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Occupational Assessments

Operational Guidelines

June 2022

These operational guidelines should be read in conjunction with the:

- Standard Terms and Conditions document; and
- Service Schedule for Initial Occupational Assessment Service and Vocational Independence Occupational Assessment Service ('your contracts').

The services you provide must comply with your contract. Where there are any inconsistencies between the operational guidelines and the Service Schedule, the Service Schedule will take precedence.

This is a living document and will be updated as needed - the latest version will be available on the ACC website at www.acc.co.nz.

Useful Contacts and Telephone Numbers

Service Name	Contact Details
Contracts administrator and health procurement specialist	0800 400 503 health.procurement@acc.co.nz
Client/patient helpline	0800 101 996
Digital Operations eBusiness help	0800 222 994 (option 1) ebusinessinfo@acc.co.nz
Engagement and performance Managers	Engagement and Performance Managers can help the Supplier to provide the services outlined in your contract; contact Provider help services or go to the ACC website - contact our provider relationship team for details of the Engagement and Performance Manager in your region
Provider help	0800 222 070 providerhelp@acc.co.nz
Provider registration	04 560 5211 registrations@acc.co.nz
ACC Portfolio	vrs@acc.co.nz

The ACC website can provide you with a lot of information, especially our 'Health and service providers' section. Please visit www.acc.co.nz

Please report all health, safety and security risks or incidents in writing using the procedure on our website www.acc.co.nz/for-providers/report-health-safety-incidents

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the Occupational Assessment Operational Guidelines. This document is intended as both a guideline for those working to deliver Occupational Assessments and as a framework document for ACC case owners.

These guidelines apply to all professions delivering services under this contract across all geographic regions.

These Operational Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the:

- [Standard Terms and Conditions document](#); and
- Service Schedule for [Initial Occupational Assessment \(IOA\)](#) and [Vocational Independence Occupational Assessment \(VIOA\)](#).

Services must comply with the IOA and VIOA Service Schedule. Where there are inconsistencies between the Operational Guidelines and the IOA and VIOA Service Schedules, the Service Schedules will take precedence.

These guidelines are a living document and will be updated in response to Supplier, Provider and client feedback, Provider service delivery issues, and as part of ACC's continuous improvement process. ACC will notify Suppliers when each new version of the Occupational Assessment Operational Guidelines is issued and that latest version will be available on the ACC website at www.acc.co.nz.

These guidelines cover information about:

- Carrying out Initial Occupational Assessments (IOA) and Vocational Independence Occupational Assessments (VIOA) for ACC clients.
- The details ACC requires in the assessment reports.

2. Overview of Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational rehabilitation is a series of services designed to assist a client to return to work following an injury. For more information see the Accident Compensation Act 2001, [Section 88-109](#).

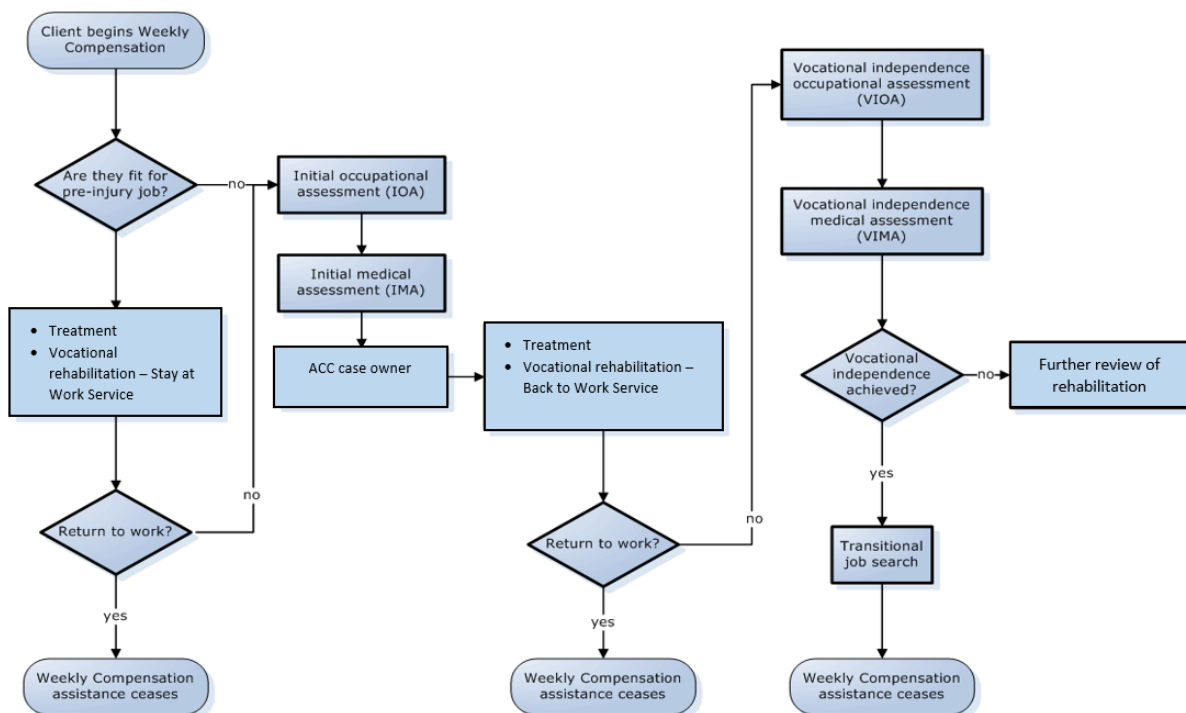
When it is not possible for a client to return to their previous employment, ACC will prepare the client for employment that matches, as closely as possible, their experience and training before their injury. To identify the types of work that may be appropriate for a client, ACC will arrange an Initial Occupational Assessment (IOA) and Initial Medical Assessment (IMA).

These assessments allow ACC to offer rehabilitation focused on addressing the identified needs and barriers that are preventing the client from being able to work. The agreed rehabilitation and treatment is included in the client's [Individual Rehabilitation Plan \(IRP\)](#).

Once the rehabilitation specified in a client's IRP has been completed, ACC will arrange a Vocational Independence Occupational Assessment (VIOA) and Vocational Independence Medical Assessment (VIMA). These assessments consider the outcome of the completed vocational rehabilitation and whether a client can obtain/maintain employment:

- for which the client is suited, by reason of transferable skills (experience, education, and training); and
- for 30 hours or more a week.

The diagram below outlines the vocational rehabilitation pathway a client may take following an injury and where the suppliers of the IOA and VIOA are involved.



3. Overview of the Occupational Assessments

There are three Occupational Assessments:

1. Initial Occupational Assessment (IOA);
2. Vocational Independence Occupational Assessment (VIOA) and;
3. Loss of Potential Earnings (LOPE) S105 Occupational Assessment.

3.1. The Initial Occupational Assessment (IOA)

If it becomes clear that, due to their ACC covered injury, a client may not be able to return to their pre-injury work type ACC will arrange an IOA. The purpose of the IOA is to produce a report that ACC can use to determine the client’s vocational rehabilitation needs.

The Occupational Assessor will identify suitable types of work for the client, considering their education, experience, pre-incapacity earnings, and training. They will also complete a work type detail sheet for each suitable work type, including the client’s pre-injury occupation. These jobs should be something which is realistic for the client to achieve and available in their local region.

3.2. The Vocational Independence Occupational Assessment (VIOA)

Once a client has completed their vocational rehabilitation outlined in their individual rehabilitation plan, ACC will arrange a VIOA.

The purpose of the VIOA is to:

- Consider the IRP prepared with the client.
- Review the vocational rehabilitation carried out and completed under the plan.
- Consider the types of work suitable for the client.

The Occupational Assessor must review the client's vocational rehabilitation, transferable skills (experience, education, and training) and the work types listed in the IRP.

3.2.1 'Next Working Day' Rule

When determining what roles are suitable during the VIOA, the Occupational Assessor must follow the 'next working day' rule. This rule requires that for each work type considered suitable, the client could start working in that role the next work day (if it was available).

For a client to be able to start a work type the next working day, it is essential that the client not only has the skills, but also has completed the necessary training and education. This training and education should have been completed during the client's rehabilitation.

3.3. The LOPE S105 Occupational Assessment

The Loss of Potential Earnings (LOPE) S105 Occupational assessment is part of the process ACC undertakes when considering whether someone is [eligible to receive compensation for a loss of potential earning capacity](#). This assessment is not for those already in receipt of LOPE.

To be eligible to receive compensation for LOPE the client needs to be considered unable, because of their injury, to engage in full-time work for which they are suited given their experience, education or training. They must also:

- have sustained their injury before reaching the age of 18, or while engaged in full-time study or training which has been continuous since before they turned 18; or
- have now turned 18 and been unable to work (over the minimum earner rate) due to their injury for more than 6 months.

***Example:** A young person suffered an injury while studying at university. Because of the injury, the young person failed to complete their study and remained unemployed. Several years later the person lodged a claim with ACC which was accepted. They requested ACC investigate whether they are entitled to receive compensation for loss of potential earnings. As they had been in continuous study since turning 18 and unable to work due to their personal injury, ACC will retrospectively investigate their entitlement to compensation for loss of potential earnings.*

ACC uses the LOPE S105 Occupational Assessment to identify jobs suited to the client by way of experience, education or training. As investigations for LOPE are usually retrospective, the Occupational Assessor must also identify the period during which the client was vocationally suited to each job identified.

When considering job suitability over a period of time, the Occupational Assessor should consider the skills, training, education and licences that the client had gained or lost during the timeline period. The jobs identified should also be or have been available in the labour market during the timeline period.

4. Referrals for Occupational Assessments

4.1. Referrals

When referring for an occupational assessment, the case owner will ensure the client is aware of the referral, its purpose, and their obligation to attending the appointment. Each referral will contain specific information for the Occupational Assessor to read prior to the assessment to familiarise themselves with the client.

4.2. Initial Occupational Assessment (IOA) Referrals

An IOA referral is sent using the ACC98- ACC referral for Vocational Services. This referral form will include:

- A summary of the client's injury and vocational rehabilitation, including the reason for the IOA.
- Any factors that may impact on the assessment, e.g. if the client has communication difficulties, has been identified as a potential risk to the Occupational Assessor, or needs cultural services, such as an interpreter.
- Details of the client's recent employment history, including pre-injury occupation.
- Details of any other planned or agreed rehabilitation interventions.
- Details of the client's earnings before their incapacity. NOTE: Pre-incapacity earnings are the amount recorded as the client's actual weekly earnings at the date of their current incapacity. This could be the date of first incapacity (DOFI) or, if there has been a subsequent incapacity, then these would-be earnings at the date of subsequent incapacity (DOSI).

The referral will include the following supporting documents:

- The client's IRP.
- Where available, previous vocational rehabilitation reports requested by ACC as part of the rehabilitation process.

When a referral is made by the case owner for a Curriculum Vitae (CV) preparation service, this will be noted on the referral letter. Where the referral is just for a CV alone, a recent IOA will be provided which identifies the transferable skills and suitable occupations.

4.3. Vocational Independence Occupational Assessment (VIOA) Referrals

A VIOA referral is sent using the VI03-Vocational Independence Occupational Assessment form. This form will include:

- A summary of the client's injury and vocational rehabilitation, including the reason for the VIOA.
- Any factors that may impact on the assessment, e.g. if the client has communication difficulties, has been identified as a potential risk to the Occupational Assessor, or needs cultural services, such as an interpreter.

The referral will include the following supporting documents:

- An IOA which includes a list of suitable work types.
- An IMA that considers the consequences of the client's injury and whether they can work in each of the work types identified as suitable by the Occupational Assessor, or whether further rehabilitation is required.
- A copy of the client's IRP(s) completed and signed by the client and their case owner. The IRP must list the work type options for the Occupational Assessor to comment on which have been confirmed as medically sustainable by the IMA.
- Case notes and reports relevant to vocational rehabilitation milestones being completed as per the IRP, i.e. any documents that show progress of the planned vocational rehabilitation.
- A copy of the ACC191 Vocational Independence File Summary, Team Review and Quality Check. This follows a branch process to ensure the client is appropriate for referral to Vocational Independence.

- ACC691 Vocational Independence assessment readiness check. This contains any comments made by the client that they considered relevant to the vocational independence Assessors.
- A copy of the client's CV (if available).

4.4 Loss of Potential Earnings (LOPE) S105 Occupational Assessment Referrals

A LOPE S105 Occupational Assessment referral is sent using the ACC6278 Occupational Referral Form. This form will include:

- A summary of the client's injury and any vocational rehabilitation being provided.
- Any factors that may impact on the assessment, e.g. if the client has communication difficulties, has been identified as a potential risk to the Occupational Assessor, or needs cultural services, e.g. an interpreter.
- The period (from one date to another date) that the Occupational Assessor must consider for each of the work types.

The referral will include the following supporting documents:

- Where available, previous vocational rehabilitation reports or any previous occupational assessments.
- The client's IRP.
- A copy of the client's CV (if available).

4.5. Standard and Complex Referrals

The ACC case owner will specify in the referral whether the occupational assessment (IOA or VIOA) is considered standard or complex. The referral should be considered standard unless the following criteria for a complex referral are met:

- A client with more than one injury or significant co-morbidity that will impact on the time required to complete and report on the assessment. This includes a client who has active mental health issues.
- A client with a serious injury, including a traumatic brain injury and/or a spinal cord injury.
- A client with a sensitive claim.
- A client with alcohol and other drug abuse.
- A client with communication issues. i.e. English as a second language or difficulties with receptive or expressive communication.

If the Occupational Assessor identifies any complex assessment criteria when completing the standard assessment, they can recommend a complex assessment. Complex assessments must cover all the standard assessment criteria and any additional issues.

4.6. Approving or Declining a Referral

The Supplier may return any Referral that contains inadequate information to ACC and request further details before accepting the referral. If upon receipt of a referral, or after obtaining further details, the Supplier determines that for any reason they are unwilling or unable to accept the referral, the Supplier must immediately contact ACC to notify decline of the referral.

Suppliers are required to notify the case owner if they are unable to contact the client within three working days of accepting the referral. If the Supplier is unable to commence the assessment within five working days of accepting the referral, the Supplier should contact the case owner to either: negotiate an alternative timeframe or allow the case owner to retract the referral.

Any person who has self-referred to the Supplier in the anticipation of a referral will be referred to ACC. ACC will not pay the Supplier for any service provided or time spent with an individual who has self-referred prior to a formal referral being made.

4.7. Release of Client Information at Referral

The case owner will advise clients about their intention to send any medical information and for what purpose (in line with the [Health Information Privacy Code](#)). Only medical information relevant to the assessment will be provided. For example, medical information may be provided in some circumstance to assist Occupational Assessors in providing recommendations on environmental modifications that may be required for certain work types.

5. Initial Occupational Assessment (IOA) Process

5.1. Interview with the Client

The Occupational Assessor should interview with the client within five working days of accepting the IOA referral. This interview will form the basis of the report and recommendations.

The interview may take place over more than one session so that the Occupational Assessor has time to consider the suitability of the work type options for the client, and the client has time to consider the recommended work types. Follow-up interviews may be conducted over the phone if it is not practical for the client to meet in person. The recommendations the Occupational Assessor will be including in the final report should be discussed at follow-up interviews.

The interview process must include, but need not be limited to:

- Explaining to the client the purpose and process of the IOA.
- Identifying all the client's work experience prior to injury, and since the injury.
- Identifying the client's transferable skills, including experience, education, and training.
- Identifying positive client attributes and competencies that will help their employment options.
- Identifying all types of work available in New Zealand (NZ) which is suitable for the client's experience, education, training, and pre-incapacity earnings, or any combination of these. The Occupational Assessor should aim to identify approximately 12 different work types. In identifying such jobs, the Occupational Assessor will:
 - Consider the client's suitability for each type of work.
 - Be realistic about work options, which must exist in the current labour market.
 - Refer to a variety of publications to reflect the availability of work within NZ, e.g. job vacancies in online advertisements.
 - Ensure that each suitable work type is identified by the 6-digit code in the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations 2006.
 - Comment on the occupation at the 6-digit code level as to whether it is suitable for the client. For example, 'Training and Development Officer (223311)'.
 - Provide information on how each identified work type is relevant to the client's experience, education, or training and pre-incapacity earnings. The Occupational Assessor will use their professional expertise to source earnings information of other work types and will be expected to keep a record of the source(s) they have used to gather the information.
 - Identify and prioritise work types that most closely align with the client's pre-injury occupation, training, experience, and pre-incapacity earnings.

The Occupational Assessor should invite the client to comment and raise any issues. The client's comments must be recorded and will include:

- Any issues and/or concerns prior to recommendations being made to ACC. However, a client's disagreement with some or all the identified types of work is not a reason to exclude the work types from the recommendations. These concerns will be discussed with the client and documented.
- Comments about types of work that are regarded as suitable and available in NZ.
- The client's work preferences and discuss any reasons why these are not considered to be realistic options.
- Any other client reported issues. These may include: job availability, effects of client's injury or any medical conditions, work tasks, salary levels, transportation availability, and child care. However, the scope of the assessments must not be limited by any of these factors.

Occupational Assessment Versus Career Counselling

The role of Occupational Assessors is different from Career Counselling. The occupational assessment is about identifying current skills, training, and experience and from there identifying the types of work suitable to the client based on their assessed skill level. In regard to occupational assessments, work options should closely align with the client's experiences. Client preferences and concerns however should be documented as per section 6.1.

The table below shows the difference between the focus of the occupational assessment, and considerations in career counselling which takes place over several sessions.

Occupational assessment focus	Career counselling focus
Labour Market	Interests
Skills	Significant Others
Educational Background	Personal Style
Work & Leisure Experience	Values

When the client has a serious injury with a significant loss of mental and/or physical functional ability, the Occupational Assessor should ensure an emphasis is placed on identifying the client's interests and choosing meaningful and sustainable work types. This should be discussed with the case owner prior to completing the occupational assessment.

5.2. Report Requirements

The Occupational Assessor should complete the [ACC652 Initial Occupational Assessment Report](#) within 10 working days from receiving the referral. The report must identify:

- The client's current work experience, training (including any work-related training and incomplete formal qualifications), skills, and the dates they obtained their experience, training, skills and qualifications.
- How the client's pre-incapacity earnings have been considered.
- Suitable work type options (stating the 6-digit code) the client could do. Work types identified must be available for 30 hours or more per week and be based on the client's, previous work experience, education and training attainments, transferable skills and pre-incapacity earnings.
- The match between the client's current skills, education, qualifications and pre-incapacity earnings (if appropriate), and the requirements on the work type detail sheet.

Note: if a qualification is **desirable** but not essential, and the client is not qualified but does have the relevant work experience and ability to do a job, then the work can be regarded as suitable, with the rationale for this explained in the report.

- Any potential vocational barriers the client has to obtaining work in the identified areas, and options that will meet these needs, e.g. requirements for any skill development or obtaining of licenses where the client has experience and skills for specific work types.

Example: If a client has the relevant training and experience to operate as a real estate agent, but lacks the actual licence, then gaining this licence can be recommended in the IOA. The client's IRP could then identify the occupation, with obtaining a licence as a step required to achieve this.

Note: This contrasts with the VIOA where the client must be eligible to perform an occupation the '[next working day](#)'.

- Relevant client comments.
- [Work type detail sheets](#) must be included in the report for each of the work types identified as being suitable for the client.

It is ACC's responsibility to send a copy of the report to the client.

5.3. Curriculum Vitae (CV) Preparation

The Curriculum Vitae (CV) should be designed to make the client more marketable to employers. It should be focused on the suitable work types identified in the IOA. The client should be educated in how to use it effectively when seeking work. The client should be provided with both printed and electronic formats of the CV.

6. Vocational Independence Assessment (VIOA) Process

6.1. Interview with the Client

The Occupational Assessor should interview with the client in five working days of accepting the VIOA referral. The interview will form the basis of the report and recommendations. During the interview process, the Occupational Assessor must:

- Review the client's IRP and whether the agreed vocational rehabilitation has been completed.
- Identifying the client's current work experience, training (including any work-related training and incomplete formal qualifications), skills, and the dates they were obtained. The Occupational Assessor should aim to identify approximately 8 different work types. The client must be eligible to perform each work type the '[next working day](#)'.
- When identifying work types with the client, go over work types identified in the IRP and IOA, as well as any other options that have become suitable for the client because of their vocational rehabilitation.

Note: *The Occupational Assessor can consider any additional types of work that belong to the same major industry group as the types of work identified in the IOA or aligned to the types of work in the IOA. The Occupational Assessor may also want to consider the additional work types listed on the ACC191 under 'Rehabilitation details' as these may now be suitable due to the skills the client has gained during rehabilitation.*

- Ensure that each suitable work type is identified by the 6-digit code in the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations 2006.
- Discuss with the client the work types that are identified as suitable for the client.
- Consider any comments the client makes to the Occupational Assessor about those types of work.

The Occupational Assessor should invite the client to comment and raise any issues. The client's comments must be recorded and may include:

- Comments about types of work that are regarded as suitable and available in NZ.
- Any issues and/or concerns prior to recommendations being made to ACC. However, a client's disagreement with some or all the identified types of work is not a reason to exclude the work types from the recommendations. These concerns will be discussed with the client and documented
- Any other issues. These may include: job availability, effects of client's injury or any medical conditions, work tasks, salary levels, transportation availability, and child care. However, the scope of the assessments must not be limited by any of these factors.

The 'Conduct of occupational assessment' is set out in [Schedule 1, clause 25](#) of Accident Compensation Act 2001.

6.2. Report Requirements

The Occupational Assessor should complete the VIOA reports within 10 working days from receiving the referral. The Occupational Assessor is required to complete the following reports:

- [ACC195 Vocational Independence Occupational Assessment report](#)
- [Work Type Detail Sheets](#)
- [ACC197 Vocational Independence Recommendation Form](#)

The ACC195 Vocational Independence Occupational Assessment report should include:

- The client's current work experience, training (including any work-related training and incomplete formal qualifications), skills, and the dates they obtained their experience, training, skills and qualifications.
- How the client's pre-incapacity earnings have been considered.
- Identify the vocational rehabilitation carried out and whether it has been completed.
- A list of the work types identified in the IRP that were determined to be appropriate for them following their IOA and IMA. The client must be able to perform all suitable work types the 'next working day' (see '[Next Working Day' Rule](#)'). Work types identified must be available for 30 hours or more per week and be based on the client's, previous work experience, education and training attainments, transferable skills, and pre-incapacity earnings.
- The match between the client's current skills, education, qualifications and pre-incapacity earnings (if appropriate), and the requirements on the work type detail sheet.
- Any potential vocational barriers to getting a job in the work types identified.
- Any environmental modifications that the Occupational Assessor identifies as necessary to enable the client to function safely in that type of work.
- The work types identified in the IOA that were excluded or removed.
- Relevant client comments.

Work type detail sheets should be provided for each of the work types identified as being suitable for the client. Please refer to [Work Type Detail Sheets](#).

The ACC197 Vocational Independence Recommendation Form should also be completed. This form requires the Occupational Assessor to list the work types identified as suitable for the client in the ACC195 Vocational Independence Occupational Assessment (VIOA) report, and any considered still suitable from the ACC652 Initial Occupational Assessment (IOA) report.

The 'Report on occupational assessment' as set out in [Schedule 1, clause 26](#) of Accident Compensation Act 2001.

VIOA is a unique assessment

Due to the nature of each occupational assessment the content of IOA and VIOA reports will be similar e.g. client's work history and training. However, please avoid copying verbatim, particularly when explaining the rationale for suitability of a particular work type.

7. LOPE S105 Occupational Assessment Process

7.1. Interview with the Client

The Occupational Assessor should meet with the client within five working days of accepting the LOPE S105 Occupational Assessment referral. The interview process should include:

- Explaining to the client the purpose and process of the LOPE S105 Occupational Assessment.
- Identifying the client's current work experience, training (including any work-related training and incomplete formal qualifications), skills, and the dates they were obtained.
- Whether the experience, training, skills and qualification identified are no longer relevant due to:
 - the experience, training, skills and qualification no longer being relevant in the employment market;
 - the experience, training, skills and qualification has been lost due to disuse or other reasons.
- Identifying suitable types of work (stating the 6-digit code) for the client. When identifying suitable work type the Occupational Assessor should:
 - Consider the client's experience, education and training.
 - Consider the vocational requirements on the work type detail sheet.
 - Ensure the work type is available for 30 hours or more per week.
 - Consider the period of time (within the period we are requesting the assessment for) during which the client was vocationally suited to each work type.
- The Occupational Assessor should invite the client to comment and raise any issues. The client's comments must be recorded and will include:
 - Comments about types of work that are regarded as suitable and available in NZ.
 - Any issues and/or concerns prior to recommendations being made to ACC. However, a client's disagreement with some or all the identified types of work, is not a reason to exclude the work types from the recommendations. These concerns will be discussed with the client and documented.
 - Any other client reported issues. These may include: job availability, effects of client's injury or any medical conditions, work tasks, salary levels, transportation availability, and child care. However, the scope of the assessments must not be limited by any of these factors.

7.2. Report Requirements

The Occupational Assessor should complete the ACC195 Loss of Potential Earnings S105 Occupational Assessment Report within 10 working days from receiving the referral. This should include:

- The client's work experience, training (including any work-related training and incomplete formal qualifications), skills, and the dates they obtained their experience, training, skills and qualifications.

- Whether the experience, training, skills and qualification identified are no longer relevant due to:
 - the experience, training, skills and qualification no longer being relevant in the employment market;
 - the experience, training, skills and qualification has been lost due to disuse or other reasons.
- The specific date in which the experience, training, skills and qualification identified are no longer relevant.
- A list of the work types identified as vocationally suitable for the client. The Occupational Assessor should aim to identify approximately 8 work types. The report must include the period during which each work type was vocationally suitable. It should make reference to the skills, training, education, and any necessary licences that the client had during that period, and the vocational requirements on the Work Type Detail Sheet.
- A summary of the recommended work types for the specific time periods.
- [Work Type Detail Sheets](#) should be provided for each of the work types identified as being suitable for the client.
- Any environmental modifications that the Occupational Assessor identifies as necessary to enable the client to function safely in that type of work.
- Relevant client comments.

8. Work Type Detail Sheets

The Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations 2006 (ANZSCO) work type details sheets can be accessed through ACC's website under > Health and service providers > Treatment and recovery > [Work type detail sheets](#).

Work type detail sheets are required to be provided by Occupational Assessors for any suitable work type identified. Work types should be listed in order of priority, with the work types most closely aligning with the client's pre-injury role listed first.

The sheets have been developed to achieve national consistency regarding descriptions of work types. They provide information on work tasks, work environment, work function/activity, qualifications, and other relevant comments.

Note: using a consistent format for work type detail sheets when describing work options helps the Medical Assessor establish whether the client can medically perform the work described.

The ANZSCO sheets are categorised into the following major occupational groups and indexed numerically:

- Managers (Major Group 1)
- Professionals (Major Group 2)
- Technicians and Trades Workers (Major Group 3)
- Community and Personal Service Workers (Major Group 4)
- Clerical and Administrative Workers (Major Group 5)
- Sales Workers (Major Group 6)
- Machinery Operators and Drivers (Major Group 7)
- Labourers (Major Group 8)

When a work option is not covered by an ANZSCO Work Type Detail Sheet

If there is a missing a Work Type Detail Sheet, Occupational Assessors should inform ACC. To do this go to ACC's website under > Health and service providers > Treatment and recovery > Work type detail sheets > [Request a new sheet](#). Please provide the suggested ANZSCO code, job title and the reason for the request.

ACC will periodically update the Work Type Detail Sheets. When developing a new Work Type Detail Sheet, a thorough job analysis is required. A job analysis will involve interviews with current incumbents of the role.

Work Type Detail Sheets are not the only option for Occupational Assessors to use when completing the occupational report for the client, and they do not have to be used if an Occupational Assessor considers that an alternative option is preferable.

9. Quality of reports

Occupational assessment reports are important documents that help develop a client's rehabilitation plan and may be subject to analysis by a reviewer or the court to determine whether the work types identified are appropriate for the client. Because of this, attention should be paid to the following points:

- The Occupational Assessor must confirm that the client has the qualifications required for each work type. Many jobs which were previously unskilled labour now require qualifications for entry into a role. For example, Occupational Assessors should not recommend that the client is suited to counselling work because they "would love to do counselling" unless the client has, as a minimum, a 2-year diploma in counselling.
- The client must also have the skills to realistically perform a role even if the skills are not specifically stated. For example, literacy skills are particularly important to check for and if they are an issue and no alternative work is suitable, literacy skills can be addressed through recommending another vocational service.
- Ensure the client has the appropriate transferable skills for the job. Transferable skills should be grouped according to the client's employment history. Occupational Assessors should use current resources, e.g. Careers New Zealand job descriptions, to identify actual employment duties the client has carried out.
- If there is doubt over whether the information obtained from the interview is factual, it should be verified, e.g. phone calls to organisations to confirm skills required, or a discussion of skills listed in work type sheets.
- When looking at strategies for finding work, the Occupational Assessor should concentrate on industry requirements, and current labour market information pertaining to work types. The strategies need to be comprehensive for rehabilitation planning purposes. A work trial is not always necessary if the client has the relevant skills, education, and experience required for a recommended work type.
- The question of being physically or medically able to engage in work is a medical issue. The Occupational Assessor must only provide evidence on the client's experience, education, or training which will help ACC decide on appropriate vocational rehabilitation.

The case owner will quality review the reports. For VIOA reports, case owners will use a checklist in [Appendix IV – VIOA Checklist](#). This is to ensure that the relevant information has been provided in the report and that the recommendations are consistent with all information provided in the body of the report and the referral information. The Occupational Assessor will promptly review and make any necessary written amendments if a case owner advises that:

- The recommendation is not consistent with the requirements set out in operational guidelines or the Accident Compensation Act 2001 Act ([Schedule 1, clause 26](#)).

- Errors or omissions need to be amended.

10. Barriers to Return to Work

These are not intended to be an exhaustive list and should not exclude other barriers to employment identified by the Occupational Assessor or the client.

Literacy, Numeracy and Computer Literacy

Although not stated as a specific requirement, most jobs require some level of literacy, numeracy and computer literacy. It is important that the Occupational Assessor identifies any literacy issues during the assessment and provides comment in the report.

A short literacy test may be conducted if the Occupational Assessors suspects a deficit in reading and writing skills.

If literacy issues are identified, work types identified as suitable for the client must be sympathetic to these limitations.

The Occupational Assessor may also choose to recommend a more in-depth literacy test and request ACC provide literacy support to the client during any recommended training or licencing.

Criminal convictions

This should be discussed with the client as some occupations exclude potential employees with criminal convictions. For example, many large organisations conduct security screening as a standard procedure in their recruiting process. It is reasonable to ask the client if they have any prior criminal convictions that would affect employment. The work option can still appear in the occupational assessment report with the comment that the client does have prior criminal convictions that may jeopardise actual employment in the work type. If the client refuses to answer the question, this can be noted also.

Job Seeking Experience / Time out of the workforce

The Occupational Assessor should consider the clients previous experience with job seeking and the time out of the work force. The Occupational Assessor may choose to recommend pre-employment modules be completed as part of their vocational rehabilitation. This could include: educating the client on interview skills, writing cover letters, etc.

11. The Individual Rehabilitation Plan (IRP)

The IRP is required by Accident Compensation Act 2001. It is used to document the agreed and planned activities that have been negotiated in partnership between the client and ACC. It is signed by both the client and ACC and is legally binding.

The IRP is an integral part of the client's vocational rehabilitation and vocational independence process. It is a record of the vocational rehabilitation plan agreed and completed. The IRP should be provided to the Occupational Assessor.

The IOA will support the overall rehabilitation outcome goal as stated in the client's IRP.

The IRP should document:

- A clear rehabilitation outcome.
- The work types identified as medically sustainable or likely to be sustainable.
- Agreed medical rehabilitation recommendations from the IMA, or other medical reports.
- Agreed vocational rehabilitation, recommended in the (IOA) or other vocational assessments to overcome barriers to a/some work type/s.
- The rehabilitation activities that have been completed or a clear statement why these have not been completed.

The IRP document is updated throughout a client's rehabilitation. All rehabilitation activities on the IRP should be complete before the client is assessed for vocational independence.

12. Culturally Competent Services

Occupational assessments are client-centred and tailored to meet the cultural needs of clients. Services delivered will recognise and respect individual cultural and spiritual values and beliefs to improve client health and wellbeing. Occupational Assessors should check with clients that information is communicated in a way clients and their family understand.

12.1. Meeting the Cultural Needs of Māori Clients

Occupational Assessors will ensure services are delivered to Māori clients in a way that recognises and respects Māori values and beliefs, and information is communicated in a way that they and their family/whānau understand.

For further information see: [Guidelines on Māori Cultural Competencies for Providers - ACC1625](#) can be downloaded from the acc.co.nz website. Adhering to the requirements of these guidelines will assist Suppliers in meeting their responsibilities for cultural competence and deliver positive health outcomes for Māori clients.

12.2. Clients who Require an Interpreter

If there are any interpreting or cultural needs identified, the Occupational Assessor should discuss these with the case owner. If the client needs an interpreter, a professional interpreter will be provided by ACC to ensure the occupational assessment is conducted in a way that is confidential, effective, and ensures the client is fully aware of what's being asked of them.

The cost of the interpreter service is met by ACC. Payment is conditional on ACC's prior approval that an interpreter is needed, cost effective and appropriate.

12.3. Multiple Support People

To complete a good assessment the client should feel comfortable and relaxed. This may be helped with the support of a friend or relative.

The client has the right to bring a support person/s (friends, family members / whānau, or other representatives) with them for support, provided that the safety of all involved can be assured and the effectiveness of the assessment is preserved. Clients do not have to explain or justify why they want a support person and it may involve more than one person.

However, if the Occupational Assessor is not comfortable with the situation and consider that you cannot undertake the assessment (e.g., a support person/s becomes disruptive and/or obstructs the assessment process) this should be discussed with the client. If the Occupational Assessor cannot resolve the issues, they may need to terminate the assessment and contact the client's case owner.

13. Clients who have a Mental Injury as a Result of Sexual Abuse

During the referral or assessment process, an Occupational Assessor may identify that a client has suffered a mental injury resulting from sexual abuse. In these instances, the Occupational Assessor should discuss a referral to an Integrated Services for Sensitive Claims (ISSC) Provider with the client and case owner.

Comprehensive best practice guidelines for providers of services to people who have experienced sexual abuse can be found on acc.co.nz by searching for *ACC4451 Sexual abuse and mental injury practice guidelines for Aotearoa NZ*. Providers delivering Occupational Assessments to clients who have experienced sexual abuse are expected to incorporate the principles and best practice guidelines outlined in the document.

14. Requirements of Occupational Assessors

Occupational Assessors are required to have at least 2 years of relevant experience in vocational rehabilitation. Vocational rehabilitation experience refers to experience in career decision-making and development, job hunting, and returning to work after illness or accident. ACC will consider the experience on a case-by-case basis.

15. Working with Clients who may pose a Health and Safety Risk

ACC may not always have access to detailed information concerning a client's history, but if a client has been identified as posing a risk, the case owner will be able to provide information relevant to the Occupational Assessor to help mitigate health and safety risks to service providers and others.

ACC clients who meet **two** or **more** of the following criteria are considered to pose a potential risk to safety, and will have a Care Indicator activated by ACC:

- Have continued to demonstrate intimidating and/or offensive behaviour (e.g. body language and verbal dialogue has made employees feel unsafe).
- Been abusive, verbally or in writing.
- Made racist or sexist comments.
- The current actions being undertaken on their claim by ACC are known to have caused or are expected to cause a significantly negative response from the client. For example, Prosecution, Fraud Investigation, cessation of Weekly Compensation, etc.

Clients who meet any one of the following criteria are also considered a hazard and will also have a Care Indicator activated:

- Have been or are physically violent (this unacceptable behaviour may not have occurred directly towards ACC employees).
- Have a history of violence or aggressive behaviour, have known convictions for violence.
- Made threats previously against ACC, ACC employees or agents acting on ACC's behalf.
- Intimidated an employee through written abuse or verbal abuse (face-to-face or over the telephone) to the extent they felt unsafe.
- Exhibited homicidal ideation.

If, for some reason, such as a safety risk or an inability to obtain a history or undertake a physical assessment, the Occupational Assessor considers that the assessment may not be able to continue, they should discuss the situation with the client and try and resolve the situation. Another reason for stopping the assessment is when a client withdraws their consent to continue with the assessment.

If despite discussion the Occupational Assessor are unable to reach a resolution and feel that the assessment should not or cannot continue, they should explain this to the client and terminate the assessment. In this situation, the Occupational Assessor will notify the client's case owner as soon as possible and fully document the reasons for the termination of the assessment in their occupational report.

15.1. Communication Regarding clients with a Care Indicator (Risky)

The case owner of a client with a Care Indicator will advise the Supplier in writing, either:

- Prior to the Suppliers initial contact with the client, or
- If the Supplier is already providing services to the client, as soon as possible when ACC receives new information about client risk.
- Please report any threatening behaviour to the police immediately if you feel that it is warranted in the circumstances and advise ACC and any other parties that are at risk as soon as possible. All threats by ACC clients or their representatives must be reported to ACC in writing using the online form on our website. ACC ask that Suppliers report threats for the protection and safety of ACC staff and other providers that are working with the client.

Supplier safety is a priority and any assessment should be terminated if the client, their advocate or support persons make the Occupational Assessor to feel threatened or unsafe in any way. If the Occupational Assessor's safety is at risk, please notify:

- The client's case owner as soon as possible and fully documents the reasons for the termination of the assessment in the occupational report.
- The police, if warranted in the circumstance.

If the Occupational Assessor choose to continue with assessment of a care indicated client and wish to employ a security guard, then please contact the case owner.

15.2. Reporting Health and Safety Risks and Incidents

Health and safety risks and incidents (including notifiable events as defined by WorkSafe), threats, and other health and safety risks, must be reported to ACC using the procedure and [online form](#) on the ACC website.

16. Privacy and Storage of Client Health Information

Suppliers are bound by the [Health Information Privacy Code 1994](#) regarding collection and storage of health information. This means that:

- Health information may only be gathered for the purpose for which it is required and must be as accurate as possible.
- The client must be informed about why the information is being asked for and give their consent for this information to be gathered.
- The client has the right to see their information and correct any information which is factually incorrect.
- Care must be taken with the storage of client health information and there are limits on the disclosure of this information.
- ACC requires clients to complete an ACC6300 Authority to collect medical and other records form.

16.1. Practical Meaning of the Code

- The Supplier must check they've been sent the right information.

- Use a secure email address for correspondence which includes personal client health information. Secure email is an email account with password and security features that only you and authorised people can access.
- Check every email address to ensure that the email is going to the intended recipient.
- Documents which are password protected may be blocked by ACC's fire wall.
- Remember not to discuss health issues with the employer. The employer needs to know about time frames and fitness for work, supports and accommodation. It's not necessary for the employer to have personal health information.
- Store information responsibly. For example, personal client information shouldn't be left unattended in your car or unsecured at your personal residence.
- Further information and advice on ACC's requirements for supplier storage of personal and health information can be found on our [website](#).

17. Service Management

17.1. Engagement and Performance Manager Meetings

Engagement and Performance Managers (EPMs) may meet with Suppliers as arranged between the parties to discuss any issues which have been escalated to the EPMs from ACC, clients, other health providers, or other stakeholders. Suppliers are encouraged to raise any issues in relation to meeting their performance requirements with the EPM.

17.2. Non-attendance Fee

Clients have responsibilities to participate and co-operate in their rehabilitation. Clients should notify their ACC case owner or the Occupational Assessor if they are unable to keep their appointment, or where there are unexpected changes in their circumstances.

Where a client appears unwilling to participate in the occupational assessment, the Occupational Assessor will determine the best way to manage this situation. Ongoing non-attendance or lack of engagement is a flag that the Occupational Assessor is expected to discuss this with the case owner.

ACC expects that Occupational Assessors will make all reasonable efforts to remind the client of the appointment such as an appointment card, a reminder letter, a phone call, or a text message to the client.

Occupational Assessors can invoice ACC for a client non-attendance fee if the client does not attend their appointment and fails to give 24 hours' notice (see the IOA Service Schedule or VIOA Service schedule for details):

The Occupational Assessor must:

- Make every effort to contact the client to determine why they did not attend.
- Notify the ACC case owner within 24 hours of the non-attendance by email.
- The price for client non-attendance fees is specified in the IOA Service Schedule or VIOA Service Schedule.

17.3. Travel

Guidelines for provider travel can be found on ACC's website, see [Providers/Invoicing and Payment/Supplier travel service: Travel guideline and calculator tool](#)

18. Working with ACC – Resolving Issues

Occupational Assessors should contact the ACC case owner in the first instance if there are any matters requiring clarification. For any matters that needs further escalation, please refer to the [“Resolving issues together”](#) process map or the [Standard Terms and Conditions](#).

This is especially important for any issue with the potential to be high risk, involves risk to a client, or risk to ACC’s reputation. For contact details please see list of contacts at beginning of this document.

If there has been a high risk or adverse event, such as a:

- Privacy breach.
- Personal or client harm or safety issue.
- Contract breach.
- Media risk.

The Occupational Assessor or Supplier must tell ACC immediately by either:

- Contacting the Engagement and Performance Manager.
- Contacting the Provider Helpline on 0800 222 070.

It is important to make contact and not just leave a message.

19. Appendices

19.1. Appendix I – Glossary

Case owner – The ACC Case Co-ordinator, Case Manager, Recovery Assistant, Recovery Coordinator, or Recovery Partner who is co-ordinating the client's rehabilitation.

Occupational Assessor – Assessor whom ACC considers having the appropriate qualifications and experience to complete occupational assessments.

19.2. Appendix II – Relevant Forms

These forms can be found at the [ACC website](#):

- ACC652 Initial Occupational Assessment Report
- ACC195 Vocational Independence Occupational Assessment Report
- ACC196 Vocational Independence Assessment Job Details Sheet
- ACC197 Vocational Independence Assessment Recommendation
- ACC7416 Loss of Potential Earnings S105 Occupational Assessment Report

19.3. Appendix III – Relevant Legislation

Relevant extracts from the Accident Compensation Act 2001

[Section 80 Purpose of vocational rehabilitation](#)

[Section 85 Corporation liable to provide vocational rehabilitation](#)

[Section 86 Matters to be considered in deciding whether to provide vocational rehabilitation](#)

[Section 87 Further matters to be considered in deciding whether to provide vocational rehabilitation](#)

[Section 88 Vocational rehabilitation may start or resume if circumstances change](#)

[Section 89 Assessment of claimant's vocational rehabilitation needs](#)

[Section 91 Conduct of initial occupational assessment](#)

[Section 105 Corporation to determine incapacity of certain claimants who, at time of incapacity, had ceased to be in employment, were potential earners, or had purchased weekly compensation under section 223](#)

[Section 106 Effect of determination under section 105 on entitlement to weekly compensation](#)

[Section 107 Corporation to determine vocational independence](#)

[Section 108 Assessment of claimant's vocational independence](#)

[Section 109 When claimant's vocational independence to be assessed](#)

[Schedule 1 Clause 24 Occupational assessor](#)

[Schedule 1 Clause 25 Conduct of occupational assessment](#)

[Schedule 1 Clause 26 Report on occupational assessment](#)

[Schedule 1 Clause 47 Corporation to pay weekly compensation for loss of potential earnings capacity](#)

19.4. Appendix IV – VIOA Checklist

Case owner to ensure that a Vocational Independence Occupation Assessment (VIOA) report meets ACC quality standards before confirming with the assessor the acceptance of the report and sending the report to the client.

Use this checklist following the receipt of a VIOA report to help you review the report and ensure it meets our quality standards.

Evaluate the VIOA report to ensure that:	
Client's name, date of birth, address and ACC claim number are correctly recorded on the report	<input type="checkbox"/>
A review of the initial occupational assessment (IOA), Recovery Plan (RP) / Individual Rehabilitation Plan (IRP) and the vocational rehabilitation provided by ACC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Client's work experience, education (including any incomplete formal qualifications) and any work-related training have been identified	<input type="checkbox"/>
The report comments on any transferrable skills the client may have	<input type="checkbox"/>
The report contains details of any work trials that were undertaken and how successful they were	<input type="checkbox"/>
The report contains types of work that are of interest to the client and the reasons these may or may not be considered realistic	<input type="checkbox"/>
The report identifies suitable work types that relate to the client's experience, training and transferrable skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
The report has given consideration on how each work type compares to the client's pre-incapacity earnings	<input type="checkbox"/>
The report includes strategies required to assist the client to become work ready for each work type	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identified work types are appropriate and available (e.g. considering the client's location or being within a reasonable commuting distance)	<input type="checkbox"/>
If the skills needed for a work type have changed since the client last worked in that field, e.g. due to technology, the assessor has checked the client's training and experience match the skills now needed	<input type="checkbox"/>
The report shows consideration of the client's numeracy, literacy, language, and computer skills if relevant for any of the identified work types	<input type="checkbox"/>
The identified work types reflect the current labour market	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barriers to employment identified	<input type="checkbox"/>
If needed, the assessor has specified any environmental modifications that may be required to assist the client to function safely in the identified work types (e.g. if the job can be completed with technology, such as voice-activated software, this is discussed for each of the identified work types where relevant in the body of the report)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any information provided by ACC and the client to the assessor is noted in the report	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reasons have been provided for removing any work type identified in the IOA	<input type="checkbox"/>
A comprehensive job details sheet for each identified work type has been included	<input type="checkbox"/>

19.5. Appendix V – Example of Recommended Suitable Work Types

Extract from [ACC7416 Loss of Potential Earnings s105 Occupational Assessment Report](#).

12. Recommended suitable work types	
List the work types you've identified as suitable for this client:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider the skills, training, education and licences that this client has gained or lost. state specific time periods in which the work types identified are/were suitable. 	
Specific time periods	List the work types suitable for this client in each time period.
19/02/2007 to 30/01/2008	Admissions Clerk Accounts Clerk Bank Worker Bookkeeper
31/01/2008 to 05/05/2011	Accounting Technician Admissions Clerk Accounts Clerk Bank Worker Bookkeeper <div style="border: 1px solid orange; padding: 5px; margin-left: 20px;"> <i>Client graduates with a diploma in Accounting. The role Accounting Technician is now suitable.</i> </div>
06/05/2011 to current	Accountant (General) Taxation Accountant Accounting Technician Admissions Clerk Accounts Clerk Bank Worker Bookkeeper <div style="border: 1px solid orange; padding: 5px; margin-left: 20px;"> <i>Client graduates with a degree in Accounting. The role Accountant and Taxation Accountant is now suitable.</i> </div>

19.6. Appendix VI – US Department of Labor Physical Demand Characteristics of Work

Overview

The 37.02 US Department of Labour Physical Demand Characteristics of Work chart lists the occupational requirements for physical exertion.

Parameters

- Amount of weight moved at work
- Relative frequency that activity occurs during workday (occasional, frequent or constant).

Physical demand level	Occasional (0-33% of the workday)	Frequent (34-66% of the workday)	Constant (67-100% of the workday)	Typical energy required
Sedentary	10lbs (4.5 kilos)	negligible	negligible	1.5-2.1 METS
Light	20lbs (9 kilos)	10lbs (4.5 kilos) and/or walk and/or stand with operation of controls	negligible and/or operate controls while seated	2.2-3.5 METS
Medium	20-50lbs (9-22.7 kilos)	10-25lbs (4.5-11.4 kilos)	10lbs (4.5 kilos)	3.6-6.3 METS
Heavy	50-100lbs (22.7-45.4 kilos)	25-50lbs (11.4-22.7 kilos)	10-20lbs (4.5-9 kilos)	6.4-7.5 METS
Very heavy	> 100lbs (45.4 kilos)	> 50lbs (> 22.7 kilos)	20lbs (> 9 kilos)	> 7.5 METS

Where

- Operation of controls includes pushing and/or pulling of arm and/or leg controls
- Operating controls while seated includes pushing medicaland/or pulling of arm and/or leg controls.

Reference

Matheson LN. Chapter 18: Functional Capacity Evaluation, pp 168-188. In: Demeter SL, Andersson GBJ, Smith GM. *Disability Evaluation*. Mosby. American Medical Association. 1996.