WHS DOCUMENTS & TEMPLATES

DOC-BHL-VOC · Backhoe Loader VOC Assessment Template

Product Overview

For: Businesses whose workers operate backhoe loaders: owners, supervisors, WHS advisers and workplace assessors

Version 1.0 · 9 November 2026

An editable verification of competency (VOC) for backhoe loader operators: check, and record, that a operator can do the work safely at your site.

Backhoe loaders strike people with the boom and bucket, hit underground and overhead services, and tip on slopes and edges. A card does not show that an operator sets up, digs near services and changes ends safely on your machine. A verification of competency is how a business checks that, and keeps a record of it.

This template gives the assessor everything in one place: the scope, the pre-assessment checks, knowledge questions with a separate marking guide, a practical observation checklist, the safety-critical fail criteria that stop an assessment, the evidence to keep, the outcome, sign-off and the review date.

Under the WHS Regulations, and in Victoria the OHS Regulations, operating a backhoe loader is not high risk work that needs a licence. The business must still make sure each operator is competent, trained and supervised for the work. Some sites and principal contractors ask for more, such as a unit of competency or a site authorisation, and anyone doing construction work needs general construction induction training (the white card). Driving on a public road needs the right driver licence. Lifting suspended loads with a backhoe has its own requirements: check them before it is done. A VOC is the business's own check that an operator can work safely on its equipment, at its site: it is not a licence and it is not a nationally recognised qualification.

What is included

Item	File
VOC assessment tool: candidate and assessor details, scope, pre-assessment checks, practical observation checklist, safety-critical fail criteria, evidence, outcome, sign-off and review date	02_VOC_ASSESSMENT/Backhoe Loader VOC Assessment Tool.docx and .pdf
Knowledge questions, candidate version	02_VOC_ASSESSMENT/Backhoe Loader VOC Knowledge Questions (Candidate).docx and .pdf
Marking guide with model answers, assessor version	02_VOC_ASSESSMENT/Backhoe Loader VOC Marking Guide (Assessor).docx and .pdf
Excel VOC register: who is verified, on what, and when they are due	02_VOC_ASSESSMENT/Backhoe Loader VOC Register.xlsx
Start here: Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms, Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (four PDFs)

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Right-click > Change Picture

[Company name]

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Backhoe Loader VOC Assessment Tool

Verification of competency for one operator, on the backhoe loader in scope, at [Site name]

Purpose	To check, and record, that a worker can operate safely on your backhoe loader, at your site, following your procedures.
When to use it	Before a new worker does the work unsupervised at the site; when they start on a new type of machine, attachment or task; at the re-verification interval your business sets; and after any of the review triggers in Part K.
Who completes it	An assessor your business has chosen as competent to assess (see Part B). The candidate completes the knowledge questions and signs Part J.
What goes with it	The Knowledge Questions (Candidate) for the candidate to answer, the Marking Guide (Assessor) with the model answers, and the VOC Register to track who is verified and when they are due.

Before you start

- Agree the scope (Part C) with the candidate's supervisor: what the candidate will do, on what, and where.
- Do the pre-assessment checks (Part D) before anything else. If one fails, do not start.
- The candidate answers the knowledge questions. Mark them with the Marking Guide and record the result in Part E.
- Observe the practical work (Part F) in the real work area, during normal work where it is safe, with other people kept clear.
- Watch for the safety-critical fail criteria (Part G) the whole time. Any one stops the assessment.
- Record the evidence, the outcome and the re-assessment plan (Parts H and I), give feedback, and sign off with the candidate (Part J).

Licences, training and the VOC

Under the WHS Regulations, and in Victoria the OHS Regulations, operating a backhoe loader is not high risk work that needs a licence. The business must still make sure each operator is competent, trained and supervised for the work. Some sites and principal contractors ask for more, such as a unit of competency or a site authorisation, and anyone doing construction work needs general construction induction training (the white card). Driving on a public road needs the right driver licence. Lifting suspended loads with a backhoe has its own requirements: check them before it is done. A VOC is the business's own check that an operator can work safely on its equipment, at its site: it is not a licence and it is not a nationally recognised qualification.

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Part A Candidate details

Name		**Position or role**	
Employer (if a contractor or labour hire)		**Employee or worker ID**	
Training or units of competency held (where required)		**Training completed (course and date)**	
Experience with this backhoe loader		**Last VOC or training (date)**	

Part B Assessor details

Name		**Position or role**	
Experience in this work (backhoe loader)		**Licence or training held (where relevant)**	
Assessor training or experience		**Relationship to the candidate (for example, supervisor, peer, external)**	

The assessor should not assess work they are not competent to do themselves. Where the assessor is the candidate's direct supervisor, record it above. It is allowed, but an independent assessor is preferred where practicable.

Part C Scope of this VOC

This VOC covers only the machine, ends and attachments ticked and written here.

Tasks (tick each task assessed)	Attachments and conditions (tick each one in scope)
☐ Backhoe digging and trenching	☐ Backhoe bucket
☐ Front loader work (loading, carrying, spreading)	☐ Quick hitch
☐ Truck loading	☐ Hydraulic hammer
☐ Travel on site and on roads	☐ Four-in-one front bucket
☐ Other: _____	☐ Pallet forks
	☐ Work near underground services
	☐ Work near overhead powerlines
	☐ Other: _____

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Backhoe Loader VOC Knowledge Questions (Candidate)

Answer in your own words. You may answer out loud and have the assessor write it down.

Name		Date	
Machine		Site	

For the candidate

These questions check that you know how to do this work safely at this site. Answer every one in your own words. Short answers are fine. If you have trouble reading or writing, tell the assessor: they will read the questions to you and write down your answers.

1. What do you need to operate this backhoe here? ★ critical

The rest of this page, and the rest of this document, are in the full product.

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Backhoe Loader VOC Assessment Template

END OF THE FREE SAMPLE

This sample shows a few pages, so you can judge the layout and the quality. An editable verification of competency (VOC) for backhoe loader operators: check, and record, that a operator can do the work safely at your site.

What the full product contains

- **VOC assessment tool: candidate and assessor details, scope, pre-assessment checks, practical observation checklist, safety-critical fail criteria, evidence, outcome, sign-off and review date**
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Formats

- Word (.docx), editable, with your logo and business name in the header
- Excel (.xlsx), editable, with dropdowns and formulas
- PDF copies of the Word documents, for printing blank
- Delivered as a single ZIP download

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