

COMPASS[®]: Nuts and Bolts

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- Two components to this session

1) COMPASS the background and mechanics

2) COMPASS the process



COMPASS[®]:
Background and Mechanics
presented by Australian Catholic University



Constructs

COMPASS[®] design was guided by three theoretical constructs:

1. That professional competency can be described.
2. That competence develops with learning and experience.
3. That assessment is complex by nature.

Construct 1: Professional competence can be described

- what is competence in SP?
- ‘competence’ is an individual’s ability to effectively apply all their knowledge, understanding, skills and values within their designated scope of practice (Communicating Quality 3, RCSLT, 2006)
- competence is observed when a speech pathologist effectively provides services, acts professionally and ethically, and reflects critically on their practice (CBOS, 2011, SPA).

Construct 1: Professional competency can be described

Professional competencies

- support the development and maintenance of competent performance of the occupational competencies
 - reasoning
 - communication
 - learning
 - professionalism

Construct 1: Professional competency can be described

professional and occupational competencies need each other. For example:

- competency in assessment requires competency in communication, reasoning, learning and professionalism
- in turn, the student needs opportunities to practise and develop the occupational competencies in order to develop the professional competencies

Construct 2: Competence develops with learning and experience

- develops along a continuum from Novice to Entry-level
- behavioural descriptors can be used to describe the continuum of development on the competences

Construct 2: Competence develops with learning and experience

Behavioural descriptors are developmental hierarchies relating to:

- managing complexity
- integrating and applying knowledge
- the degree of guidance required

Construct 2: Competence develops with learning and experience

- Entry-level competence is the starting point for new graduates
- an Entry-level speech pathologist needs to have professional support and clinical supervision, as well as managerial supervision.
- it is unrealistic to expect that an Entry-level speech pathologist will be competent in all areas of speech pathology practice without access to supervision, guidance and support from a senior member of the profession (CBOS, 2011, SPA, p. 2)

Construct 3: Assessment is complex by nature

- assessment is subjective
- valid assessment judgements are supported if:
 - the assessor is attentive to all features to be assessed (competencies)
 - the assessor is aware of their own preferences (biases)
 - sufficient evidence is collected from multiple observations

Important general guidelines

- refer to and **use the behavioural descriptors** and your **professional judgement** based on your observations of the student to determine VAS ratings
- do NOT take into account other factors, such as:
 - The student's year level or semester of placement
 - Predictions of future competence
 - How you think the student will interpret your rating

COMPASS[®]

Part 2. The Process

First, take a walk through the system:

[https://compass.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/compass/
static/renew/educator-mid/index.html](https://compass.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/compass/static/renew/educator-mid/index.html)

Who has done a COMPASS?

- As a clinician as a student?
 - Pros and cons?
- Benefits and challenges?

The COMPASS process should begin before placement starts

- For each placement: Are you aware of the competencies being assessed?
- Do you know the behavioural descriptors well? Eg. what is 'intermediate' analysis and interpretation/implementation etc.
- Often, educators don't look at COMPASS[®] until a few days before the assessment. Sometimes expectations for the student have been too high or too low....

Try to give feedback against the COMPASS[®] Competencies

- Try to link feedback to the competencies that the students will be assessed against
- Makes it easier to justify your COMPASS[®] assessment and for the student to know what to focus on
- Use the COMPASS ready reckoner (attached)

Mid COMPASS[®] requirements



1. The student rates themselves on all units and elements on the visual analogue scale (VAS)
2. The student emails you with their strengths and weaknesses and general comments about the placement (you will use these to inform your COMPASS[®] completion)
3. You rate the student on all units and elements on the VAS and write comments in the text boxes (you can use some of their comments).
4. Once you SUBMIT the COMPASS[®], the student will be able to see your ratings and comments. It is better NOT to submit, until you have met with the student.

Final COMPASS[®] requirements



1. Ensure you have SUBMITTED the mid COMPASS[®] or you won't be able to access the final COMPASS[®] form
2. The student rates themselves on all units on the VAS (completing the elements is optional) before you commence yours (so you can see their ratings on your screen)
3. The student emails you with their strengths and weaknesses and general comments about the placement before you start your COMPASS[®] evaluation (you can use these)
4. You rate the student on all units on the VAS and provide comments (rating each element is optional)
5. Don't SUBMIT the COMPASS[®] until after you meet with the student.

Prior to the assessment meeting:

Advise the student about what will happen during the COMPASS[®] meeting:

Eg.

- How long it will be (usually 30-45 mins)
- student will provide a general reflection of their experience to date
- Supervisor will provide a progress overview, drawing on themes in the COMPASS[®]
- You will discuss any disparity in ratings
- You will both collaboratively set goals to ensure progression (the student must be active in this process)

The assessment meeting:



- Students will be anxious approaching the assessment; the main thing they want to know is *are they on track or not*.
- Give this information early in the meeting.
- If they are marginal or struggling, talk about the central/global issues rather than going through every unit
- Discuss specific goals
- Ask them to review your COMPASS® comments later that day, and make a follow up appointment discuss the specifics if required.
- SUBMIT the COMPASS® once you feel it accurately reflects the student's competency.

Tips for completing COMPASS when working with a number of students

- Develop a word document of goals/phrases that you can use to cut and paste
- Group your students in terms of competency development i.e. if you have 4 students , 2 may be strong and 2 may be less strong. Complete COMPASS for the two weakest in succession then the two strongest in succession as issues are likely to be similar
- Write goals for improvement under each unit but save the overall positive comments for the final box.

Competency expectations at ACU



- Year 1: Prenovice
- Year 2: Novice
- Year 3: Intermediate
- Year 4: Entry level

(see competency attachment for details)

Thanks for coming!

