

Guidelines for Use of the Model Cultural Orientation Assessment

The Model Cultural Orientation (CO) Assessment consists of 11 questions that can be administered to refugees who participate in Reception and Placement cultural orientation to assess their understanding of key CO concepts.

The process of developing this assessment included the following steps:

1. Creation of the R&P Objectives and Indicators.
2. Identification of a list of indicators within the R&P Objectives and Indicators critical to survival and assessable at the end of R&P CO.
3. Development of one or more questions for each of the critical indicators.
4. Selection of questions from Step 3 that were considered to be *valid* (i.e., they are meaningful, non-ambiguous, and closely related to the indicator of interest) and which sampled a broad domain of CO topics.

The assessment is designed to be administered at the completion of R&P CO. It is intended to be one measure that can be used along with others to evaluate the effectiveness of CO. Please see the Assessment Toolkit for additional general information about assessment and evaluation and how the results of the Model CO Assessment can be used.

Timing and Participation

- It is expected that this assessment can be completed by all refugees who participate in CO.
- The assessment should be given to one refugee at a time. It is not intended to be given to a group or for individuals to confer with each other.
- The assessment should be administered in one sitting if possible. If the administration of the assessment is interrupted and restarted the same day, the assessor may pick up from where s/he left off, otherwise the assessor should start from the beginning.

Language and Wording

- The assessment should be administered in a language that the participant can understand, so translation into languages other than English is encouraged. The Center for Applied Linguistics will be translating the assessment over time into primary languages spoken by refugees.
- In order to ensure consistency across participants, it is preferable to translate the assessment ahead of time rather than to rely on an interpreter to translate during the assessment. It is also good practice to have the instrument translated into a language and then back-translated into English in order to ensure that the question still has the same meaning as originally intended.

- Whether administered in English or other languages, locally- or culturally-relevant terms should always be used when terms in the original question might be unfamiliar (for example, “grocery store,” “supermarket,” or “bodega” would all be acceptable based on local circumstances).
- Any term used in English or other languages may be defined or rephrased if the participant does not understand the word.

Local Adaptation

- Because the assessment is not being used in a standardized way across agencies, national agencies may choose to adapt the assessment questions or scoring guidelines. It is recommended that agencies occasionally review responses to provide guidance on correct and incorrect answers to assessors.
- Local resettlement agencies should work with their national headquarters to determine the degree to which assessments should be adapted for different populations within a site or across sites. Whether assessments should be adapted or should be consistent across sites depends mostly on the uses for the data (i.e., to compare across people or sites, you need to ask the same questions in roughly the same way).
- The questions on the model assessment are ordered so as to intersperse more and less cognitively challenging questions so that participants can feel successful answering “easy” questions before and after answering “hard” ones. Questions may be reordered but it is recommended to maintain this basic principle. It is recommended that #7 (things to do to become employed) immediately follow #6 (how will you get money) as they are logically related, and that #9 come after these two questions so that participants have had a chance to reflect positively on how they will earn money.

Scoring

- Partial credit should only be awarded where indicated. Credit should not be awarded for answers that are “close,” although in many cases there are prompts that can be asked to allow respondents to be more specific or to try again.
- Some questions for which it is possible that participants may give vague and partially correct answers include an optional prompt. In the answer section on the right side of each question, you may only check () one box per row (e.g., “correct” OR “prompt” OR “incorrect”). Credit can only be given for items that are marked “Correct,” “Fully correct,” “Correct but requires prompt,” and “Displayed or said correctly.” When “Incorrect” or “Prompt” are checked, these should not be given credit.
- If refugees are exempt from question 11, you may skip that question and check the box under “exempt.” At the end of the assessment you will indicate the total points awarded out of ten questions attempted instead of eleven.

- It is intended that this assessment will only be administered once per participant. During the administration of the assessment, do not indicate to the participant whether the participant gave a correct or incorrect response. After the assessment has been concluded, you may go over the results with the participant and/or re-teach concepts as necessary.
- There is no universal “passing score.” Depending on the use of assessment results and after some initial data is gathered on how well participants do, agencies or affiliates may create guidelines for what constitutes a “good” result.

