

# WRITING EFFECTIVE LEARNING OUTCOMES



LEARNING  
DESIGN AND  
TEACHING  
INNOVATION



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# WHAT IS A **LEARNING OUTCOME**?

A **MEASURABLE, OBSERVABLE** AND **SPECIFIC** STATEMENT THAT CLEARLY INDICATES WHAT A STUDENT SHOULD KNOW AND BE **ABLE TO DO** AS A **RESULT** OF LEARNING.

Well-written learning outcomes contain the following parts:



# WRITING LEARNING OUTCOMES

## 1. State clearly using future tense

By the end of this course, students will be able to...

## 2. Describe skills, abilities or knowledge required using appropriate verbs from chosen taxonomy

- **formulate** questions about...
- **demonstrate** the ability to...
- **communicate** ideas, procedures, results, and conclusions using...
- **describe, evaluate** and **communicate** the impact of research in...

## 3. Learning outcomes should be assessable for skills/abilities/knowledge to required standard, relevant to the course or program, attainable for the level of student and in the time given.

# LEARNING OUTCOME EXAMPLES

## Not clear

- Be exposed to a comprehensive analysis of the social costs of employment inequity in Australian Society
- Creatively engage the project brief
- Participate in electronic communication
- Appreciate mathematical fundamentals of computer graphics techniques
- Engage with the notion of teaching as a profession
- Have particular regard for the requirement for security measures in a workplace
- Understand all of the different aspects of the social impacts of new technologies

## Why not?

Unable to measure students' achievement

## Effective

- Identify and explain the social costs of employment inequity in Australian Society
- Illustrate a marketing concept through the application of a specified project brief
- Effectively communicate key concepts through electronic media
- Apply appropriate mathematical fundamentals to create effective computer graphic objects
- Demonstrate various applications of professional ethics in teaching
- Design and defend an implementation plan for security measures in a workplace
- Explain the social impacts of new technologies
- Create culturally responsive designs that reflect the unique identity of Indigenous communities.

**Why?** Tasks are clear and measurable

# EVALUATE LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Are they clearly expressed?
- Do they state what the students should learn?
- Does each one use an active verb suitable for the level of the course/program?
- Are the learning outcomes clearly relevant to the course?
- Do the learning outcomes provide a pathway for learning activities, teaching and assessment?
- Do the learning outcomes align with the faculty and university strategic priorities and graduate identity?
- Does each learning outcome have a task/s to assess whether it has been achieved (constructive alignment)?

# USEFUL VERBS FOR WRITING LEARNING OUTCOMES

Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyse	Evaluate	Create
arrange	associate	apply	advertise	appraise	adapt
cite	classify	calculate	analyse	argue	anticipate
collect	compare	chart	break down	assess	arrange
define	contrast	choose	categorize	choose	assemble
describe	convert	classify	classify	conclude	collect
duplicate	describe	complete	collect	convince	combine
enumerate	estimate	compute	compare	criticize	compile
find	explain	construct	connect	critique	construct
identify	extend	contribute	contrast	debate	decide
locate	generalize	develop	correlate	decide	design
memorize	give examples	discover	criticize	defend	develop
record	identify	dramatize	diagram	determine	facilitate
recognize	interpret	employ	differentiate	discriminate	formulate
match	justify	experiment	distinguish	evaluate	generate
relate	locate	extend	divide	grade	generalize
select	outline	illustrate	establish	integrate	imagine
name	paraphrase	implement	examine	interpret	incorporate
label	predict	instruct	explain	judge	individualize
list	recognize	interpret	identify	justify	integrate
order	report	modify	illustrate	predict	invent
quote	restate	operate	infer	prioritize	modify
recall	review	participate	investigate	rate	negotiate
repeat	select	practice	order	recommend	organize
reproduce	summarize	predict	outline	reframe	plan
select	trace	show	prioritize	score	propose
show	translate	solve	question	select	rearrange
state		teach	select	support	reconstruct
		test	separate	value	reorganize
		use	verify		

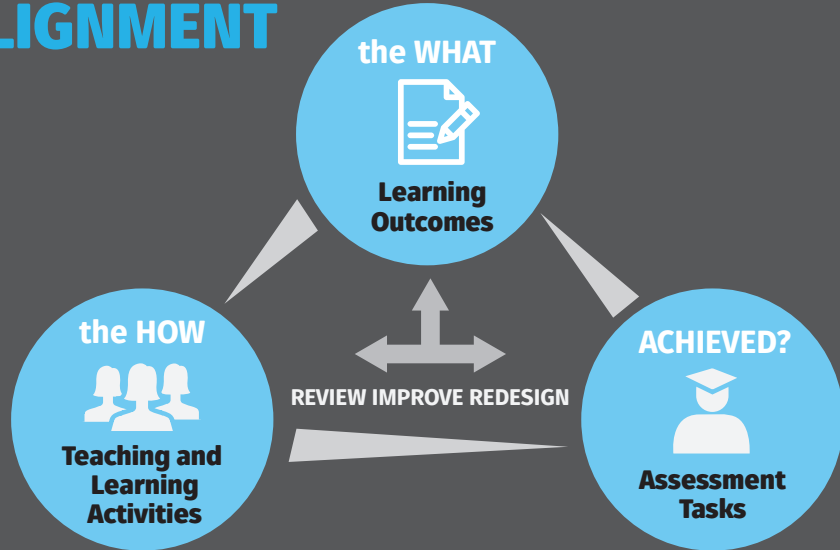
(based on Greenleaf 2008)

## BLOOM'S REVISED TAXONOMY

Pre-structural	Uni-structural	Multi-structural	Relational	Extended abstract
fail	identify	combine	apply	create
incompetent	name	describe	analyse	formulate
misses point	follow simple procedure	enumerate	argue	generate
		perform serial skills	compare/contrast	hypothesise
		list	criticise	reflect
			explain	theorise
			causes	
			relate	
			justify	

## SOLO (verbs indicate levels of understanding)

# CONSTRUCTIVE ALIGNMENT



Reference: Biggs, John; Tang, Catherine. EBOOK: *Teaching for Quality Learning at University (UK Higher Education OUP Humanities & Social Sciences Higher Education OUP)*. McGraw-Hill Education. Kindle Edition.