

Documenting a Skills Inventory for Seamless Mobility

Report Date: March 2018

Project Number: 2017-09

FINAL REPORT



Participants and Partner Institutions

Lead:

Northern College

4715 Highway 101 East
South Porcupine ON P0N 1H0
T: 705-235-3211 | F: 705-235-7279
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 3211
Timmins ON P4N 8R6

Participating:

Canadore College

100 College Drive, P.O. Box 5001
North Bay, Ontario P1B 8K9
T. 705-474-7600

Project Manager:

Dr. Audrey J. Penner

Vice President Academic and Student Success
Northern College
pennera@northern.on.ca

Project Lead:

Diane Ryder

Campus Manager, Moosonee Campus & Acting Manager, Indigenous Services
Northern College
ryderd@northern.on.ca

FINAL REPORT**Contents**

Participants and Partner Institutions	1
Lead: Northern College	1
Participating: Canadore College.....	1
Project Manager: Dr. Audrey J. Penner.....	1
Project Lead: Diane Ryder.....	1
Project Purpose and Goals.....	4
Pathway Development.....	6
Methodology.....	7
Program Comparison and Analysis	13
Entry point	14
Implementation process and timelines	15
Promising practices and lessons learned	15
Promising practices.....	16
Lessons Learned.....	17
Recommendations	18
References.....	19
Appendix A.....	20
Office Administration- General.....	20
What is the Skills Inventory Project?.....	23
About the Program: Office Administration- General	24
Description of Courses	25
Office Administration- General: Courses in Semester 1	30
Office Administration- General: Courses in Semester 2	31
What are Vocational Learning Outcomes?.....	32
What are Essential Employability Skills?	33
Contact Details of the SIP Facilitators	34
Appendix B	35
Word Processing and Key Boarding 1	35
How to use this booklet.....	37
Unit 1: Ergonomics of the Workstation	38

FINAL REPORT

Table 1 Milestones for pathway development 6

Table 2 Process for Skills Inventory 8

Table 3 Course Selection 10

Table 4 Skills inventory completion..... 11

Table 5 Skills Ranking 12

Table 6 Strengths and Weaknesses 13

Table 7 Evaluation Framework 15

Figure 1 Adult upgrading learners transition to postsecondary..... 14

FINAL REPORT

Project Purpose and Goals

Many adult learners enter adult upgrading with rich life experience in a variety of areas, but demonstrate a lack of confidence and may not recognize their skills and/or abilities. These learners often do not transition from adult upgrading, thus limiting their mobility to continue on an educational path and leaving untapped, tremendous human capital. Life and program choices become limited as these adults have not received credit where credit is due. Seamless mobility for these students is needed to assist them in entering a college or university.

Documenting a skills inventory is an innovative approach to adult education curriculum delivery, which can be evaluated as a pilot project with expansion potential across the system. Academic upgrading in the college system is affiliated with Employment Ontario (Northern College, 2018). The program length is dependent upon the individual learners needs. Academic upgrading can help the individual to acquire prerequisites for college programs, job specific or computer skills, or general development to assist learning goals. There is no tuition for academic upgrading at any college in Ontario. There are nine (9) academic upgrading sites traditionally offered at Northern College: Cochrane, Haileybury, Iroquois Falls, Kirkland Lake Campus, Hearst, Timmins Campus, and Timmins Native Friendship Centre. Northern College offers adult upgrading in satellite sites in Kapuskasing, Attawapiskat, Moose Factory, and Fort Albany. Northern College has a high percentage of Indigenous learners at traditional campuses, with 100% of learners at satellite sites on the James Bay coast, of Indigenous heritage.

Documenting a skills inventory is predicated on the competency based concept of education. Competency based education is tailored to variations in learning abilities while leading to more efficient outcomes (Educause, 2018). Out of competency based education arose the need to develop curriculum designed around the premise of competency. This curriculum is known as DACUM (Develop a Curriculum) (DACUM, 2001). The process to develop curriculum using DACUM includes capturing the duties, knowledge, and skills required to perform the task under review (Canadian Vocational Association, 2013). In the case of documenting a skills inventory, the curriculum was already in place, so the design required working backwards from the curriculum in place to identify the skills to be documented.

This pilot curriculum delivery is suitable for Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners. A key factor in this project is that it mirrors Indigenous ways of knowing more closely than traditional adult education upgrading. In theory, this should meet the needs of Indigenous learners more effectively than the more traditional adult upgrading. Where skills recognition can occur prior to more formal education or training, an empowerment occurs for the learner, and a recognition grows of what and how that learner can achieve educational goals. The ability to develop seamless personal pathways is an aspirational

FINAL REPORT

goal of many colleges, and certainly of many adult learners. At the outset of this project, it was hoped that a variety of vocational skills could be identified, however, due to the labour intensive nature of the skills inventory, and the labour disruption that occurred in 2017, the focus had to be narrowed. Canadore College participated as a regional partner with the original intent to act as a PLAR consultant for those programs not offered at Northern College. As the focus narrowed to one program, which Northern did offer, Canadore College's role merged to assist in vetting the skills identified and assist with the validation process.

The goals of this project were to:

- Identify and document a 'skills inventory' for learners in Northern College's adult upgrading programs.
- Provide a transcript 'type' document of these skills.
- Develop a personalized pathway for the learners from adult upgrading through to PSE and beyond.
- Formalize the skills inventory as a curriculum offering in adult upgrading.
- Build capacity within the Adult Education department to continue documenting skills inventories after the pilot project is completed.
- Create a methods manual for future skills inventory in the adult education program or beyond.

FINAL REPORT

Pathway Development

To develop the 'skills inventory pathway', a unique approach was defined. Unique approaches are common at Northern College, which services a geographic area the size of France, utilizing technologies other colleges are only beginning to deploy. The unique approach was to take a 'pre PLAR' or reverse engineered Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) approach. Rather than learners coming to us to request PLAR, we would reach out to the learner and help them assess what **they already know**. In northern and remote communities, often people work in employment where they do not have the requisite credential, but certainly have the real world experience.

The project was delineated into three phases, with milestones attributed to each phase. See Table 1.

Table 1 Milestones for pathway development

Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
Verify skills inventory tool to be used	All sites are visited and participating learners identified	Application processes are finalized*
Design transcription document to capture skills inventory	Inventories are developed with participating learners	Measures of success compiled
Hire Skills inventory facilitator	Inventories are reviewed and matched to potential programming	Recommendations for follow up made
Train facilitator in Skills inventory protocol	PLAR portfolio is defined and started*	Best practices compiled
Design communication plan to learners on the Skills inventory pilots	Midterm report is filed with ONCAT- Mid November	Methods manual completed
Calibrate adult upgrading faculty	Individualized pathways are determined in consultation with student advising at the participating institution	Adult Education Faculty trained in skills inventory work
Verify PLAR approaches at participating institution	PLAR portfolio needs are finalized*	Report compiled and submitted to ONCAT
Develop travel schedule for facilitator to all sites over the fall semester	Learners are linked to the appropriate institution to achieve their pathway*	
Define required elements of the methods manual	Formative evaluation	
	Application processes are initiated*	

FINAL REPORT

Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
	Methods manual is compiled	
All milestones completed	All milestones completed for those learners who participated early in the project. *These milestones are still in progress for learners who joined the project in January and February	All milestones completed for those learners who participated early in the project. *These milestones are still in progress for learners who joined the project in January and February

Methodology

The first step was to hire a facilitator for the project, whose role was to determine skills to measure and identify a tool to use. The facilitator traveled to each Northern site with particular emphasis on the remote communities along the James Bay coast. It had been decided at the time of application for this project that Northern College adult upgrading students were target group as the logical choice. The facilitator needed to break down the curriculum of the chosen program, and identify skills specific to the vocational learning outcomes of that program. The DACUM approach was utilized to achieve this.

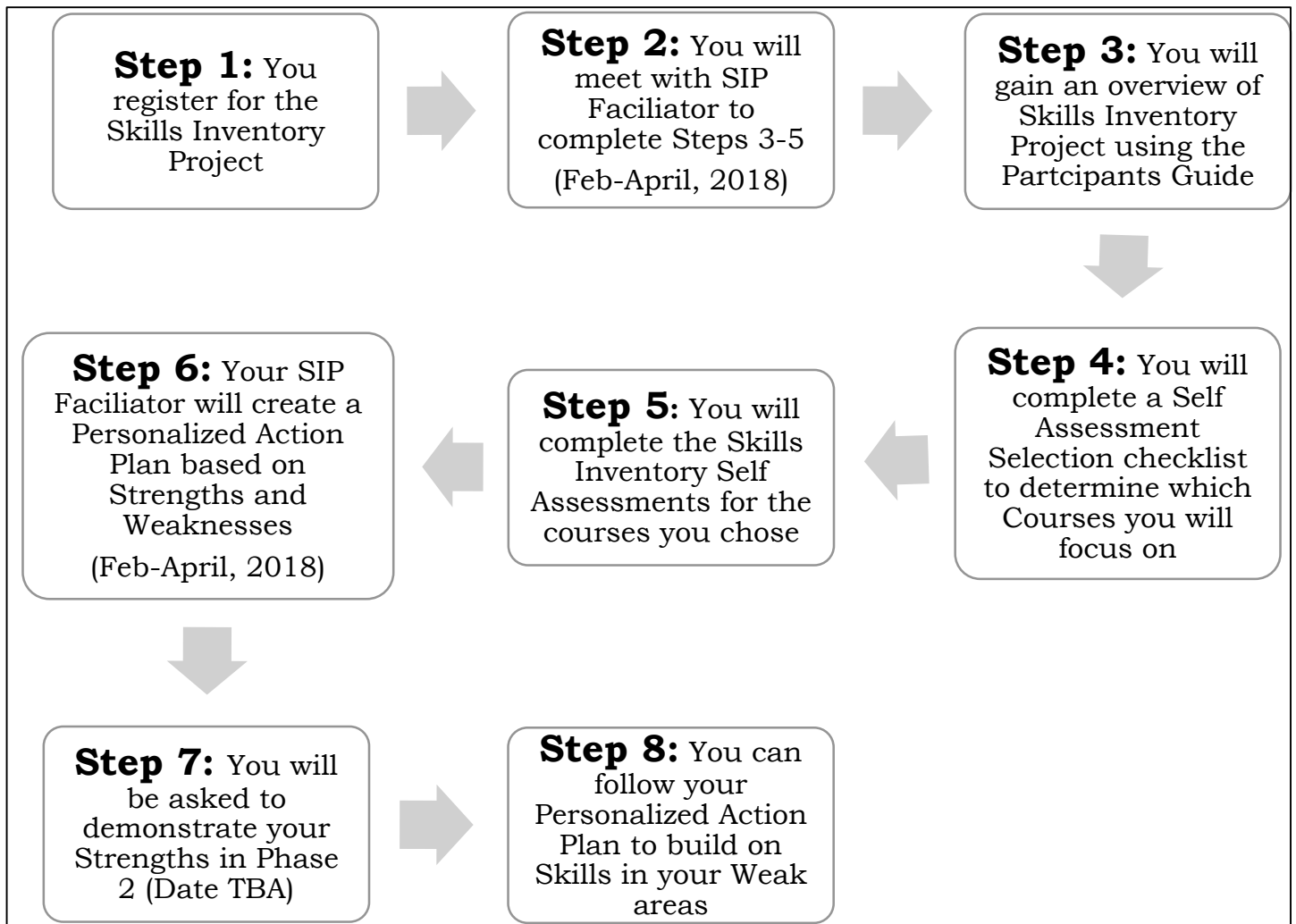
This project was identified as labour intensive, given a one on one inventory approach was required at the pilot stage. By working with adult upgrading learners, Northern College demonstrated practical application and completion were a priority. This is important to adult upgrading learners. As the project gained momentum within communities, the appeal of the project reached beyond upgrading students, and into the community itself, whereby workers within the community joined the project, to assess the skills they had built from their real world experience.

The next step in the methodology was to determine skills to be measured. This represented the first phase of the project and proved to be the largest challenge the project faced. Determined to focus upon vocationally relevant skills, and those most commonly used, the facilitator and the project team, agreed the scope needed to be narrowed to one program which was Office Administration. While there are many vocational skills an adult upgrading learner may have, the skills associated with Office Administration were considered to be the broadest reach. Once focus was narrowed, documentation of the skills associated with each semester of the Office Administration program at Northern College were defined. This was the beginning of the skills inventory 'tool'. The validation of skills as they were mapped to the Office Administration program was completed by faculty who taught the program and had the required subject matter expertise. In essence, this was a reverse DACUM process.

FINAL REPORT

Once the skills inventory ‘tool’ for Office Administration was completed, the next step in the methodology was to have learners work with the skills inventory tool, side by side with the facilitator. This process included tweaking of the ‘tool,’ as various learners gave feedback on the ‘user friendly’ aspect of the tool. A process was defined to assist learners in understanding the activity and use of the tool (See Table 2). All learners interested in participating, received a handout explaining project goals and the process to identify skills, for an Office Administration career.

Table 2 Process for Skills Inventory



FINAL REPORT

Each participant was given a manual specifically tailored to the Office Administration program, to help them understand what the overall learning for an Office Administration certificate entailed. This tool was entitled ***Participant's Guide*** and provided:

1. Details of the Skills Inventory project
2. Course load for the Office Administration program
3. Course descriptions
4. Vocational learning outcomes for Office Administration
5. Employability essential skills required for Office Administration

The ***Participant's Guide*** was developed in Phase II of the project and requires updating based upon completion of a variety of skills inventories, and the subsequent feedback and additional development of skills alignment to the second semester.

The ***Participant's Guide*** is available in [Appendix A](#).

In order to keep this manageable from the learner's perspective and reinforce the tie to a seamless pathway, learners were asked to choose those courses they believed they had applicable skills (See Table 3). The first choices were offered for the first semester of programming. This offering of choice as to what the learner would like to assess, empowered the learners to take on as much or as little in developing their own skills inventory as they were comfortable with. All courses had skills directly mapped to the individual course. Learners completed a self-evaluation, based upon the skills linked to this first semester of the Office Administration program at Northern College. Each learner completed a table such as in Table 3, as a starting point.

FINAL REPORT

Table 3 Course Selection

Semester 1- Office Administration- General		
Course Code	Course Name	Do you want to Self-Assess your Skills in this area?
AC1034	Introduction to Financial Accounting	
CM1903	Communications I	
EV7003	Issues in Environmental Sustainability	
GN1033	Health and Safety	
IN1093	Computer Applications for Business and Technology	
MA1024	Business Math	
OF1023	Office Procedures I	
OF1136	Word Processing and Keyboarding I	

Once a majority of skills inventories were compiled, the Project lead used formative evaluation data on the project, to assist the facilitator in development of a methods manual based upon best practice for ongoing use. It was at this point the labour disruption occurred shutting down some of the Northern College adult upgrading centers. In addition, the facilitator hired for Phase I and II of the project was unexpectedly unable to complete the project. This happened in late November, and while the new facilitator hired did a wonderful job, the ability to catch up was limited. The Project Lead took over much of the facilitator's communication and training aspects for the balance of the project. The facilitator offered preliminary workshops at the more remote adult upgrading campuses, however, more training for all adult upgrading faculty will be done throughout the balance of the 2017-2018 academic year in the non-teaching time. Table 4 summarizes the skills inventories activity.

FINAL REPORT

Table 4 Skills inventory completion

<i>Total participants 43</i>	<i>Number of participants</i>	<i>Still to be assessed</i>	<i>Moosonee north</i>	<i>Moosonee south</i>
Academic upgrading	21	9		
Community participants	22	11		
Geographical participation			38	5

Of the forty-three (43) participants, thirty-one (31) completed three (3) or more course assessments, which would be very close to completing a full semester of work at Northern College. Twelve (12) of the participants completed one (1) or two (2) assessments at the time of writing this report. These participants will continue with their assessments over the next two months.

All academic upgrading faculty are aware of the tool, and have an introductory exposure to use of the tool. In all, five (5) Academic Upgrading staff have currently been fully trained to use the tool, and one (1) First Year Experience Officer. This tool would be an asset within the Student Advising services, given they are often a first point of contact for PLAR. Further training on the tool is slated for the May-June period of 2018.

Once the learner had selected the course(s) they wished to have skills evaluation completed upon, the next step was to rank themselves in terms of the specific skills. A sample of how learners could rank themselves is shown in Table 5. [Appendix B](#) has the full sample of skills for the Word Processing and Keyboarding course.

In all steps, the material was made to be as user friendly, in both look and implementation, as possible. This is an important lesson learned to generate learner engagement and follow up. While assessment of essential skills was not a proposed part of this project, the addition of that component was seen as a value added by both adult upgrading faculty and adult learners. The self-rankings were designed to be easily understood while separating them enough that to facilitate judgement by the learner. A recognition that “I cannot do it”, compared to “I can do it perfectly” was more effective for self-evaluation than a Likert scale would have been. The engagement of the learner in this process was subjective in order to achieve preliminary rankings. Competency based education premises the acquisition of new skills, on the learner understanding the skills base they already have. Therefore, subjective self-assessment at the outset of this process builds self-awareness critical to skills acquisition.

FINAL REPORT

Table 5 Skills Ranking

Module 1- Developing Keyboarding Skills
Unit 1: Ergonomics of the Workstation

Can you do this?

			I cannot do it	I could do it with difficulty	I can do it well	I can do it perfectly
Vocational Learning Outcomes- 7	Essential Employability Skills- 6	Set up your workstation ergonomically				
		Recognize the risk factors of musculoskeletal injury				
		Recognize environmental concerns in the office				
		Recognize and cope with stress on the body				

Learners were then asked to create a tally of their strengths and weaknesses for each skill unit. This would give them a platform for PLAR portfolio development, and a determination of how much work was required to complete the skill set for particular courses. Table 5 shows the approach to tallying strengths and weaknesses.

FINAL REPORT

Table 6 Strengths and Weaknesses

Total STRENGTHS (Add the 'I can do it perfectly' and 'I can do it well' categories in this section)	=	STRENGTHS
Total WEAKNESSES (Add the 'I can do it with difficulty' and 'I cannot do it' categories in this section)	=	WEAKNESSES

To complete the skills inventory, a validation of skills through a variety of experiential learning opportunities needed to occur. This is still occurring as many of the learners joined the project later in January and February.

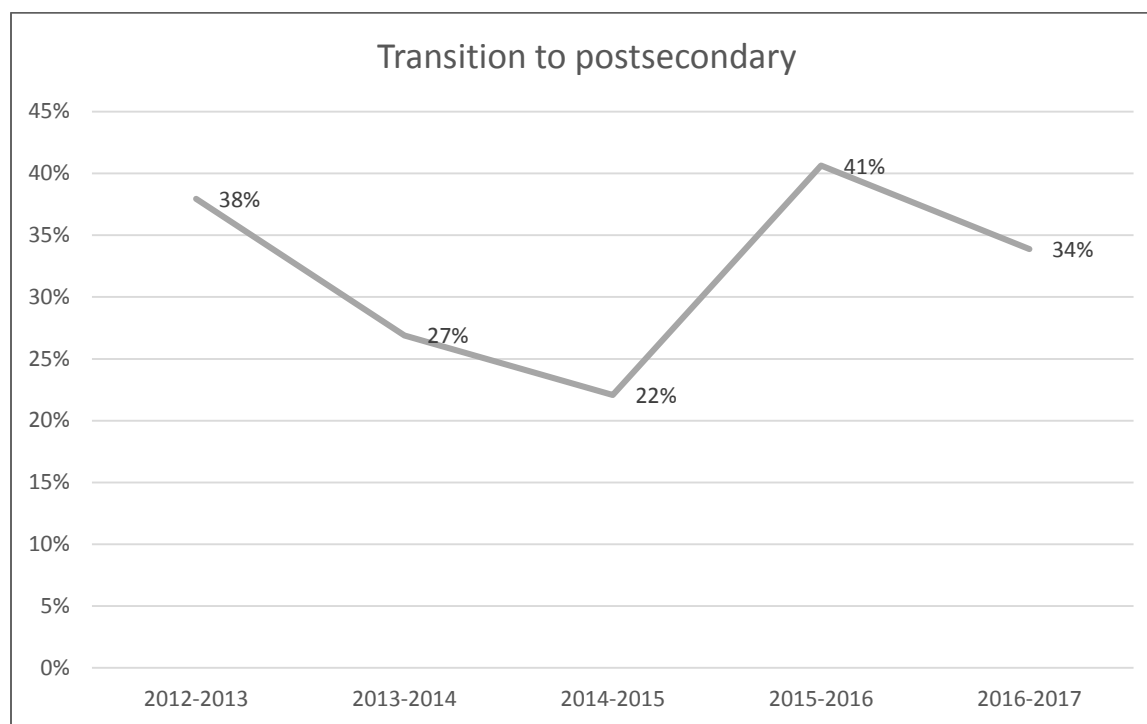
The skills themselves were best captured as a co-curricular activity, and working with the Registrar’s department, Northern College was able to do that internally. However, a challenge to this project was to generate a system wide credential recognition, the learner could carry with them.

The final activity was to map what the student had achieved to build the personalized pathway to an Office Administration program. This portion of the project is still ongoing, for two reasons; 1) the delay in late November with the changeover of facilitators, and 2) the uptake of non-adult upgrading learners from within the communities who wanted to become part of the project.

Program Comparison and Analysis

This innovative pathway did not result in a different or new credential. Rather this pathway was tested as a seamless way to engage more adult learners in postsecondary programs to obtain established degrees. The development of the project included alignment with existing, established PLAR processes.

The criteria to compare and evaluate this pathway, was based upon trends and an identified gap within postsecondary as it related to engagement by adult upgrading students. As Figure 1 shows, the percentage of adult upgrading learners who went on to post-secondary at Northern College, either immediately after completing adult upgrading or later in their learning journey, has been below 50% for the past several years. There was a particularly low transition in 2014-2015 year, at 22%. Northern College’s mission “Excelling in quality accessible education through innovative programs, services and partnerships for the benefit of our northern communities” mandates innovative services to Northern College communities. Therefore, this project directly links to Northern College’s mission. The bulk of activity occurred at satellite sites in the College’s northern communities; it filled a gap not previously addressed.

FINAL REPORT*Figure 1 Adult upgrading learners transition to postsecondary*

We began in the spring of 2017, to build interdepartmental collaboration on the project, meeting with adult upgrading and program faculty to outline the project identify and goals. Inter-departmental collaboration was excellent from the start through to the finish of this project. Everyone recognized the need to transition more adult upgrading learners into postsecondary programs and the value added this project brought to learners

Inter-institutional collaboration worked very well. Canadore College is our neighboring college to the south. The arrangement was made between the Vice President's Academic Offices. Previous activity on the Northern College Collaborative Programming project, has established a collegial environment between the two institutions. The Dean responsible for PLAR at Canadore has worked with Northern on many projects and that relationship was expanded through this project.

We observed participants who completed at least one or more course assessments, became more motivated in wanting to complete the courses that they were evaluated for. Either through a PLAR process or by wanting to register the next time it was offered. Skills identification empowered learners to seek more skill identification.

Entry point

As this project was unique in concept, the entry point was individualized for each learner. This was understood at the outset. The learner would bring a set of skills, which would be credited through the PLAR process, determining where they would start within the

FINAL REPORT

Office Administration program. As not all learners have finished this process, we do not have a predictor of how many starting points there will be.

Implementation process and timelines

Given PLAR processes are already in place, there are no approval processes required to implement the postsecondary pathways. What needs to be monitored is how many learners utilize this pathway and when. Part of the gap analysis identified that often adult upgrading learners do not move into postsecondary programs immediately following the upgrading training. Tracking these learners over time will be important to see how many actually take up the postsecondary offering. In addition, we included participants in the study, who were not in adult upgrading, but participated based upon community engagement. This group will also be tracked to identify how this provides seamless opportunities for the learner. The Fall of 2018 is the expected first intake of learners who have come through this skills inventory project, into the Office Administration program.

Promising practices and lessons learned

Evaluation of this pilot curriculum delivery was based upon the logic model framework. The traditional logic model framework includes a balance of inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes. The measures for this project have been mapped to the logic model to demonstrate how it was evaluated. (See Table 6)

Table 7 Evaluation Framework

Measure	Inputs	Processes	Outputs	Outcomes
Number of learners participating**	✓			
Office Administration program material**	✓			
Facilitator training	✓			
Skills inventory defined for Office Admin		✓		
Time on task to complete inventories		✓		
Student feedback on process and outcomes		✓		
Facilitator and faculty feedback on process and outcomes		✓		
Number accepted to PSE compared to previous years			✓	
Number of skills inventories completed			✓	
Faculty trained in skills inventory delivery			✓	
Credit recognition defined and recorded			✓	
Community engagement in education**				✓
Defined best practices in skills inventory				✓
Learner pathway expanded				✓

** These measures were included as the project evolved, other measures were designated in the preliminary proposal

FINAL REPORT

The formal evaluation of the program has not yet been completed, due to delays incurred (labour disruption and change in facilitators). While we had 35 learners involved, we do not yet have the final tally on the number of inventories completed, nor total number of students accepted.

Promising practices

The feedback from students during this process was excellent. Many felt it was an opportunity that could not be passed up. The challenge for them was to self-evaluate, with many wanting to be 'told' what their skill level is. The emphasis on self-evaluation is important for a learner to grow and develop. The promising practice here was having this evaluation at the start of the process rather than in the middle (formative) or at the end (summative). This practice empowers learners to a far greater degree than any other form of delivery and pedagogy. This empowerment breeds confidence in the learner for themselves.

Another promising practice is the community engagement in this approach to learning. Typically, as institutions, we engage with individuals first and the community secondly. In this process, to assure the project was understood, the small communities were invited to be part of the process which led to a level of engagement that brought new participants. Individual community members became active as recruiters for the project. This is not typical of education delivery and adult upgrading in particular.

By offering the skills inventory, we added dimension to adult upgrading not previously seen. Rightly or wrongly, adult upgrading can be stigmatized within the postsecondary system. Often seen as a 'lesser' form of education by learners and educators, it is an unsung hero in the Canadian education landscape. The skills inventory added value to the upgrading program we had not anticipated. Instead of talking about upgrading, the learners talked about skills they had or could develop. Changing the conversation in this way, elevates the activity in a way that was not anticipated by the project administrator or lead. This conversation needs to occur in as many communities as possible, and expand across the province.

FINAL REPORT

Lessons Learned

This project provided the opportunity to learn many valuable lessons.

Lesson 1:

Estimate your time carefully when dealing with skills inventories. This is a labour intensive activity. Defining the skills, mapping them to existing program activity and consolidating how to validate them is time consuming. We had estimated doing more programs than the Office Administration, however, that would have taken the entire project time with no participants involved, so we opted to do one program and gauge uptake.

Lesson 2:

Explanations are critical. This is an innovative approach to learning, explaining the ‘how’ and the ‘why’ are necessary for learner engagement. The **Participant’s Guide** is a good example of this concept.

Lesson 3:

Skill identification leads to the learner wanting to identify more skills, this is a motivating approach. However, the motivation needs to be applied by allowing the learner to approach this in their own time frame. They may want to sit down and do several self-evaluations at once, or they may choose to do one at a time, or anything in between. Let the learner lead!

Lesson 4:

Trust the learner to know themselves. Their self-evaluations are not always accurate, but we experienced learners tend to underestimate themselves rather than over estimate. As this was a subjective approach, faculty did not always ‘believe’ a learner could have the skill. Validation established the correlation between the self-evaluation and the outcome.

Lesson 5:

Prepare to change and adapt as you go. This is true of any project, but was even more evident in this situation. Even the look of the documents was revised through the process, to assure information was presented in a manner that was most user friendly for the learner.

Lesson 6:

The team recognized upcoming change as communities will begin to see an increase in community members obtaining a recognized credential. The more community members that obtain credentials the more employers will raise expectations about the need for a credential. This will raise the knowledge and skill level within jobs within the communities. This will also hold true for all small towns and communities in Northern Ontario.

FINAL REPORT

Recommendations

The skills inventory approach offers many opportunities for seamless pathways for learners. To facilitate these opportunities, the following recommendations are made.

Recommendation 1:

Skills inventories be developed for 5-10 college program offerings in Ontario. If the most popular programs were targeted, skills inventories could be created that open additional pathways for learners.

Recommendation 2:

While internal co-curricular recognition was created, a more robust credit (badging/micro-credential) system needs to be established across institutions, to encourage the seamless nature of this pathway.

Recommendation 3:

With this tool now available, it is recommended that Northern College reevaluate the present PLAR procedures/policy. Furthermore, it is recommended that staff from Advising Services also be trained as they are the first step in meeting with potential PLAR candidates at the College.

Recommendation 4:

The adult upgrading system provincially should utilize this skills inventory approach. This would mean training on a provincial basis.

Recommendation 5:

A provincial pilot project to examine the development of a skills passport as a way to credential skills inventories should be undertaken.

FINAL REPORT

References

Canadian Vocational Association. (2013). *CVA Dacum model presentaiton* . Retrieved from DACUM PLUS:
<http://cva-acfp.org/training-and-workshops/cva-dacum-model-presentation/>

DACUM. (2001). *DACUM Archive and Resource Website* . Retrieved from DACUM :
<http://www.dacum.org/>

Educause. (2018). *Competency Based Education*. Retrieved from Educause:
<https://library.educause.edu/topics/teaching-and-learning/competency-based-education-cbe>

Northern College. (2018). *Academic Upgrading*. Retrieved from Northern College Academic upgrading:
<http://www.northernnc.on.ca/upgrading/>

Appendix A

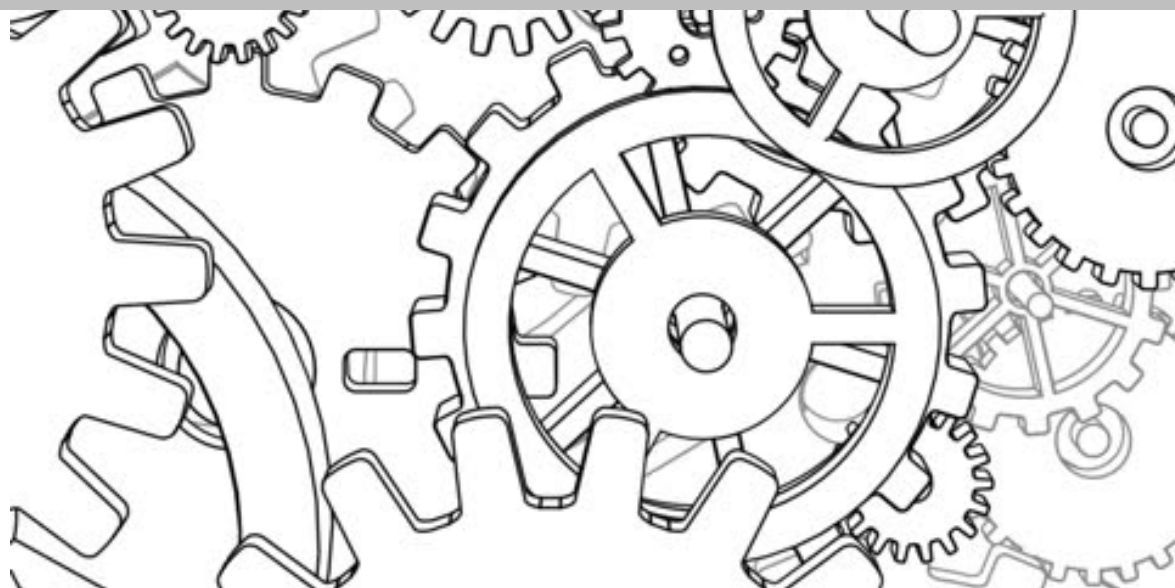
Office Administration- General



SKILLS INVENTORY PROJECT

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION- GENERAL

PARTICIPANT GUIDE



Name: _____

SIP Facilitator: _____

Date: _____

Contents

What is the Skills Inventory Project?	23
About the Program: Office Administration- General.....	24
Description of Courses	25
Office Administration- General: Courses in Semester 1	30
Office Administration- General: Courses in Semester 2	31
What are Vocational Learning Outcomes?	32
What are Essential Employability Skills?	33
Contact Details of the SIP Facilitators.....	34

What is the Skills Inventory Project?

The Skills Inventory Project is a research pilot program that is intended to look at experienced workers and their eligibility to receive College Micro Credentials for their skills acquired on the job. This could validate the skills an employee has and they can work their way up to receiving a College Diploma.

The project is being developed by Northern College and is funded by Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT).

This project will happen in Phases.

Phase 1: Skills Inventory Tool Development and Testing (*The Phase we are in now*)

Phase 2: Skills Inventory Tool Demonstrations and Evaluation of Micro Credentials (estimated to begin February 2018)

Phase 3: Possible development of other Programs using the Skills Inventory Project Model

The main aim of this Phase 1 is to make a tool that can be used to record and demonstrate Vocational Learning Outcomes and Essential Employability Skills.

Based on the College course outline, the skills and knowledge acquired in a traditional college classroom will be self-evaluated into strengths and weaknesses. Those who state they have strengths in particular areas will be asked to demonstrate this in Phase 2 to a Skills Inventory Project (SIP) facilitator to evaluate the possibility of a Micro Credential for a Module/ Unit/ Course credit.

About the Program: Office Administration- General

This program is aimed at people who wish to work in an office environment. The college diploma in Office Administration- General is very flexible and there are many areas of work that a person can be employed in.

The Office Administration- General program focuses on:

- Communication
- Organizing and Planning
- Physical and Information Resources
- Document Production
- Financial Functions
- Human Resources
- Computer and Collaboration Applications

Description of Courses

Below is a description of the courses in the Office Administration- General program at Northern College. Semester 1 has been completed for the testing in the Skills Inventory Project. This information has been copied from the Northern College website. Please visit the website for more information: <http://www.northernnc.on.ca/office-administration-general/>

Semester 1

AC1034 Introduction to Financial Accounting

This course gives hands-on training in fundamental accounting concepts as applied in service and merchandising firms. Students will be taken through a complete accounting cycle and will record and report financial transactions. Topics include recording entries, preparing financial statements and accounting for merchandising activities. This course will be essential for further study in financial accounting.

CM1903 Communications I Model A

Communications is a process that defines how we engage with the world. Writing is essential and represents the most important formal process of communication. Communications 1 is a practical course designed to help students strengthen both oral and written skills as required in industry today. Students learn theory and practical applications of good business/technical planning as well as advanced sentence-writing techniques. Students acquire knowledge of effective communication practices in today's world of work and apply basic sentence techniques, paragraph strategies, and specialized oral and writing skills including proper usage of MLA format in business and/or technical writing situations. The students will also learn about the informal channels of communication that support the creation of authentic relations with peers, colleagues, family and the community. Instruction in both formal and informal communication processes combine to assist students to become successful members of the workplace and the communities in which they live. Students will be expected to exhibit professionalism in a diverse and inclusive classroom environment.

GN1033 Health and Safety

This course introduces the student to health and safety in their home, in society and within an occupational setting. Students learn about the social and personal benefits of safe work practices and the methods to best prevent accidents or injuries. Students will review the role, right and responsibilities of an individual in today's health and safety conscious world. Students also learn how to read and interpret the Occupational Act and Regulations.

IN1093 Computer Applications for Business and Technology

This course provides a brief review of MS Word and MS PowerPoint. More features of both these applications will be explored further. MS Excel is examined thoroughly along with an introduction to the use of MS Project as a project planning and management tool.

MA1024 Business Math

In this course, students will begin with a review of basic arithmetic and algebraic manipulations, continuing with the following topics: ratios and proportions, percentages and the percentage formula, discounts, mark-ups and mark-downs, payroll scenarios, break-even analysis, and simple interest.

OF1023 Office Procedures I

This course will equip the student to find meaningful employment in the administrative field. Administrative Professionals have more responsibilities in today's work environment. Some of the topics covered in this course include: professionalism, telecommunications, records maintenance, technology and soft skills. In-class simulations and discussions provide students with the opportunity to problem solve and participate in group activities.

OF1136 Word Processing and Keyboarding I

This course provides applications that reinforce word processing skills. It focuses on techniques to enable students to produce a wide variety of documents using Microsoft Word 2013 using Windows 7. Keyboarding speed and accuracy will be reinforced during document preparation.

EV7003 Issues in Environmental Sustainability

Our human society is at a crossroads in terms of our activities and impacts on the environment and our planet. This general education course is of interest to students of all walks of life and all intended professions, in order to increase their awareness of the environment and challenges that impact its health and integrity. This course will also provide information on how one can live more sustainable, and in so doing, help to conserve the environment for the needs and enjoyment of future generations.

Semester 2

Semester 2 has not been completed for the Skills Inventory Project.

BU1003 Introduction to Business Concepts

In this course, students will be introduced to business in Canada, focusing on introductory topics for those interested in employment in a business management role. Topics of study will include the relationships between the areas of finance, human resources, marketing, and operations within an organization, business ethics and social responsibility, management concepts and practices, and an exploration of the entrepreneurial spirit. The course brings in numerous examples of practical applications with the involvement of the learners from real-life situations and personal experiences to analyze the concepts discussed. There is also key emphasis on developing awareness towards corporate social responsibility and the relation between ethical practices and management.

BU1103 Introduction to Human Resources

In this course, students will learn how proper recruitment/selection strategies, and training and development methods, maintain an organization's competitive advantage. The integral role of job design and analysis in affecting compensation management and performance appraisal decisions will be examined. Students will investigate a variety of employment and health and safety laws as they relate to managing a diverse workforce. In addition, the fundamental principles of the union-management framework will be explored.

CM2903 Communications II – Model A

Communications 2 is a one-semester course which applies the oral and written communication tools learned in the first semester to specific business/technical applications as required by industry today. The student will enhance writing skills acquired in COMM1 and learn to produce effective documents including business letters, memoranda, emails, employment documents as well as reports and problem-solving documents as applicable to their field of study. The course presents the theory and practice necessary for the planning and presentation of short informal and formal reports and introduces the dynamics of planning and participating in meeting situations. Students will participate in mock interviews (as applicable), so that they are prepared to sell themselves as they transition into the competitive employment market. Students will continue to review grammatical structures and apply editing strategies to business/technical documents through both in-class activities and the usage of the customized online grammar tool. As with COMM1, the content will be inclusive and reflect the diverse workplace that students will find themselves in in the future.

IN2013 Computer Applications II

This course reinforces the fundamentals of the prerequisite Computer Applications course while providing further exploration of the Microsoft Office 2013 suite of applications. Students will obtain a more in-depth understanding of the Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint applications.

IN2113 Introduction to Computerized Bookkeeping

During this course, students will gain an understanding of computerized accounting concepts using Simply Accounting for Windows. Students will complete applications using the general module, inventory module, accounts payable module, accounts receivable module, and payroll module. Theory topics include adjustments and the worksheet, closing entries, trial balances, subsidiary ledgers, special journals, and accounts receivable ledgers.

OF2136 Word Processing and Keyboarding II

In this course, advanced features in Microsoft Word will be examined. A variety of documents incorporating Word features will be produced. The students will develop timesaving skills and techniques when completing applications.

Keyboarding speed and accuracy will be reinforced during document preparation, practice sessions, and timed drills.

OF3012 Administrative Procedures

This course analyzes the tasks and responsibilities of an administrative assistant in an electronic office environment. As an Administrative Professional you will be “information central”, a valued member of a team in a business or organization where everyone will depend on you to keep the office organized and running efficiently. This course reviews duties and responsibilities of the Administrative Professional including: telecommunication tools, managing appointments, planning meetings, and arranging travel.

OF2044 Placement

This is a two week unpaid work placement with an employer. This placement provides valuable work experience for students.

Office Administration- General: Courses in Semester 1

Course Code	Course Name	Compatible with SIP
AC1034	Introduction to Financial Accounting	Yes
CM1903	Communications I	Yes
EV7003	Issues in Environmental Sustainability	Yes
GN1033	Health and Safety	Yes
IN1093	Computer Applications for Business and Technology	Yes
MA1024	Business Math	Yes
OF1023	Office Procedures I	Yes
OF1136	Word Processing and Keyboarding I	Yes

Office Administration- General: Courses in Semester 2

Course Code	Course Name	Compatible with SIP
BU1003	Introduction to Business	No
BU1103	Introduction to Human Resources	No
CM2903	Communications II	No
IN2013	Computer Applications II	No
IN2113	Introduction to Computerized Bookkeeping	No
OF2044	Placement	No
OF2136	Word Processing and Keyboarding II	No
OF3012	Administrative Procedures	No

What are Vocational Learning Outcomes?

Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLO) are demonstrations of learning and achievements in a specific college course. This is standard across the province. The VLOs below are the culminating tasks you would be able to show after completing each course in the Office Administration- General program.

Vocational Learning Outcomes for Office Administration- General:	
VLO 1	Conduct oneself professionally and adhere to relevant legislation, standards and codes of ethics
VLO 2	Schedule and coordinate tasks, within specific deadlines and according to set priorities
VLO 3	Receive, process and distribute communications in the workplace to assist the flow of information
VLO 4	Operate and provide support related to the use of office equipment and technologies
VLO 5	Locate, file and retrieve documents and records from a variety of electronic and paper sources to support daily office operations
VLO 7	Produce routine business documents and using available technologies standards and formats
VLO 8	Use interpersonal and client service skills to respond to diversity and to support the vision and mission of the organization
VLO 9	Compile resources as well as services to prepare summary reports
VLO 10	Select and use information technologies to support communication with internal and external stakeholders
VLO 11	Assist in the organization and coordination of meetings and travel arrangements

What are Essential Employability Skills?

Essential Employability Skills (EES) are skills that are critical for success in the workplace, in day to day living and lifelong learning. The skills fall into six categories: Communication, Numeracy, Critical Thinking & Problem Solving, Information Management, Interpersonal and Personal. All college programs require its students to demonstrate these skills to graduate. These skills are transferable in all aspects of your life. The EES listed below are what you would be able to show as a result of completing the Office Administration-General program.

Essential Employability Skills for Office Administration- General:	
EES 1	Communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience.
EES 2	Respond to written spoken or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.
EES 5	Use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.
EES 6	Locate, select, organize and document information using appropriate technology and information systems.
EES 8	Show respect for diverse opinions, values, belief systems and contributions of others.
EES 9	Interact with others in groups or teams in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.
EES 10	Manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.
EES 11	Take responsibility for one's own actions, decision and consequences.

Contact Details of the SIP Facilitators

If you have any questions about the Skills Inventory Project please use the contact details below:

James Bay Area (Moosonee, Moose Factory, Fort Albany, Kashechewan, Attawapiskat):

Please contact:

Sara Feero (705-336-2913 Option 1- ext. 5617) or email jbec@northern.on.ca

Timmins, Kirkland Lake, Haileybury and surrounding areas:

Please contact:

Amy Danchuk (705-235-3211 Option 1- ext. 2104) or email danchuka@northern.on.ca

Appendix B

Word Processing and Key Boarding 1



SKILLS INVENTORY PROJECT

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION- GENERAL

Word Processing & Keyboarding I



Name: _____

SIP Facilitator: _____

Date: _____

How to use this booklet

This booklet will give you the opportunity to self-assess the skills you have gained through work experience and compare them to Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLO) and Essential Employability Skills (EES). The aim of the this SIP will be to see if a **Micro Credential** in this Northern College course can be earned. Below are the steps to complete this assessment:

- Read the first statement in the table
- Honestly reflect on your ability to do the task (depending on what you put, you may need to demonstrate this skill to the SIP Facilitator in Phase 2 of this project)
- Once you have decided, tick one category per statement
- Move onto the next statement until the section is complete
- When complete, add up the categories '***I can do it perfectly & I can do it well***' and write it next to **STRENGTHS**. If you did not tick any, write '0'
- Next, add up the categories '***I cannot do it***' & '***I can do it with difficulty***' and write it next to **WEAKNESSES**. If you did not tick any, write '0'.

		Can you do this?				
		I cannot do it	I can do it with difficulty	I can do it well	I can do it perfectly	
Vocational Learning Outcomes- 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11	Essential Employability Skill15- 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10	<input type="checkbox"/> Understand the Microsoft Outlook window and open the calendar folder				✓
		<input type="checkbox"/> Enter, edit and move appointments				✓
		<input type="checkbox"/> Display and print a calendar in daily, weekly and monthly views			✓	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Create and print a To Do List and Contacts List	✓			
Total VLO and EES STRENGTHS (Add the 'I can do it perfectly' and 'I can do it well' categories in this section)		=	<u>3</u>	STRENGTHS		
Total VLO and EES WEAKNESSES (Add the 'I can do it with difficulty' and 'I cannot do it' categories in this section)		=	<u>1</u>	WEAKNESSES		

Module 1- Developing Keyboarding Skills

Unit 1: Ergonomics of the Workstation

Can you do this?

I cannot do it I could do it with difficulty I can do it well I can do it perfectly

Vocational Learning Outcomes- 7	Essential Employability Skills- 6	Set up your workstation ergonomically				
		Recognize the risk factors of musculoskeletal injury				
		Recognize environmental concerns in the office				
		Recognize and cope with stress on the body				

Total STRENGTHS

(Add the 'I can do it perfectly' and 'I can do it well' categories in this section)

=

STRENGTHS

Total WEAKNESSES

(Add the 'I can do it with difficulty' and 'I cannot do it' categories in this section)

=

WEAKNESSES

Module 1- Developing Keyboarding Skills

Unit 2: The Alphabetic Keys

Can you do this?

I cannot do it I could do it with difficulty I can do it well I can do it perfectly

Vocational Learning Outcomes- 7	Essential Employability Skill1s- None	Key the alphabetic keys by touch				
		Use the mouse appropriately				
		Understand the keyboard arrangement				
		Keyboard at a rate of 14 GWAM or more				
		Keyboard using proper technique				

Total STRENGTHS

(Add the 'I can do it perfectly' and 'I can do it well' categories in this section)

=

STRENGTHS

Total WEAKNESSES

(Add the 'I can do it with difficulty' and 'I cannot do it' categories in this section)

=

WEAKNESSES

Module 1- Developing Keyboarding Skills

Unit 3: Figure and Symbol Keys

Can you do this?

I cannot do it I could do it with difficulty I can do it well I can do it perfectly

Vocational Learning Outcomes- 7	Essential Employability Skills- 1, 6	Key the numeric keys by touch				
		Use symbol keys correctly				
		Build keying speed and accuracy				
		Apply correct number expression				
		Apply proofreaders' marks				

Total STRENGTHS

(Add the 'I can do it perfectly' and 'I can do it well' categories in this section)

=

STRENGTHS

Total WEAKNESSES

(Add the 'I can do it with difficulty' and 'I cannot do it' categories in this section)

=

WEAKNESSES

Module 2- Word Processing Skills

Unit 1: Creating Word Documents

Can you do this?

I cannot do it I could do it with difficulty I can do it well I can do it perfectly

Vocational Learning Outcomes- 7	Essential Employability Skills- 1, 6	Learn and apply essential Word 2013 commands				
		Create, save and print documents				
		Apply text, paragraphs and page formats				
		Navigate, review, and edit documents				
		Build keyboarding skills				

Total STRENGTHS

(Add the 'I can do it perfectly' and 'I can do it well' categories in this section)

=

STRENGTHS

Total WEAKNESSES

(Add the 'I can do it with difficulty' and 'I cannot do it' categories in this section)

=

WEAKNESSES

Module 3- Keyboarding Speed

Unit 1: Keyboarding Speed- Achieving a Minimum WPM

Can you do this?

I cannot do it I could do it with difficulty I can do it well I can do it perfectly

Vocational Learning Outcomes- 7	Essential Employability Skill1s- None	Build keyboarding skills (both in speed and accuracy)				
		Achieve a minimum net speed of 25 words per minute				

Total STRENGTHS

(Add the 'I can do it perfectly' and 'I can do it well' categories in this section)

=

STRENGTHS

Total WEAKNESSES

(Add the 'I can do it with difficulty' and 'I cannot do it' categories in this section)

=

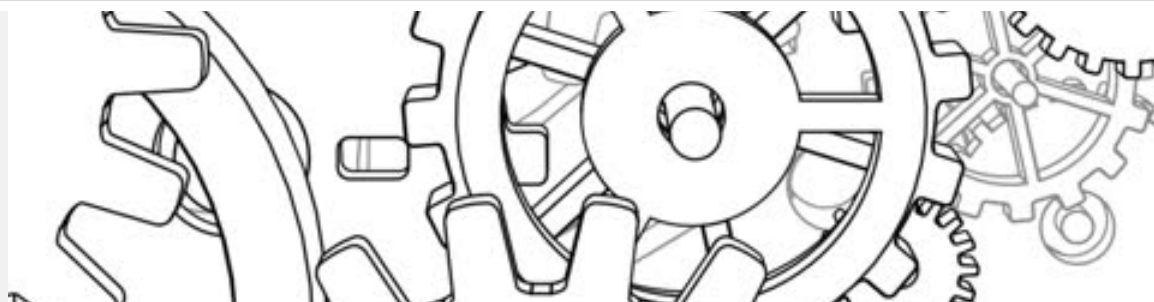
WEAKNESSES

Office Administration- General



End of Assessment

Your SIP Facilitator will look at your results and summarize your strengths and weaknesses.



Word
Processing
and
Keyboarding
I
OF1136

Strengths/ Weaknesses Summary

This page is to be completed by the SIP Facilitator ONLY.

Participant Name:

Date of Assessment:

SIP Facilitator:

Word Processing and Keyboarding I			
Word Processing and Keyboarding I Module / Unit #	Strength Number	Weakness Number	Overall... Strength or Weakness (Strength = 50% + 1)
Module 1- Developing Keyboarding Skills Unit 1: Ergonomics of the Workstation			
Module 1- Developing Keyboarding Skills Unit 2: The Alphabetic Keys			
Module 1- Developing Keyboarding Skills Unit 3: Figure and Symbol Keys			
Module 2- Word Processing Skills Unit 1: Creating Word Documents			
Module 3- Keyboarding Speed Unit 1: Keyboarding Speed- Achieving a Minimum WPM			