WHS DOCUMENTS & TEMPLATES

DOC-EXC-VOC · Excavator VOC Assessment Template

Product Overview

For: Businesses that operate excavators: owners, supervisors, WHS advisers and workplace assessors

Version 1.0 · 9 November 2026

An editable verification of competency (VOC) for excavator operators: check, and record, that an operator can use your excavator safely at your site.

No licence shows that a person can operate your excavator, with your attachments, near your services and your people. 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 from pre-start to shutdown (services, overhead lines, the exclusion zone, the quick hitch), 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 an excavator 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, principal contractors and industries ask for more, such as a unit of competency from the Resources and Infrastructure Industry (RII) training package or a site authorisation, and anyone doing construction work needs general construction induction training (the white card). Mining has its own rules. A VOC is the business's own check that an operator can work safely on its machine, at its site: it is not a licence and it is not a nationally recognised qualification. Lifting suspended loads with an excavator has its own requirements: check them before it is done.

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/Excavator VOC Assessment Tool.docx and .pdf
Knowledge questions, candidate version	02_VOC_ASSESSMENT/Excavator VOC Knowledge Questions (Candidate).docx and .pdf
Marking guide with model answers, assessor version	02_VOC_ASSESSMENT/Excavator VOC Marking Guide (Assessor).docx and .pdf
Excel VOC register: who is verified, on what, and when they are due	02_VOC_ASSESSMENT/Excavator VOC Register.xlsx
Start here: Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms, Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (four PDFs)

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Excavator VOC Assessment Tool

Verification of competency for one operator, on one class of excavator, at [Site name]

Purpose	To check, and record, that a worker can operate safely on your excavator, 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 an excavator 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, principal contractors and industries ask for more, such as a unit of competency from the Resources and Infrastructure Industry (RII) training package or a site authorisation, and anyone doing construction work needs general construction induction training (the white card). Mining has its own rules. A VOC is the business's own check that an operator can work safely on its machine, at its site: it is not a licence and it is not a nationally recognised qualification. Lifting suspended loads with an excavator has its own requirements: check them before it is done.

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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)		**Construction induction card number (for construction work)**	
Experience on this size and type of excavator		**Last VOC or training on this type (date)**	

Part B Assessor details

Name		**Position or role**	
Experience in this work (excavator)		**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 what is ticked and written here. An operator verified on a 5 tonne excavator with a bucket is not verified on a 30 tonne machine, or with a hammer, or for lifting.

Excavator class (tick the one being assessed)	Attachments and tasks (tick each one assessed)
☐ Mini excavator (under about 5 tonnes)	☐ Digging or trenching bucket
☐ Midi excavator (about 5 to 10 tonnes)	☐ Batter or mud bucket
☐ Excavator over 10 tonnes: tracked	☐ Quick hitch (coupler)
☐ Wheeled excavator	☐ Hydraulic hammer or breaker
☐ Zero or reduced tail swing	☐ Auger
☐ Other: _____	☐ Grab or rake
	☐ Lifting with a rated lifting point (only if the business allows it)
	☐ Loading trucks
	☐ Other: _____

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Excavator VOC Knowledge Questions (Candidate)

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

Name		Date	
Excavator class		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 training or authorisation do you need to operate this excavator at this site? ★ critical

2. What do you check before you use the excavator each shift? What do you do if you find a defect? ★ critical

3. How do you know it is safe to dig here? ★ critical

4. What must you do when working near overhead powerlines? ★ critical

5. What is the exclusion zone around the excavator, and what do you do if someone enters it? ★ critical

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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 excavator operators: check, and record, that an operator can use your excavator 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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