



TASER

A practical guide to understanding and assessing training results

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This guide provides an overview of the Training Assessment System for Evaluation and Reporting (TASER), including what it is, how it can be used to assess training effectiveness, and key considerations when applying the framework. It is intended as an introduction to TASER rather than a detailed implementation manual.

What is TASER?

TASER (Training Assessment System for Evaluation and Reporting) is an assessment framework that helps organisations monitor training quality, assess training effectiveness, and understand the value generated by training investments.

Originally developed by Itad for use by the military to measure the results of UK-funded training delivered to African peacekeeping forces, TASER has since been applied across a wide range of military and civilian training contexts. It provides a practical and robust approach to understanding whether training is delivering meaningful and sustainable results.

TASER addresses a common challenge faced by organisations that deliver and fund training. Approaches to monitoring training results are often inconsistently applied or absent, rely heavily on a limited number of information sources, and struggle to assess whether training leads to changes in practice, performance or organisational effectiveness.

TASER provides a structured framework for assessing training design, delivery and results, including real-world application and impact. For those delivering or funding training, TASER can support continuous improvement in training design and delivery, strengthen reporting on results, inform future investment decisions, and demonstrate value for money.



What questions can TASER help you answer?

If you are involved in the delivery or funding of training, TASER can provide a structured way of answering important questions about training design, delivery, effectiveness and value. These might include:

- Are we training the right people?
- Is the training content appropriately designed for its audience, objectives and operational context?
- How can training content or delivery be improved to increase learning and uptake?
- How are participants applying new skills and knowledge after training?
- Has training improved individual performance?
- What contextual, cultural or institutional factors support or hinder the application of learning?
- How is training contributing to wider organisational performance and effectiveness?
- Are training results aligned with our objectives?
- What evidence is there that training is achieving its intended outcomes?
- What value does the training offer to the organisation and other stakeholders?



By helping answer these questions, TASER supports accountability, learning and decision making. It provides evidence that can be used to report results to leadership, funders, taxpayers and other stakeholders, while also helping organisations identify opportunities to improve training design and delivery in real time. At a strategic level, it can inform decisions about where to invest resources and how training can be delivered most effectively to maximise results.

The TASER framework: an overview

TASER builds on established approaches to training evaluation* and provides a framework for assessing training design, delivery and results across six levels.

Together, the six levels enable a comprehensive assessment of training effectiveness, from design, delivery, through to individual and organisational behaviour change.



* Including, most notably, the [Kirkpatrick Model](#)

LEVEL 0

Appropriateness of training needs assessment, design and course attendance

LEVEL 01

Participants' reaction to the training design and delivery

LEVEL 02

Participants' learning (knowledge and skills) from the training

LEVEL 03

Participants' proficiency (confidence and ability to apply knowledge and skills in scenarios and exercises) as a result of training

LEVEL 04

Participants' performance demonstrated through the application and use of knowledge and skills acquired in training

LEVEL 05

The impact on operations or organisational effectiveness as a result of the improvement in performance

Importantly, TASER recognises that not every training course requires intensive assessment. Levels 0-3 can typically be applied as part of routine monitoring and can generate valuable insights to improve quality and delivery. Levels 4 and 5 provide a deeper understanding of real-world application and organisational impact and can be prioritised where the evidence needs is greatest.

Understanding the TASER levels: what they measure and when they are most useful

The below diagram provides details on each TASER assessment level, including what is measured, how to measure it, when, and what benefits it offers.

	Before/during/at the end of training				After training	
	LEVEL 0	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
Training	Design	Reaction	Learning/Skills	Proficiency	Performance	Effect
What is measured 	If the training is based on participants' needs, is appropriately designed and delivered to the right people	The initial satisfaction of the participants with the training	The increase in participants' knowledge and comprehension from before to after the training	Participants' confidence and ability to apply knowledge and skills (in scenarios and exercises) as a result of training	The extent to which the participants have applied the learning and changed their behaviour based on the training received	The effects on the organisation or operation, from changes in performance and behaviour of the training participants
How to measure 	Questionnaire to be completed by trainer, questionnaires to be completed by participants	Feedback forms, end-of-course/module surveys, oral feedback from participants	Pre-and-post-training tests and self-assessments, interviews, assessments by trainer	Usually a scenario-based assessment or practical task	Interviews, focus groups, debriefs, surveys, direct observation, anecdotal evidence	Interviews, focus groups, debriefs, surveys, direct observation, anecdotal evidence
Timing 	Before the start of training	During or at end of training	Pre- and post-training, and/or during	During or at end of training	After training, once participants have opportunity to apply new knowledge and skills	After training, after changes in individual performance expected to have taken effect
Why do it? 	Inform refinement of course design and targeting, to ensure right training is delivered to right people	Reaction of participants is often early indication of likely success, supports improvement of training content and delivery by identifying weaknesses	To assess the quality and success of training delivery and identify any problems Informs reporting of output-level results to funders	Assess training success in equipping trainees with ability to practically apply new knowledge and skills Informs reporting of output-level results to funders	Helps understand the real-world effect and value of training: is training resulting in behaviour change, and if not, what are the barriers? Informs outcome-level reporting to funders	Helps understand the real-world effect and value of training: is training contributing to improved organisational performance, and if not, what are the barriers? Informs outcome-level reporting to funders



Applying the framework: key considerations

When considering how TASER might be applied, there are several important questions to address.

What is the purpose of the assessment?

Training may be assessed for accountability, learning, decision-making, or a combination of all three. Levels 0-3 can provide sufficient evidence for routine monitoring and reporting requirements and inform some decisions about training delivery. However, organisations may choose to undertake Levels 0-4 or 0-5 assessments where a deeper understanding of training effectiveness, outcomes and value is required.

Which training activities should be assessed?

Resource constraints may mean that it is not feasible to assess every training activity in depth. While Levels 0-3 are generally suitable for most training programmes, Levels 4 and 5 may not always be practical or cost-effective (e.g. if there is a long time between training and application of training, or if there are access challenges). Organisations should therefore prioritise assessments based on feasibility, strategic importance and potential value.

What evidence do I need?

Different levels of TASER provide different types of evidence. Level 0 findings can help improve participant selection, while Levels 1 and 2 can inform training design and delivery. Higher-level assessments can provide insights into programme effectiveness, organisational outcomes and the factors that enable or constrain success.

What tools will be required?

Assessing training requires appropriate data collection tools and methods, such as feedback forms, surveys, interviews, observations or operational performance data. Organisations may already have tools or processes in place that can be adapted while others may need to develop new tools to meet their requirements.

Who will collect and analyse the data?

Consider who has the appropriate access, authority and skills to collect and analyse the required information. This may include designing and testing tools, gathering data, assuring data quality, and conducting analysis.

When should data be collected?

Timing is critical to obtaining reliable evidence. Some information can be gathered during training, while other data may need to be collected weeks or months afterwards to understand how learning has been applied. Developing a data collection plan can help ensure the right information is collected at the right time.

How will evidence be analysed and used?

To ensure sufficient confidence in the data, it should be quality assured. This may include triangulating information from multiple sources and/or undertaking spot checks. You will then need to analyse the data to answer your key questions. Your approach to analysis will depend on what those questions are. More comprehensive assessments may require more complex analytical approaches. Once analysed, organisations should consider how findings will be communicated, who needs the information, and how the evidence will be used to support learning and decision-making.

TASER in practice: examples and lessons

Example 1

Assessing the results of military training

TASER was originally developed by Itad in 2018 for use by the British Peace Support Team Africa (BPST-A) to assess the results of UK-funded military training delivered to peacekeeping forces operating across Africa. Following the success of this initial work, Itad subsequently partnered with Operation TANGHAM in Somalia to apply the framework to assess training delivered to the Somali National Army in Baidoa.

At the time, approaches to assessing military training were often inconsistent. They frequently relied on a small number of sometimes unreliable information sources and struggled to determine whether training led to sustained behavioural change or operational improvements.

TASER was developed to address these issues by providing a practical yet rigorous framework for assessing training effectiveness. Working with BPST-A, Itad introduced a structured approach to evaluating training results, including the real-world application of learning. The framework was used to support a field-based assessment in Mogadishu, generating strategic and operational recommendations based on evidence gathered from those applying training in practice.

The assessment demonstrated the effectiveness of training in the field while also identifying institutional and operational barriers that limited the application of knowledge and understanding. These insights provided valuable evidence to improve future training programmes and strengthen reporting outcomes.



Since its introduction in 2019, Itad's long-term application of TASER enabled both BPST-A and Operation TANGHAM to build a consistent picture of training effectiveness over seven continuous years. This supported ongoing improvements in training design and delivery while providing robust, evidence-based reporting on training results.

Example 2

Reviewing the results of non-military training in the UK Overseas Territories

Although TASER was originally developed for military training, the framework is equally applicable to non-military capability-strengthening programmes where training is expected to contribute to behavioural, organisational or institutional change.

One example is its use in a review of training programmes delivered across the UK Overseas Territories. The review examined a range of interventions focused on institutional strengthening and public sector capability development, including training on cyber security, public health incident response, and incident command. It also explored the effectiveness of different delivery modalities, including face-to-face, hybrid and remote learning.

Using the TASER framework, Itad assessed not only whether participants acquired new knowledge and skills, but also the extent to which learning was subsequently applied and contributed to wider organisational improvements. The review generated several important insights. It found that the effectiveness of training interventions depended heavily on strong partnerships with local stakeholders and delivery partners. It also highlighted the importance of clear strategic oversight and accountability for training outcomes to maximise the value of training investments.

These findings have informed the development of a new strategy for training delivery, helping funders strengthen the design, delivery and oversight of future capability-building programmes.



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Six lessons from applying TASER

1

Speak the language of the user

One factor behind TASER's successful adoption was grounding the framework in language and concepts that resonated with military practitioners. Monitoring systems are far more likely to be used when they align with the operational realities of those responsible for delivering programmes.

2

Build confidence through testing and learning

Embedding new measurement approaches requires trust. Piloting TASER with a test and learn approach helped demonstrate its practical value, built confidence among users and created momentum for wider adoption.

3

Measure what matters most

Many organisations already collect substantial information about training delivery and participant satisfaction. The greatest evidence gap often lies in understanding changes in performance and organisational effectiveness. TASER's proportionate approach helps target resources towards answering the most important questions.

4

Real-world effects can be measured, even in challenging environments

Access constraints and security challenges can make post-training assessment difficult. However, our experience shows that meaningful evidence can still be gathered. TASER provides a structured way to identify what is feasible and design approaches that generate credible evidence in complex settings.

5

Outcomes depend on more than training

Across multiple applications, TASER has highlighted that outcomes depend on more than the quality of training itself. Leadership, organisational culture, institutional systems, incentives, and local partnerships all influence whether learning translates into sustained improvements in performance.

6

Better evidence supports better value for money

TASER helps organisations understand not only whether training was delivered well, but whether it led to meaningful improvements in individual and organisational performance.

This evidence can inform programme design, improve accountability, strengthen the targeting of resources and support decisions about where future investment will have the greatest impact. Ultimately, it helps funders and training providers achieve better value for money.

Interested in learning more about TASER?

If you would like to explore how TASER could help your organisation better understand and demonstrate the results of training, we'd be pleased to discuss your needs and share our experience. [Contact us](#) to find out more about the framework, its applications, and the support available to help you get the most value from your training investments.



Solving complex challenges with evidence and learning

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