteristics.

As RAC is a relatively new field, much remains to be done on the theoretical and practical levels to enrich and consolidate knowledge and experience in this area. By publishing this guide, the Ministère provides production teams with concepts and a methodology that enable them to deepen their knowledge of the subject and develop quality assessment instruments.

This guide is an important step in the development of RAC at the Ministère. At the core of the *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training*,³⁰ it is a follow-up to the *Action Plan for Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training*³¹ and draws directly on the *Recognition of Prior Learning and Competencies in Vocational and Technical Training, General and Technical Frameworks*. Several of the concepts presented here, such as the “essential elements of a competency” or “integration” and “inclusion,” should be explored in more depth and developed in the light of future projects and expertise.

Far from being the conclusion of the work and research on RAC instruments, the tools suggested here are designed to allow production teams to meet ministerial requirements and achieve the principal aim of the **harmonized approach**:

To make available to vocational and technical training networks instruments allowing them to provide quality service that is at the same time accessible and open, harmonized and integrated, while remaining focused on individuals and their needs.

³⁰ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training* (Québec: Ministère de l'Éducation, 2002). Chapter 4 is on acknowledging adults' prior learning and competencies through official recognition.

³¹ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Action Plan for Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training* (Québec: Ministère de l'Éducation, 2002). Pages 25 to 32 are on the eight measures for the recognition of prior learning and competencies.

APPENDIX I

Evolution of vocational training concepts

As stated in the *Reference Framework for Planning Learning and Evaluation Activities: Vocational Training*,³² the components and the format of programs of study were revised in order to make the competency and its components more apparent and to add an achievement context and competency-related knowledge, skills, attitudes, perceptions and guidelines.

This guide uses the terms that resulted from this revision.

Production teams can use this table to make the necessary correspondences if they are working with programs of study approved prior to June 2003.

Terms used in programs of study prior to June 2003	Terms used in programs of study after 2003
<i>Behavioural Competency</i>	
Expected behaviour	Statement of the competency
Specifications of the expected behaviour	Elements of the competency
Specific performance criteria	Performance criteria
General performance criteria	For the competency as a whole
Conditions for performance evaluation	Achievement context
Field of Application (if applicable)	Achievement context
Second-level operational objectives	Competency-related knowledge and know-how
<i>Situational Competency</i>	
Expected outcome	Statement of the competency
Specifications	Elements of the competency
Learning context	Learning context
Instructional guidelines	Instructional guidelines
Participation criteria (review of phases)	Participation criteria (review of phases)
Second-level objectives	Competency-related knowledge and know-how

³² Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport. *Reference Framework for Planning Learning and Evaluation Activities: Vocational Training* (Québec: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2005), 76.

APPENDIX II

Standard version of the competency *Determine their suitability for the trade³³ and training process*

In vocational training, *Determine their suitability for the trade and training process* is always the first competency in all ministerial programs of study. Its formulation is generally quite similar from one program to another, with certain adaptations being made if necessary. For example, some programs refer to “occupation” instead of “trade.” The following is a typical version.

The Trade and Training Process

Code...

Competency 1 **Duration** 15 hours **Credits** 1

Situational Competency

Statement of the Competency

Determine their suitability for the trade and the training process.

Elements of the Competency

- Be familiar with the nature of the trade.
- Understand the training process.
- Confirm their career choice.

Learning Context

Information Phase

- Learning about the job market in (name of trade, e.g. building maintenance).
- Learning about the nature and requirements of the trade (e.g. tasks, working conditions).
- Presenting the information gathered to the class and discussing their perception of the trade: advantages, disadvantages, requirements.

Participation Phase

- Discussing the skills, aptitudes and knowledge needed to practise the trade.
- Discussing how the training program prepares them for the work environment.
- Talking about the training process.

Synthesis Phase

- Writing a report in which they must:
 - state their preferences, as well as their aptitudes for and
 - assess their career choice by comparing the aspects and requirements of the trade with their own preferences, aptitudes and interests

³³ In some programs, the word “trade” is used while in other programs, the word “occupation” is used.

Over the years, some programs have been updated and this competency has changed, especially where the duration of the competency has increased to 15 hours.

Thus, in the Preparing and Finishing Concrete (5843) program, the following activities have been added to the Information Phase in the Learning Context: *Learning about the attitudes and behaviours required with respect to communication in the workplace, teamwork, employers, competitors and other construction trades* and *Becoming familiar with the general regulations and standards governing the trade*. These additions have broadened the scope of the competency.

If a competency has changed, the production team must identify the modifications made to the standard version of the competency and determine their impact. Then, the team must prepare a self-assessment form for the additions only. The same process applies when the team prepares the assessment form.

APPENDIX III

Standard version of the competency *Analyze the occupation*³⁴

In technical training, *Analyze the job function* or *Analyze the occupation* is always the first competency in the ministerial programs. Originally, there were two versions of the objectives and standards, one which included a performance criterion related to entrepreneurship. The following table presents an example that incorporates that performance criterion (the addition is underlined).

OBJECTIVE	STANDARD
Statement of the Competency Analyze the occupation of graphic designer.	Achievement context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given recent information about the occupation, as well as companies and organizations in the sector Given the current laws, regulations and codes
Elements of the Competency 1. Describe the occupation and the conditions for its practice. 2. Examine the tasks and operations associated with the occupation. 3. Examine the skills and behaviours needed to practise the occupation.	Performance Criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant information gathered Thorough examination of the characteristics of the occupation and the conditions for its practice Recognition of the contribution of related occupations <u>Recognition of entrepreneurial potential</u> Thorough examination of the operations, conditions and requirements associated with each task Accurate determination of the relative importance of the tasks Relevant connections made between the skills and behaviours required and the different tasks

Over time and as other programs have been developed, other versions of this competency have appeared. Thus, some programs with specialization streams have competency statements that include several “job functions,” as is the case for Computer Science Technology (420.A0).

In other programs, another element of the competency has been added, for example: *Understand the work environment in the building industry* in Architectural Technology (221.A0), *Begin to reflect on delinquency as a phenomenon* in Youth and Adult Correctional Intervention (310.B0), and *Draw relationships between occupational health and safety rules and industrial maintenance tasks* in Industrial Maintenance Technology (241.D0).

³⁴ Some programs use the phrasing “analyze the occupation” while others use “analyze the job function(s)” or “analyze the work function(s).”

A number of modifications have also been made to performance criteria and achievement contexts. These changes sometimes nuance the program and almost always result in additional requirements for success. A list of these modifications would not be necessarily helpful for designing and developing RAC instruments.

Whether the statement of the competency has been modified, the elements of the competency and performance criteria have been added to, or the achievement context has been changed, it is important that the production team identify the nature and scope of the modification and produce the statements on the self-assessment form using the template for the self-assessment form recommended for this competency. The same process should be repeated when the assessment form is prepared.

APPENDIX IV

Self-assessment form

The following is an example of a self-assessment form.

ANALYZE THE JOB FUNCTION/OCCUPATION³⁵

CODE

SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM

**Information on
the
competency**

Be familiar with the role and responsibilities of a technician and the general characteristics of the occupation

Description of the competency	I can do this			I need more information
	Yes	Partially	No	
1 Describe the general characteristics of the occupation of a (name of the occupation) technician (e.g. role, responsibilities, tasks, working conditions).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Identify the skills and behaviours required to perform this work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

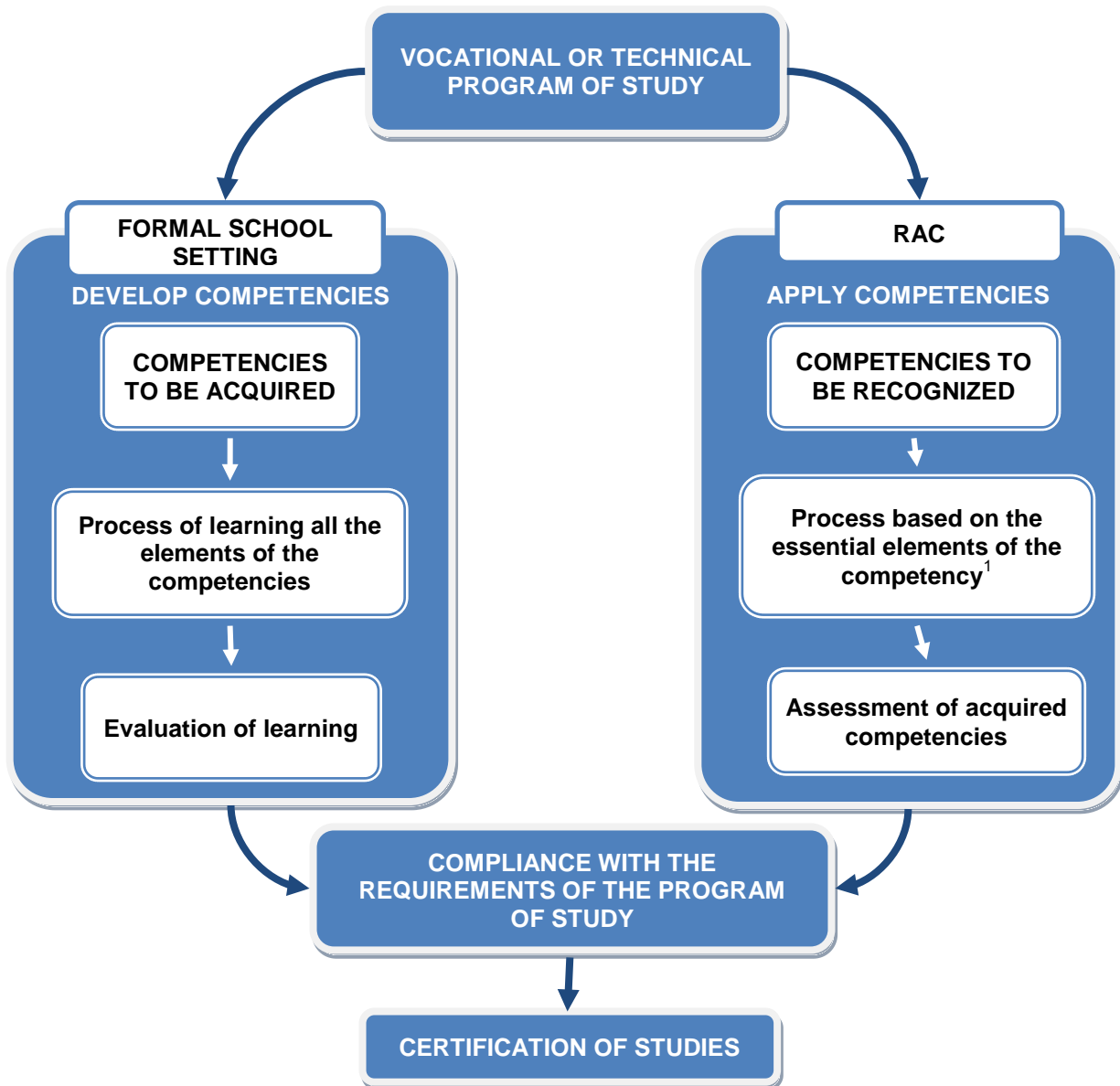
³⁵ Some programs use the phrasing “analyze the occupation” while others use “analyze the job function(s)” or “analyze the work function(s).”

ASSESSMENT OPTIONS FOR RECOGNITION

		Choice
O1	PROOF OF SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF A COURSE OR PROGRAM	<input type="checkbox"/>
O2	PARTICIPATION IN AN INTERVIEW	<input type="checkbox"/>
To obtain recognition for the competency <i>Analyze a job function</i> , you must participate in an interview about:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• practising the occupation• the skills and behaviours required to perform the tasks		

APPENDIX V

Diagram illustrating the difference in the approaches used in a formal school setting and in RAC



¹ The “essential elements of a competency” guide and support the entire process for developing RAC instruments so that only those program elements that appear crucial to applying the competency are selected as a frame of reference.

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- Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur,
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