

ASSESSING PSYCHOLOGY TRAINEE COMPETENCIES: A NOVEL AND EFFECTIVE TOOL



PROBLEM...

Commonly used rating scales are often simplistic and lack nuanced descriptors that reflect competencies at different developmental stages. Ratings gathered from these scales are frequently prone to halo or leniency bias.

SOLUTION...

VIGNETTE-MATCHING ASSESSMENT TOOL (VMAT)

Our team of highly experienced clinic directors and researchers from 10 Australian and 2 international universities have developed a **Vignette-Matching Assessment Tool (VMAT)** to evaluate trainee competencies.

The VMAT is a catalogue of vignettes that describe clinical scenarios that cover 10 domains of competence.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Supervisors judge their trainee as performing at a level "higher than", "equal to" or "lower than" the profile described in a vignette.

Importantly, the VMAT provides a profile of competencies at **4 developmental stages from Beginner to Competent**. Trainee competencies are compared to scenarios that reflect the expected developmental trajectory.

Domain 2 - Clinical Assessment Skills

Trainee K *efficiently* collects sensitive and complex information in simple and in *unusual* or *difficult* cases and employs the available time with the client to greatest advantage. She/he integrates available information into hypothesis, diagnosis and case formulations. She/he incorporates socio-cultural factors into their clinical assessments. She/he consistently identifies relevant risk factors and formulates appropriate risk assessment and risk management plans.

My trainee has reached a developmental stage that is:

Higher than depicted in this vignette

Equal to that depicted in this vignette

Lower than depicted in this vignette

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HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

Our team is currently undertaking research to assess the existing CYPRS and to examine the reliability, validity and usability of the VMAT. You are invited to trial our [CYPRS online sample assessment](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/vmp/about_the_cyprs) at https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/vmp/about_the_cyprs.



Supported by the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching

If you would like more information about the VMAT, please visit <http://www.uws.edu.au/vmp/home> or email the Project Officer at OLTProjectOfficer@westernsydney.edu.au.

WHAT DOES VMAT MEASURE?

- Relational Competencies
- Clinical Assessment Competencies
- Case Formulation Competencies
- Generic Intervention Competencies
- Cognitive-Behavioural Intervention Competencies
- Psychometric Competencies
- Scientist Practitioner Competencies
- Ethical Practice
- Professionalism
- Response to Supervision

WHAT DOES VMAT OFFER?

The VMAT provides a measure of trainee competency that is **realistic, credible, effective** and **efficient**.

- Measures trainee competencies against **realistic expert-validated vignettes**
- Provides a measure appropriate to the trainee's developmental stage
- Assesses ten essential competencies
- Easy-to-use ONLINE tool
- Accurate and reliable
- Time efficient - takes less than 30 minutes to complete
- Objective
- Reduces leniency bias

