

# Writing actionable learning outcomes

## What are learning outcomes?

Learning outcomes describe what participants will be able to do at the end of the activity, that is, what knowledge/skills they will gain and/or what change in attitudes/behaviour may occur. **Learning outcomes should guide the development of content, learning activities and assessment.**

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*"By the end of this activity, participants will be able to..."*

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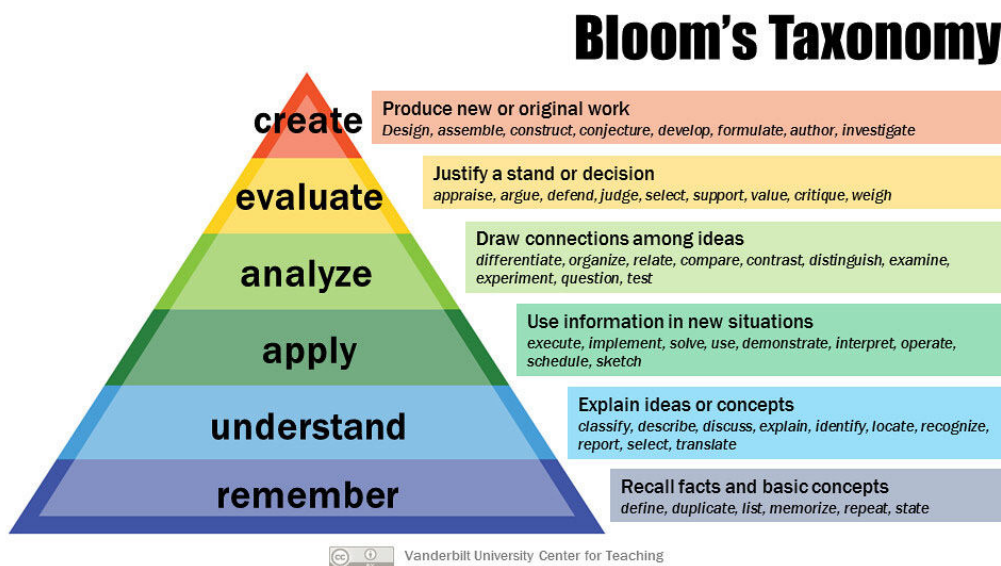
Learning outcomes should:

- Start with an action verb, recognising an appropriate level of achievement
- Communicate the learning purpose to students
- Guide the development of assessment, learning activities and content
- Be observable and/or measurable.

## Choosing the right verb

### Bloom's taxonomy

[Blooms Taxonomy](#) is a framework for educational standards. It provides a hierarchical ordering of skills from simple (remembering/ understanding) to complex (evaluation/ synthesis).



### Aim higher!

The more specialised a person is in their field, the more complex their knowledge and skills should be. Learning outcomes for our Fellows should ask more of them than simply recalling facts or explaining concepts. They should be required to apply their knowledge to new situations, draw connections among ideas, evaluate options, and formulate management plans - as this is what they do in their day-to-day practice.

## Words/phrases to avoid

- Know
- Learn
- Understand
- Appreciate
- Be aware of
- Be familiar with

## Sentence starters (good examples)

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|--|---|
| • <b>Discuss</b> the risk factors for...         | • <b>Investigate</b> treatment and management of... |
| • <b>Construct</b> differential diagnoses for... | • <b>Implement</b> a strategy for...                |
| • <b>Analyse</b> the impact(s) of...             | • <b>Demonstrate</b> the techniques for...          |
| • <b>Evaluate</b> treatment options for...       | • <b>Examine</b> the current issues in...           |
| • <b>Develop</b> a management plan for...        | • <b>Discuss</b> evolving evidence in...            |
| • <b>Distinguish</b> between...                  | • <b>Apply</b> quality improvement principles to... |

## Structure

A useful structure to base learning outcomes on is:

**Verb (ACTION) + Content (WHAT) + Context (WHEN, HOW, or WHY)**

- **Verb** (action word)
- **Content** (key concept or skill - 'WHAT do they need to know or be able to do?')
- **Context** (condition or circumstance - 'WHEN, HOW, or WHY will they use this knowledge/skill?')

Examples:

Verb (Action word)	Content (WHAT will they know or be able to do?)	Context (WHEN, HOW, or WHY will they use this?)
<b>Investigate</b>	contemporary treatment and management of cardiac conditions	to manage critical obstetric care situations
<b>Discuss</b>	evolving evidence in obstetric emergency management	to inform clinical decision making
<b>Formulate</b>	differential diagnoses of patients	with common benign gynaecological conditions
<b>Identify</b>	treatment options for common women's health conditions	in complex presentations

These become full sentences, i.e. *Investigate contemporary treatment and management of cardiac conditions to manage obstetric patients in critical care situations.*