

## User Guide to Creating a Gap Analysis and Educational Need

### What

A **gap analysis** is a systematic process used to identify discrepancies between current and desired knowledge, skills, or performance levels in a given field. It helps educators determine what learners currently know or do versus what they **should** know or do based on best practices, industry standards, or regulatory requirements.

An **educational needs** report is a structured document that outlines the findings of the gap analysis and provides recommendations for an educational intervention. It does not need to be more than a few paragraphs long. It serves as a roadmap for designing an effective learning activity that addresses identified deficiencies.

### Purpose

The gap analysis and educational need report play an integral role in ensuring that planned educational activities are evidence-based, targeted, and effective. By systematically identifying deficiencies in knowledge, skills, behaviours, or attitudes, educators can design interventions that effectively bridge these gaps.

A well-executed gap analysis and needs assessment;

- Enhance learner engagement,
- Improve outcomes, and;
- Supports compliance with accreditation and regulatory standards.

## How

This guide walks users through a step-by-step process:

1. **Purpose of the Report:** Explain why this gap analysis was conducted (e.g., compliance with industry standards, improvement of learner performance, improving clinical decision-making skills, procedural training, or communication skills).
2. **Target learners:** Define the group for whom the educational activity is being designed e.g., healthcare professionals, doctors, pharmacists, community healthcare providers, noting that there may be more than one.
3. **Scope:** Outline the focus of the gap analysis e.g., specific skills, knowledge areas, competencies and geographical scope including local hospital, regional training, national program.
4. **Gather Stakeholder input:** Identify key stakeholders - doctors, medical educators, hospital administrators, and professional bodies. Use focus groups and interviews to collect their perspective and engage patient advocacy groups if relevant.
5. **Gather Data:** – Including, but not limited to; surveys, assessments, reports, evidence-based publications, government data, performance reviews, and stakeholder input to evaluate current competencies. Ensure that data is referenced with appropriate citations.
6. **Identify the Gap:** Compare existing knowledge, skills, and behaviours against desired standards.
7. **Analyse Root Causes:** Determine why the gap exists e.g., lack of training, outdated information, systemic barriers, updated best practice guidelines.
8. **Prioritise Needs:** Rank gaps based on urgency, impact on performance, and feasibility of addressing them.
9. **Create the Report:** Summarise findings and proposed solutions in a clear, actionable format for stakeholders.

Write your Gap Analysis and Educational Need