WHS DOCUMENTS & TEMPLATES

DOC-CHS-VOC · Chainsaw VOC Assessment Template

Product Overview

For: Businesses whose workers use chainsaws for cross-cutting, limbing and basic felling: owners, supervisors, WHS advisers and workplace assessors

Version 1.0 · 9 November 2026

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

Chainsaw injuries are severe: cuts to legs and hands, kickback to the face and neck, and people struck by falling timber. A course certificate does not show that an operator checks the saw, wears the PPE and cuts safely at your site, or knows when a job is for a specialist. 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.

No licence is needed to use a chainsaw under WHS or OHS laws. The business must make sure each operator is trained and competent for the work they do, and many businesses and sites require a unit of competency for chainsaw operation. Felling beyond basic small trees, trees under tension, hazardous or damaged trees, and work at height in trees are specialist work for trained and experienced arborists or fallers: this VOC does not cover them. A VOC is the business's own check that an operator can work safely 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/Chainsaw VOC Assessment Tool.docx and .pdf
Knowledge questions, candidate version	02_VOC_ASSESSMENT/Chainsaw VOC Knowledge Questions (Candidate).docx and .pdf
Marking guide with model answers, assessor version	02_VOC_ASSESSMENT/Chainsaw VOC Marking Guide (Assessor).docx and .pdf
Excel VOC register: who is verified, on what, and when they are due	02_VOC_ASSESSMENT/Chainsaw VOC Register.xlsx
Start here: Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms, Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (four PDFs)

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Chainsaw VOC Assessment Tool

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

Purpose	To check, and record, that a worker can operate safely on your chainsaw, 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

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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 chainsaw		**Last VOC or training (date)**	

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Part B Assessor details

Name		**Position or role**	
Experience in this work (chainsaw)		**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 tasks ticked and written here: cross-cutting, limbing and basic felling of small trees. It does not cover specialist felling, trees under tension, hazardous trees or work at height.

Task (tick each task assessed)	Saw and conditions (tick each one in scope)
☐ Cross-cutting on the ground ☐ Limbing (de-limbing) fallen timber ☐ Basic felling of small trees with no complications ☐ Maintenance: chain, bar and sharpening ☐ Other: _____	☐ Petrol chainsaw ☐ Battery chainsaw ☐ Pole saw (from the ground) ☐ Storm or wind-thrown timber (assessed only for cross-cutting of timber not under tension) ☐ Near roads, paths or the public ☐ Other: _____

Saw make and model		**Equipment ID**	
Bar length		**Chain brake type**	
Site		**Work areas**	
Timber sizes		**People and traffic nearby**	

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Chainsaw VOC Knowledge Questions (Candidate)

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

Name		Date	
Saw		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 work can you do under this VOC, and what must you leave to a specialist? ★ critical

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

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Chainsaw 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 chainsaw operators: check, and record, that a operator can do the work safely at your site.

What the full product contains

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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

Get the full editable documents

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