

Learning outcomes need to be **clearly understood by learners, instructors, and receiving institutions** who may be reviewing them to determine transferability.

Learning outcomes are well-written statements that need to **align closely with evaluation of student learning**.

*More details on how to write a learning outcome according to one or more of the possible learning categorizations (Fink, Webb, LaFever, and Bloom) can be found via the drop-down menus on this site.*

1. Each course learning outcome should align with a program learning outcome or overarching goal.
2. Course learning outcomes reflect what you want your students to **be able to know, do, and value** (and most often use action verbs at the beginning of the statement to articulate what actions the students are doing, valuing, and coming to know).
3. Course learning outcomes must be **observable and measurable** to those doing the evaluation of student learning.
4. Course learning outcomes include:
  - A short and consistent **stem**; "Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to ..."
  - An **action verb** that identifies the depth of learning expected.
  - A statement of the learning to be demonstrated – addressing the "**what**." This always comes first in the outcome statement.
  - A statement of the context in which the learning will occur – addressing the "**how**" or the "**why**." These are optional and always follow the "**what**."
  - Each outcome statement should be numbered, begin with a lower-case letter, and end with a semi-colon, except the second last outcome statement, which should be followed by a semi-colon and the word "and" to indicate the last outcome statement will complete the list.
5. **Avoid:**
  - using multiple verbs in a one outcome statement. Choose the one action word that best represents the broadest or fullest form of the demonstration of the learning assuming that the sub-actions are included in that action word. For example: 'Evaluating' assumes that the learner has analyzed and organized information to be able to evaluate it.
  - including course assignments or activities in the learning outcome statement. These are not part of a learning outcome.
  - using adverbs such as effectively, proficiently, accurately, etc. or adjectives such as efficient, well-designed, accurate, etc. unnecessarily.  
These qualifiers are usually unnecessary because:
    - i. The degree to which learners achieve the outcomes is dealt with during the assessment / evaluation process.
      - Example - "... accurately calculate return on investment (ROI)." *How accurately will be determined during the assessment/evaluation process.*

- ii. The opposite of the qualifier you intend to use is not an option.
  - Example - "... write a clear concise grant proposal for the Canada Council for the Arts." *Because writing an unclear and long-winded grant proposal is not an option, the qualifiers are unnecessary.*

iii. The meaning of the action verb is clear

- Example - "... critically analyze research process, products, and practices." *Inherent in the definition of "analyze" is to do it critically, therefore the qualifier is also unnecessary.*

- **NOTE:** While often unnecessary, qualifiers can be used for emphasis or clarification (see example #3 below)

## 6. Examples:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to **(stem):**

1. .... explain **(verb)** how exercise affects stress **(what)**.

2. ... prepare **(verb)** cover letters, resumes, formal reports, memoranda, and e-mails **(what)**.

*(Avoid "including" or "such as." Include all items or a general phrase that all items fall under; e.g., ... prepare a variety of standard business communications.)*

3. ... create **(verb)** critically informed care-plans for older adults **(what)** using Miller's 2015 "Nursing Model for Promoting Wellness in Older Adults" framework **(how)**.

4. .... utilize **(verb)** electronic databases and internet sites **(what)** to locate relevant resources **(why)**.