

Protocols for
Accreditation of
Assessment
Agencies and
Assessment
Framework

2020

Version 4.0

Sports, Physical Education, Fitness and Leisure Skill Council of India

Protocol for Accreditation of Assessment Agency and Assessment Framework

Introduction

- 1. Assessment is one of the most important activities of the skills value chain. The National Skills Policy 2009 mandates NSDC to set up Sector Skills Councils with Affiliation, accreditation, examination and certification as one of the key functions amongst other responsibilities. This policy further specifies “Quality Assured Assessment of Learners for ensuring that assessment is based on national standards (competencies) and uses valid and reliable assessment methods”; The Union Government of India has mandated Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) besides other charter, “Participation in Affiliation, Accreditation, Examination and Certification.”**
- 2. Sports Sector has ten subsectors comprising of 1) Sports Science and Technology, 2) Sports Medicine, 3) Sports Broadcasting, 4) Sports Grassroots, 5) Sports Facilities, 6) Sports Management, 7) Sports Development, 8) Sports Event Management, 9) Sports Coaching, 10) Leisure and Adventure Sports. It goes without saying the quality is the highest concern for this sector.**
- 3. Assessment of trainees or recognition of prior learning of existing workforce leading to certification is therefore one of the key responsibilities of Sports, Physical Education, Fitness & Leisure (SPEFL-SC) - the Sector Skill Council for Sports industries. A strong and stringent assessment framework will help establish credibility of the organization. Hence, it is important to design the protocol and a framework within which all Assessments will be done. Any deviation to this will have to be cleared by Sports, Physical Education, Fitness & Leisure (SPEFL-SC).**
- 4. The Assessments will be based on the relevant and approved Qualification Pack for each job role. New job roles will be continuously added to the list and older versions will be periodically revised to match with changes required by the industry.**
- 5. This Protocol being the first on Assessments by Sports, Physical Education, Fitness & Leisure (SPEFL-SC) will be Version 4.0.**

Terms of Reference

- 6. This protocol for Accreditation of Assessment Bodies is based on the following Terms of References:**
 - i. Training Provider will NOT be an Assessment Agency to safeguard against “conflict of interest.” Any deviations to this will be at the discretion of Sports, Physical Education, Fitness & Leisure (SPEFL-SC) based on merit of each case.**
 - ii. No Assessment Agency will be allowed to establish monopoly in geographical stretch or disciplines. Exceptions to the rule will be cleared by Sports, Physical Education, Fitness & Leisure (SPEFL-SC).**
 - iii. Assessment processes / procedures should be transparent, demonstrative and in line with international best**

practices to ensure credibility of the certificate. Lead Assessment Bodies may be considered to manage and administer the assessment process on merit.

- iv. Seamless documentation and evidence collection.
- v. Assessments through trained and certified assessors / assessors aligned to assess competencies as per the National Occupational Standard (NOS).

Accreditation Paradigm for Assessment Bodies

- 7. The Sports, Physical Education, Fitness & Leisure both in its numbers and domains dictates accreditation of a number of Assessment Bodies, with empaneled industry experienced assessors through Sport, Physical Education, Fitness & Leisure – Skill Council of India.
- 8. Assessment Agency could be for all disciplines of Sport, Physical Education, Fitness & Leisure (SPEFL-SC) on pan- India basis; or restricted in scope of geography and/or disciplines. Establishing monopoly will be guarded against.
- 9. Assessment will be based on the concept of Independent Assessors empaneled with Assessment Agencies, identified, selected, trained and certified on Assessment techniques. These assessors should be aligned to assess as per the laid down criteria.
- 10. Accreditation of Assessment Bodies will be periodically reviewed. SPEFL-SC reserves the right to cancel the accreditation based on the reports of periodic review and audit / reports of irregularity from the stakeholders.
- 11. Appointing a Lead Assessment Agency may be considered for quality assurance and uniformity of operations across multiple assessment agencies.
- 12. Online systems for monitoring and reporting will be encouraged.

Accreditation of Assessment Agency

- 13. The Assessment Agency providing Assessment to a standard i.e. NOS, should have the required competence and impartiality. This is also applicable for other functions/disciplines, as well.
- 14. Expanse of the Accreditation of Assessment Agency is fairly large and elaborate. It will include infrastructure and its organization, capability and capacity to develop Assessment tools for various courses as per Occupational Standards; identification, selection and maintaining quality of Assessors; and Quality Management System (QMS) and its operation.

Terms of Engagement for Assessing Agencies

15. Assessment Agencies will be considered for assessment assignments by SPEFL-SC based on their ability and availability to carry out assessments in the areas where the training has been conducted. SPEFL-SC reserves the right to allocate the batches for assessment to the assessment agencies. Assessment Agencies will be engaged by SPEFL-SC at the rates as prevailing at the time of engagement. Assessment Agencies shall conduct assessment in States and programmes assigned by SPEFL-SC and will neither engage any franchises nor outsource the assessment on their behalf.
- i. Assessment Agencies shall form a roll / panel of assessors of high repute and integrity, State wise and forward their names, address, qualifications, experience, contact numbers and photographs to SPEFL-SC. These assessors should either be employed or on long term contract with the assessment agency. These assessors shall be accredited through orientation, assessment and certified by SPEFL-SC. The assessment of the Trainees can be carried out by these authorized assessors only.
 - ii. Assessment Agency should conduct assessment only at the training centres of Training Partner or designated testing centers authorized by SPEFL-SC.
 - iii. Assessment batch size for the practical exams shall not be more 15 to 20 for each individual assessor (or in accordance with the requirements of any particular scheme) and can be reviewed on case to case basis.
 - iv. Assessment Agency appointed by SPEFL-SC shall not enter into any agreement with any other organization for similar assessments related to Sports domain without informing SPEFL-SC in writing.
 - v. Assessment Agency shall maintain full and complete record pertaining to candidates registered, tested, passed, centres, assessors, assessment fee etc., and shall preserve all the records for at least five years / as per applicability of any particular scheme at any point in time and make it available to SPEFL-SC at any time required. The process records will also be maintained.
 - vi. Assessment agency shall maintain full and complete record while doing due diligence of Training Provider /Physical verification of Training Centres/Training of Trainers according to the guidelines / protocols of SPEFL-SC and make it available to SPEFL-SC as per agreed timelines.
 - vii. Assessing Agency will have to ensure that any information collected during the course of assessments will not be shared with a third party other than the concerned training provider and SPEFL-SC.
 - viii. Assessment Agency / Assessors will not disclose the results to the Training Provider and submit the results to SPEFL-SC as per agreed timelines.
 - ix. Assessment Agency will be responsible for the conduct of its empaneled assessors.
 - x. Assessment Agency will be responsible for the conduct of its staff/empaneled experts who will be doing due diligence of Training Provider /Physical verification of Training Centers/Training of Trainers.

Criteria for Selection of Assessing Bodies

16. The basic criteria for selection will be that a Training Provider will NOT be an Assessment Agency to safeguard against "conflict of interest." Any deviations to this will be at the discretion of SPEFL-SC based on merit of each case.
17. Other accreditation criteria's will be as follows:
- i. Infrastructure and Management, including compliance and financial health including proof of empanelment by a DD partner.
 - ii. Preferably the agency should have an experience of assessment of training institutions to assess and evaluate

- the minimum infrastructure and resources required to assess the relevant batch.
- iii. Capacity and expertise to carry out assessments including technology integration. Number and Quality and industry experience of Assessors relevant to Sports Sector & details of assessments carried out in the QP job roles. Each agency will share the list of empaneled assessors with qualification and numbers of years of work experience. Ideally each assessor should have minimum 6 years industry experience with relevant diploma, degree.
 - iv. The agency applying for Pan India operations must empaneled Sports Sector relevant assessors in all states. The assessor should be able to reach the assessment venue within one days travel time.
 - v. Ability to develop the Assessment process and Assessment Tools for different training courses and ability to continuously improve the assessment process and tools as per feedback.
 - vi. Ability to inspect the facilities of the Training Provider / TC to support the assessments.
 - vii. Quality Management System including an institutionalized system for assessor training / re-orientations and of obtaining feedback on the assessors from the training institutions and students.
 - viii. Governance and Leadership including process of empaneling the assessors.
 - ix. Capacity and experience of Assessment Coordinators, who will mentor, supervise, plan the assessment strategy and guide the team of assessors.

Process of Accreditation of Assessment Agencies

1. Three stage processes for Accreditation of an Assessment Agency will be followed to include:-

Stage 1- Application Stage.

Stage 2- Evaluation Stage by Committee formed by S P E F L - S C . (This stage is optional on the part of SPEFL-SC and the Sector Skill Council may exercise discretion in this regard)

Stage 3- Accreditation Stage.

Stage 1: Application Stage.

- I. Prospective Assessment Agency will submit a detailed Application Form.
- II. The application will be submitted in both hard copy and soft copy.
- III. A non-refundable Cheque/DD/NEFT for application fee of Rs 10,000/- (Rupees Ten thousand only)+ 18% GST drawn in favor of SPEFL-SC payable at Delhi, will be enclosed.
- IV. One on one meeting at SPEFL-SC may be called for deliberation and clarity, if necessary.
- V. SPEFL-SC will examine the application and if, prospective Assessment Agency found suitable will be requested to proceed to second stage.
- VI. SPEFL-SC reserves the right to select the assessment agencies on merit.

Stage 2: Evaluation Stage by Due Diligence Partner.

- I. The Assessment Agency has to give a presentation before the Evaluation committee formed by SPEFL-SC.
- II. The committee will submit its report to SPEFL-SC.
- III. This stage is optional on the part of SPEFL-SC and the Sector Skill Council may exercise discretion in this regard.

Stage 3: Accreditation/Affiliation Stage:

- I. SPEFL-SC will consider the stage 1 and stage 2 documents of the process and will decide whether the Assessment Agency under consideration can be accredited/affiliated.
- ii. Each Assessor on field may have to undergo an alignment / re-orientation workshop before being assigned any assessment and will be allotted a unique number to enable him / her to log into the NSDC SDMS portal.
- iii. The cost of organizing the training of assessors including the travel, boarding and lodging of SPEFL-SC representative will have to be borne by the assessment agency, failing which SPEFL-SC will be entitled to charge up to Rs. 5000 (as approved by NSDC) per assessor for TOA.
- ii. The Accreditation/affiliation will be valid for two years, after which the Assessment Agency will apply for renewal. The renewal fees will be intimated from time to time as per prevailing norms.
- iii. Assessment Agency will ensure certification of all Assessors within one year of accreditation to SPEFL-SC, failing which SPEFL-SC reserves the right to break the accreditation. Assessment Agency will obtain an ISO certificate within one year of its accreditation to SPEFL-SC, if not already done. Failing which, SPEFL-SC reserves the right to break the accreditation/affiliation.

Quality of Assessors

18. For any assessment to be meaningful it is imperative that assessors have necessary expertise for the job. It is this imperative, that the Assessor has the following essentials for quality output:

- i. Academic and Occupational Qualifications.
- ii. Industry work experience.
- iii. Knowledge of assessment process and tools.
- iv. Understanding of the Occupational Standards for the relevant job role.
- v. Understanding of competencies required in the job role for which assessment is being done.
- vi. Ability to capture the assessment observations correctly on the prescribed forms.
- vii. Ability to communicate in writing and orally in the local language in addition to English.
- viii. Good observation skills.
- ix. Ability to use technology like computers, tablets, video communication tools like SportZgrid, skype etc.
- x. Each Assessor must be able to plan each task and allocate necessary resources to support the assessment.

In addition, the assessor must have high level of integrity, reliability and fairness. Each Assessors shall sign a document by which they commit themselves to comply with the rules of confidentiality and conflict of interest, independence from commercial and other interests that would compromise impartiality of the assessments.

Periodic Audit and Quality Checks

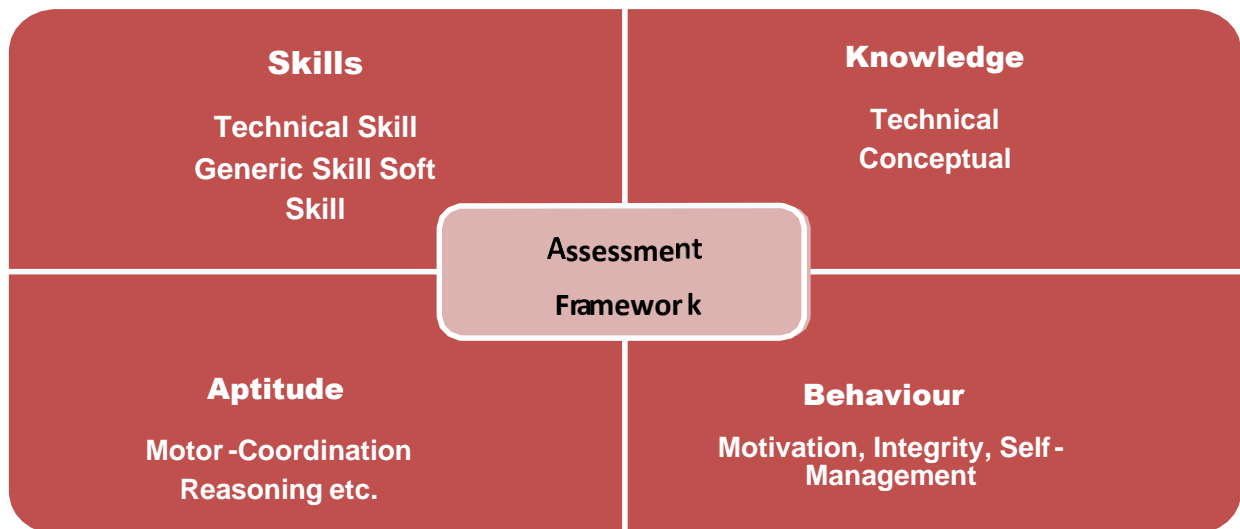
19. Once an Assessment Agency is accredited, it is necessary that it continues to perform at the competency levels at which it was accredited. SPEFL-SC reserves the right to carry out periodic audits and quality checks to confirm that the Assessment Agency is continuing to maintain the said standards. In case short comings are found during the audit the agency will be intimated to rectify these in a given time as decided by SPEFL-SC, failure to which would lead to temporary or permanent de-accreditation of the assessment agency.
20. In addition, SPEFL-SC may also carry out additional checks and audit in case of complaints/ reports about the performance of an Assessment Agency. The costs for these specific audits will be borne by the Assessment Agencies.
21. The Assessment Agency must develop mechanism for continuous up gradation of knowledge and processes and provide evidence in support of this to SPEFL-SC.

Guidelines for Assessments

22. Certification by SPEFL-SC indicates the competency of an individual. Competency can be defined as a cluster of related knowledge, skills and attitude that correlates with the performance on the job that can be measured against well accepted standards. The competence is about “performing” and not just knowing.
23. The performance should meet the National Occupational Standards and be demonstrated in the real work environment. The following important issues will be considered while planning assessment strategy:-
 - I. A variety of Assessment methods should be used to confirm competence.
 - II. The assessment should reflect occupational competence though relevant work activities.
 - III. The Assessment of knowledge should be integrated with assessment of performance, wherever possible.
24. The Assessments will be based on the relevant QP for each job role approved and uploaded on the NSDC and SPEFL-SC website as a matter of policy for compliance. New job roles will be continuously added to the list and older versions will be periodically revised to match with changes required by the industry.
25. Ideally, the assessment will be a continuous process comprising of three distinct steps:
 - A. Mid- term assessment
 - B. Term / Final Assessment

The Framework:

26. Each candidate will be assessed for knowledge, skills, Behaviour and Aptitude. A broad structure will be as follows:



Assessment Methods

27. The assessment agency will innovatively use the following assessment methods to assess the potential candidate. Evidence against each will be captured and secured.

Skills	Knowledge	Aptitude	Behaviour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical Assignments • Product Appraisal - checking designs, finished product etc • Observation of performance & essentials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical knowledge & understanding of the assignment & processes • Conceptual clarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing of Motor coordination • Numerical ability • Reasoning • Time Management for the given task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation • Integrity • Self-Management

Alignment of Assessment Framework with Qualification Packs

28. Each National Occupational Standard (NOS) in the Qualification Pack (QP) will be assigned a relative weightage for assessment based on the criticality of the National Occupational Standard NOS.

29. Each National Occupational Standard (NOS) in the respective QPs will be assigned weightage. Therein each Performance Criteria in the NOS will be assigned marks for theory and / or practical based on relative importance and criticality of function.

30. This will facilitate preparation of question bank / paper sets for each of the QPs. Each of these papers sets / question bank so created by the Assessment Agency will be validated by the industry subject matter experts through SPEFL-SC, especially with regard to the practical test and the defined tolerances, finish, accuracy etc.

Assessment Tools

31. The following tools are proposed to be used for final assessment:

- i. **Written Test:** This will comprise of (i) True / False Statements (ii) Multiple Choice Questions (iii) Matching Type Questions. Online system for this will be preferred.
- ii. **Practical Test:** This will comprise a test job to be prepared as per project briefing following appropriate working steps, using necessary tools, equipment and instruments. Through observation it will be possible to ascertain candidate's aptitude, attention to details, quality consciousness etc. The end product will be measured against the pre-decided MCQ filled by the Assessor to gauge the level of his skill achievements.
- iii. **Structured Interview:** This tool will be used to assess the conceptual understanding and the behavioral aspects as regards the job role and the specific task at hand.

Assessment Recommendations

32. SPEFL-SC will be the final authority to issue certificates to the successful candidates based on the assessment results and recommendations supported with documentation and evidence. The documentation and evidence should be safely filed / stored and accounted for by the Assessment Agency as per policy defined by SPEFL-SC / NSDC from time to time.

Documentation and Evidence Collection

33. All assessment agencies will maintain the following documents to capture evidence of assessments. The structure of each of the above will be discussed and finalized:

- I. Facilities with Training Provider (TP) / Training Centre (TC) for assessments.
- II. Candidates' Attendance Record.
- III. Assessment Checklist for Practical Tests. The checklists should be written in such a way

that for each competence tested, it is possible to say either 'YES', the candidate successfully carried out this activity, or 'NO', the candidate has not yet achieved this standard.

- IV. Answer papers for the written test.
- V. Marking sheet for the written papers and interview / viva.
- VI. Final Assessment Summary.
- VII. Saving of the practical exam output in digital form.
- VIII. Assessment completion certificate.
- IX. Photographic record of assessments showing the assessors, students and the institution with date and time imprints.
- X. Evidence of mid-term assessments by the training provider.
- XI. Any other documents are required from time to time.

34. All Assessment bodies will upload the assessment results on SDMS of NSDC. The id and password for this will be provided by NSDC.

Testing Centers (TC)

35. Assessment of the candidates will normally be done at the premises of the SPEFL-SC affiliated Training Provider (TP), however, if for any reason it is necessary to have a Testing Centre (TC) other than the premises of TP, then costs for the services rendered by the TC will be borne by TP.

Independent Candidates

36. SPEFL-SC recognizes that there may be candidates who have prior learning experience in the Sports Sector and are desirous of being certified. Such candidates can apply to SPEFL-SC for testing and certification of their skills, and they will be allotted a Training Provider / TC for being tested. Fee for testing will be paid by the candidates directly to SPEFL-SC at the time of application. Documentation for such candidates will be done by the Training Provider / TC. Certificates of successful candidates will be dispatched to the TP / TC for distribution to them.

Assessment Fee

37. Training Providers will pay SPEFL-SC the prescribed fee for assessment and certification of their candidates, for which SPEFL-SC will raise necessary invoice. The Assessment Agencies will be paid by SPEFL-SC as per the agreement in place.

Appeals and Grievance Redressal

38. If the Assessment Agency is aggrieved by the accreditation process, they can appeal through a written representation to COO SPEFL-SC. The representation will be put up to the Grievance Redressal Committee for considering the appeal and make recommendations. The decision of the Committee will be final.

Service Level Agreement

39. All assessment Agencies willing to align with SPEFL-SC will have to sign a SLA on a specified format. The sample clauses are as per Annexure A (given at the end of this document). This is subject to change as per any central guidelines of NSDC.
40. Any deviation to this will be at sole discretion of SPEFL-SC.
41. All assessment bodies will have to align their assessors to the assessment process through a series of workshops and mock assessments at the training provider's site. SPEFL-SC will facilitate the process.

Conclusion

42. SPEFL-SC is mandated to uplift the standards of training in the Sports Sector resulting in improved productivity. Since the final outcome of any training is determined by assessment. Therefore, it is imperative that assessments are done professionally through a fair, transparent and consistent process. Certification by SPEFL-SC must add value to an individual's profile and be accurately indicative of his standards. For this to happen, quality and performance of assessment agency must be of a high order.

Annexure A

Sample Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Assessment Agency

Salient Points to be covered in the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Assessment Agency

- Provide support in pre-screening tasks and work with the SPEFL-SC to update agency details on to the SDMS, including sharing the list of empaneled assessors as per mutually agreed format, process of empanelment of assessors and the method of reimbursements to the assessors including the details of past performance in the field is assessments.
- Co-ordinate and Liaise with training partners to get information about commencement of training batches.
- Within two working days of receipt of information of the commencement of training batches by the training partner, provide decision to accept assessment of training program related tasks.
- Within two working days of acceptance of conducting the assessment, requisition certified assessors to carry out assessments.
- Ensure that certified assessors are sent to training locations/sites within the specified date and time.
- Ensure that all assessments conform to assessment guidelines and that these are undertaken as per the pre-defined format and in accordance with each of the performance criteria outlined in respective qualification packs.
- Assist SPEFL-SC to develop question bank / test papers as per specified guidelines for industry validation and inputs.
- Ensure that the assessment exercise happens within the stipulated timeline and that on-site visits are conducted by the agency to crosscheck for quality and transparency of assessment exercises.
- Ensure that the photographic / video evidence is collected for each assessment. The following are mandatory:
 - Group photo of the nominated assessors with the complete batch with the backdrop of the training institutions name board with date and time.
 - Photographs of students taking written and practical assessments with date and time.
 - Photographs of Assessors taking interviews of candidates with data and time.
- Provide the results of the assessment along with the original assessment sheet (physically and electronically) to the assessment agency within two working days of the completion of the assessment.
- Ensure that copies of the original assessment papers are properly documented, collated and filed as per government guidelines.
- Agree on a mutually accepted distribution ratio of the assessment fee for each candidate.