

Guide to Crafting Learning Outcomes

Understanding This Guide This resource provides a straightforward method for creating specific and measurable learning outcomes. It is designed for instructors who are new to this task as well as a refresher for those who have experience.

Utilization Instructions Developing specific and measurable learning outcomes is a crucial initial phase in the development of cohesive and structured courses. When devising new learning outcomes or revising existing ones, this guide should be used to confirm the creation of effective outcomes. For support, please contact our educational design team.

A meticulously crafted learning outcome offers a definitive expectation of the student's achievement or performance by the conclusion of the course. Each learning outcome should be:

- Included in the course instruction
- Evaluated within the course
- Precise and quantifiable

Goals that do not meet the above criteria, while valuable, are different from learning outcomes. "Valuing ethical considerations" and "Developing a commitment to continuous learning" are examples of such goals and may be incorporated into the course outline to convey the broader educational ambitions of the instructor.

Structure The structure for a learning outcome is: action verb + object (+ condition + timeframe) Inclusion of condition and/or timeframe is optional. Here are some examples of well-structured learning outcomes:

- Assess a specified data set using Excel
- Identify the skeletal structures in an X-ray
- Explain post-treatment protocols to a patient during a consultation

Additional Illustrations

- When provided with four pieces of short fiction from different genres, students will match each to its respective genre.
- Utilizing information from a statistical source, students will create a histogram that represents demographic trends in a specified region for a selected year.
- Presented with a scenario, students will pinpoint legal and ethical dilemmas and propose appropriate responses.

Verb categorizations based on Bloom's Taxonomy can aid in formulating learning outcomes.

Questions for Crafting Learning Outcomes:

- Does the outcome emphasize student performance?
- Is the skill or knowledge taught and assessed in your course?
- What benchmarks will be used to determine achievement of the outcome?

Typical Missteps Common errors in writing learning outcomes can be avoided by being mindful of the following oversights:

- Citing desired cognitive states with verbs like know, understand, learn, which are non-measurable.
- Disguising cognitive states as learning outcomes with verbs such as demonstrate. E.g., "Demonstrate comprehension of interview techniques."
- Listing sub-tasks that are components of another learning outcome, thus creating redundancy. For instance, multiple outcomes related to research can be consolidated into a single comprehensive outcome.
- Enumerating class activities instead of the competencies gained. For example, rather than stating outcomes like attending workshops or completing surveys, focus on the skills these activities are intended to develop.