**THE ASSESSMENT NEEDS ANALYSIS – Guidelines for completion**

1. The ANA is used as a mechanism for the trainee’s evaluator to evaluate the trainee’s current levels of demonstrated competence in both their technical and professional skills. This requires 3 main considerations on the part of the evaluator:
   1. A determination of the trainee’s current level of demonstrated competence – based on what has been submitted to date (their “overall rating of competence”).
   2. A consideration of whether or not this overall rating is adequate / acceptable at the current stage of their training contract, given the trainee’s work exposure and demonstrated ability to date. Should a trainee not be demonstrating levels of competence that are adequate (i.e., expected of them at this point in time), evaluators should then flag these tasks as requiring development and should, with the input of the trainee, compile development plans to address these shortfalls.
   3. A consideration of, and discussion regarding, the cumulative evidence submitted to date by the trainee in support of their demonstrated professional conduct (the PC competencies).
2. The person best qualified to be the trainee’s evaluator is someone sufficiently senior to be able to determine, and establish, any necessary plans of action for the trainee arising from the evaluation. They should also have adequate knowledge of the assessment process to be able to make the judgement call as to whether or not the trainee is on track with their progress towards achieving the required final levels of competence / capability.
3. The initial completion of the document remains the responsibility of the trainee. They need to transfer reviewer ratings from technical skills reviews and professional skills reviews from the preceding 6 month period into this document. They also need to bring forward - from the last ANA completed - their previously assessed levels of competence and capability and their prior examples in support of their professional conduct. The trainee is also required to perform a self-evaluation (in section 2 of the ANA) of other developmental areas relevant to their training contract (such as their academic progress, for example).
4. Evaluators need to consider the evidence presented to date for **all** skills, competencies and tasks (including both carry-forward evaluations of competence as well as reviews of competence presented during the current 6 month period) and determine a trainee’s current level of demonstrated competence / capability. Where this evaluation of a trainee’s current level of competence indicates that their skill level is below where it should be for a trainee at that stage in their contract having had the exposure to tasks that they have been provided with to date, a development need should be identified and documented. A plan to address this need should then be agreed on by the evaluator and the trainee in terms of what the trainee needs to do to improve their skill level in the identified area.
5. In competencies where no evidence has yet been presented by the trainee, the evaluator should consider, and document, whether this may present a development need or not. The evaluator may have expected the trainee to have demonstrated a certain level of competence in a certain task by this point in time and the fact that they have not done so may indicate a developmental need.
6. The evaluator’s overall rating of competence reflects their opinion of that trainee’s level of competence at that point in time in respect of the trainee’s continued ability to demonstrate that task. The determination of this overall rating of competence is a matter of professional judgement that is exercised by the evaluator. Please note the following when it comes to the exercising of this judgement:
7. There is no prescription regarding any set number of times the trainee must demonstrate competence at a certain rating level before they made be declared to have reached that overall rating.

The number of times that an evaluator will need to have the trainee demonstrate their competence at a certain rating level will depend entirely on the evaluator and the degree to which they are satisfied that the evidence presented to date suggests that this trainee will be able to continue to demonstrate that level of competence. In some cases, only 1 instance of demonstrated competence at a certain level will be sufficient evidence for an evaluator while in other cases, the evaluator may require the trainee to demonstrate their ability several or even many times before they are satisfied that the trainee will be able to continue to demonstrate that ability going forward.

1. There is no need for a trainee to demonstrate level 4 competency in a basic context *prior* to them being able to demonstrate competency in an advanced context.
2. Determination of the overall rating of competence is not an exercise in simple mathematical averaging. Just because a trainee receives Reviewer ratings of 4 in a TSR does NOT imply that the evaluator will determine that the overall rating of competence will now also be a level 4. It is possible for an overall rating to be lower than individual TSR or PSR rating scores that have been transferred into the ANA. Remember that the overall rating reflects the Evaluator’s professional opinion as to the level of competence that the trainee will be able to demonstrate ***consistently*** going forward.
3. Although it is only likely to be under exceptional circumstances, it is possible for an evaluator to reduce their overall rating of competence in a current ANA should there be documented evidence (in a TSR or PSR) that the trainee’s perceived overall rating of competence at the previous ANA is no longer justified. It is equally possible for an assessor to change their mind regarding the degree to which the trainee meets the final exit level requirements. In other words, although likely to be only under exceptional circumstances, a trainee who has been signed off by an assessor as being competent (based on evidence presented up to that point in time) may subsequently be found to be no longer competent. Should this occur, the assessor is entitled to change their sign-off to reflect “not yet competent” and they should obviously document in full the evidence to support this change in their summative assessment.
4. A trainee’s overall rating of competence is not influenced by their academic progress. In other words, a trainee’s competence cannot be “written down” just because they haven’t passed certain examinations. At the end of the day when considering the trainee’s practical work experience, we are assessing their ability to perform a set task or to demonstrate a specified skill and not whether they have passed their exams or not. Having said this, lack of academic progress is likely to inhibit a trainee’s ability to demonstrate practical competence. The results of their failure to pass their exams will most likely be reflected in lower reviewer ratings of that trainee’s competence in their jobs. There is therefore no need to make any sort of adjustment to their overall ratings to reflect poor academic progress.
5. The period of the training contract in which the trainee accountant is has no bearing on their ability to demonstrate competence. Although it is likely to be the exception rather than the norm, it is quite possible for a trainee to demonstrate level 4 competence in the first year of their training contract. It is equally possible for a trainee in the final year of their contract to demonstrate level 1 ability.
6. As a general guideline, the ANA document must be completed within 4 weeks of the end of each 6 month period.