

Writing Learning Outcomes

A learning outcome “reflects what the learner will be able to do as a result of participating in the educational activity” (2015, ANCC Primary Accreditation Manual, p. 25). Learning Outcomes are statements that describe or list measurable and essential mastered content knowledge. These statements reflect skills, competencies and knowledge that learners will have acquired and will be able to demonstrate after completing the learning activity.

Difference between *Course Objectives* and *Learning Outcomes*:

- *Objectives* are intended results or consequences of instruction or learning activities.
- *Outcomes* are achieved results or consequences of what was learned (evidence that learning took place).

Guidelines

- The learner is the subject of the outcome statement.
- Use **action verbs** that will show tangible measurement.
- Learning outcomes are not content-specific. They should focus on the overarching concepts, skills, abilities, behaviors, or attitudes that learners will present at the end of the program.
- Be sure your activity evaluation plan will measure the outcomes you set.

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Checklist for Outcomes

- Are the outcomes specific?
- Are the outcomes simply stated?
- Are the outcomes written using action verbs to specify definite, observable behavior?
 - Do they use vague or unclear language, such as "understand" or "comprehend"?
 - Refer to *Bloom's Taxonomy* for a list of suggested action verbs to use in your outcome statements.
- Are learners at the center of the outcome, or does it focus on the presenter behaviors?
- Does the language used describe a learning outcome, not a process?
- Do the outcomes clearly describe and define the expected abilities, knowledge, and values of learners?
- Is it possible to collect accurate and measurable data for each outcome?
 - If not, can it be re-written?
 - Is it possible to use a single method to measure each outcome?
 - Can the outcomes be used to identify areas for improvement?
- Are the outcomes aligned with the mission, vision, values and goals of the institution? program? course?
- Would the indicators associated with the outcomes accurately reflect the key results of the program?

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Possible Format

In writing intended learning outcomes, it is useful to begin each learning outcome statement with “Learners will be able to...,” followed by an appropriate verb relating to the desired action or performance associated with the intended cognitive level (e.g., using Bloom’s taxonomy as a guide) and ending with the object of the statement describing the learning that students are expected to demonstrate through the action or performance.

- The (target/learner) (action verb) (object) (optional modifiers)
 - *The learner will self-report 2 communication styles to use for effective interdisciplinary communication.*
 - *The learner will complete the program post-test with a score of 80% or higher.*

Retrieved from: https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/provost/assessment/documents/blooms-taxonomy_IACBE.pdf