

Global University for Lifelong Learning
Tracking, Review and Correction Action (TRACA) User Manual
 TRACA version 1 release January, 2013.

TRACA is GULL’s online system for variance monitoring, incremental improvement and impact tracking.

1. The role of impact tracking

GULL’s code of practice specifies that GULL affiliated organizations must:

1. Check to ensure that all their participants have gathered appropriate evidence of their learning and its application prior to each and every level of certification;
2. Track the impact of the GULL system on a longitudinal basis;
3. Prepare an annual report in which the evidence of tracking is documented together with details of corrective action (as needed) taken in response to variances.

GULL’s ‘getting started’ resources explain how activity or outcomes mapping can enable a GULL affiliate organization to integrate GULL certification with its training and other activities. In so doing, participants should be able to gather and summarize the evidence of their own learning (personal and professional) and the specific contribution they have made to community or work-based projects. Outcomes mapping draws on existing formats for documenting outcomes as well as GULL’s generic forms and as GULL participants gather the evidence of their respective contributions to change, overall impact tracking is relatively straightforward because each participant is responsible for identifying their own outcomes and evidence of learning.

Using action learning to stimulate change

The GULL learning process is based on two parallel strands of action and reflection. It begins when learners develop an outline plan for their own learning as a basis for attaining personal and organizational learning outcomes. As they progress and at the end of the formal journey, participants must reflect on what they have accomplished for themselves and for the other stakeholders involved in the process. In all cases, the outcomes should have a hard edge – in the form of practical, implementable and trackable contributions to real work/community issues. In this way learners, sponsors and others can discern a difference arising from their investment in action learning by monitoring or tracking the individual and collective impact of action learning.

Gathering and summarizing evidence of learning and change

The GULL system includes generic, customizable formats for individual reflection and for individual and group projects. Our goal is to enable affiliate organizations to forge a natural form of integration between work and/or other activities and active, on-going learning. It is for this reason that all our formats can be adapted to fit the circumstances, the learning objectives and the anticipated learning outcomes. Although most learners provide written evidence of learning and application in their own language, there are some circumstances in which a written format may not be the best mechanism to use. Here, evidence of learning might be presented in a visual format (e.g. a portfolio of photographs depicting the stages of skill acquisition or project development), video format (using a combined audio-visual approach) or using other practical methods and combinations that clearly demonstrate evidence of learning, application and change. The GULL narrative format provides a number of forms that can be used to gather and track individual learning outcomes:

Return on outputs or Progress review form	Typically used to summarize personal and organizational learning outcomes after completing four weekly summaries and one monthly summary. [Normally used at Levels 1 & 2]
Project review form	Use to reflect on one or more strands of project work, the process and approach deployed, its relative effectiveness, alternative courses of action and the steps required to sustain the project. [Normally used at Levels 3, 4 & 5]
Learning summary form	Typically used to review the learning journey from the outset (at level 1) to the conclusion (at level 5). [Normally used at Level 5]
Outcomes review form	Typically used to summarize and to quantify the outcomes, impact and benefits of your action learning journey. [Normally used at Level 5]

The Outcomes review form (ORF) is especially helpful in settings where affiliate organizations are able to establish a searchable intranet 'Projects' database. Here, with minor modification, the ORF can be used to enable GULL participants to add details of the ROI evidence arising from their project work. Prior to database entry, this can be verified and 'signed off' (as accurate) by an appropriate specialist or senior leader.

2. GULL's generic tracking, review and corrective action (TRACA) system

GULL provides an online tracking, review and corrective action (TRACA) system with reporting formats that are easy to follow and use. TRACA uses a quarterly self-review format so that users can track their own progress and identify their own variances for corrective action. This takes place over an annual cycle that concludes with an annual report and review meeting. The self-review reporting steps are as follows:

Step 1: Quarterly Facilitator Report (QFR)

Whenever a new action learning group starts, the group facilitator uses the QFR to record what is working well / not so well together with any corrective action needed. QFR reports are due on the first day of the month - 1st March, 1st June, 1st September and 1st December and so for example, if a new group starts on 1st November, its first QFR would be due on 1st December and thereafter on a quarterly basis until the group completes.

Step 2: Quarterly Administrator Report (QAR)

If there are multiple action learning groups in progress, the affiliate organization must also prepare a consolidated QAR. This report is prepared by the affiliate's administrator and it summarizes the key issues arising during the past quarter. The QAR should be submitted on the same day each quarter (two weeks after the receipt of QFR reports - e.g. 15th March, 15th June, 15th September and 15th December) to the affiliate's GULL representative.

Step 3: Annual Administrator Report (AAR)

Prepared by the administrator for the representative, the AAR interprets the QARs and/or other tracking data. It also provides:

- (1) A strategic overview - with a concise summary of the extent to which objectives for the year have been achieved.
- (2) Commentary on the QARs and/or other tracking data - highlighting variances, issues and action taken or proposed.
- (3) An operational overview - outlining challenges (e.g. delivery gaps, system or procedural problems).
- (4) Plans for the coming year - outlining suggestions for supporting priorities.
- (5) Action - needed to implement plans for the coming year.

Summary: Annual TRACA cycle steps:

Step 1: Quarterly Facilitator Report (QFR)	The QFR is prepared by action learning group facilitators and submitted to the affiliate's designated administrator. [Requested on 1 st March, 1 st June, 1 st September and 1 st December]
Step 2: Quarterly Administrator Report (QAR)	Whenever there are multiple action learning groups in progress, the administrator prepares a consolidated quarterly report (QAR) for the GULL representative. [Submitted two weeks after receiving the QFRs - 15 th March, 15 th June, 15 th September and 15 th December]
Step 3: Annual Administrator Report (AAR)	The AAR is prepared and submitted by the administrator to the representative. Thereafter, an annual review meeting date is scheduled. This meeting is attended by the affiliate's administrator, the representative and by the designated GULL officer.

4. Using the TRACA online system

The TRACA online homepage is accessible from <http://www.gullonline.org/traca/>. The homepage provides access to all the resources that action learning group facilitators and administrators will need to use. The report forms (located on the left-hand side of the page) must be completed online and resources on the right-hand side of the page (Evaluation questionnaire, the external reviewer (ExR) nomination form and ExR report form) should be downloaded for completion by your GULL level 5 participants (Evaluation questionnaire) and by your GULL level 5 external reviewers (ExR nomination form, ExR report form).



Figure 2: The TRACA homepage @ <http://www.gullonline.org/traca/>

As noted on page 2, the purpose of the online forms is as follows:

Quarterly Facilitator Report (QFR)

QFRs are prepared by the action learning group facilitator for submission to the designated GULL affiliate administrator (Step 1).

Step 2: Quarterly Administrator Report (QAR)

QFRs are used by GULL administrator(s) to prepare their consolidated QARs for the GULL affiliate's senior leader - the GULL representative (Step 2).

Step 3: Annual Administrator Report (AAR)

QARs are used by GULL administrator(s) to prepare their AAR for the GULL representative (Step 3).

Using the TRACA online forms

The TRACA online forms have been carefully designed with ease of use in mind. Each form provides explanatory notes and prior to completing the form, it is essential that the data submission fields are fully and accurately completed. The forms cannot be submitted without the correct email information as all three forms are submitted in email format. The use of an email format ensures that the forms are: easy to send and receive (because the report is an email – not an attached document), easy to read (as they use a consistent format) and easy to store, retrieve and forward (as necessary and/or appropriate).

5. The TRACA online form questions and resources

Quarterly facilitator report (QFR) (an online form)

Please complete sections 1 and 2 each and every time you submit a QFR. Additionally, please complete section 3 if you have level 5 learners and section 4 when your level 5 learners have completed their external review.

Section 1: Standard procedures

- Q1: Learners selected and briefed and all meeting timetable and output due dates agreed?
- Q2: Learning coaches and specialist advisers selected and briefed?
- Q3: Self and internal reviewing working effectively?
- Q4: Group timetable and output due dates on schedule?
- Q5: Any issues/actions for resolution by the representative, administrator or facilitator (as appropriate)?
- Q6: QFR submitted on time (01 March, June, September, December)?

Section 2: General comments on group progress

Q1: Progress to-date
[Please comment on: Individual learner and group progress issues; Specialist adviser / Internal reviewer issues / External reviewer issues (as appropriate)]

Q2: What is going well?
[For example: Group schedule, timetable and deadlines; Coaching; Reviewing and grading. Examples of good practice that might be captured and disseminated; Individuals/procedures that are working well.]

Q3: What is not going so well?
[For example: Group schedule, timetable and deadlines; Support issues such as coaching and project support; Variances that need to be corrected.]

Q4: Outcomes
Implications for the effectiveness of learning / Proposed action (as needed):

Section 3: Additional Level 5 procedures (applicable only if there are level 5 participants)

- Q1: External review (ExR) nominations submitted? [Nominations to the administrator]
- Q2: External review dates scheduled and the external reviewer briefed?
- Q3: Evaluation questionnaires completed at the external review meeting?
- Q4: Evaluation questionnaires compiled and analyzed?

Section 4: Level 5 evaluation questionnaire analysis (applicable only if there are level 5 participants)

Please analyze the level 5 evaluation questionnaires (completed by each learner prior to the external review meeting) and include your analysis below. Please base your analysis on the following questions:

- Q1: What went well from the learner's point of view? Please give examples.
- Q2: Were there any difficulties arising from the learner's perspective? If so what were they?
- Q3: Reflecting on your analysis and your own experience, what improvements might be made?
- Q4: As group facilitator, are there any other issues which you think need to be addressed?
- Q5: What were the most significant outcomes? Please provide two or three examples.

Quarterly administrator report (QAR) (an online form)

The entries for all sections of the QAR should be based on your analysis of QFRs and your discussions at the quarterly review meeting with the representative. Please complete sections 1 and 2 each and every time you submit a QAR. Additionally, please complete section 3 if you have level 5 learners and section 4 when your level 5 learners have completed their external review.

Section 1: Standard procedures

- Q1: Facilitators and other support team members briefed?
- Q2: All Quarterly facilitator reports (QFRs) received (each active group) and a quarterly review meeting held?
- Q3: QFRs submitted on time (01: March, June, September and December)?
- Q4: Self and internal reviewing working effectively?
- Q5: Group timetables and output due dates on schedule?
- Q6: Any issues/actions for resolution by the representative/administrator/facilitators?
- Q7: Financial reconciliations up to-date (e.g. fees received or payable)?
- Q8: Annual administrator report (AAR) in preparation/submitted?
- Q9: Annual review meeting scheduled with the representative?

Section 2: Progress report

Q1: Progress to-date

[Please comment on: Group progress issues; Specialist adviser / Internal reviewer issues / External reviewer issues (as appropriate)]

Q2: What is going well?

[For example: Group schedules, timetables and deadlines; Coaching; Reviewing and grading. Examples of good practice that might be captured and disseminated; Individuals/procedures that are working well.]

Q3: What is not going so well?

[For example: Group schedules, timetables and deadlines; Support issues such as coaching and project support; Variances that need to be corrected.]

Q4: Outcomes

Implications for the effectiveness of learning / Proposed action (as needed):

Section 3: Additional Level 5 procedures (applicable only if there are level 5 participants)

- Q1: External reviewer (ExR) nominations (level 5 only) received and approved by the representative?
- Q2: External review dates scheduled with the external reviewer and the facilitator and the ExR briefed?
- Q3: ExR report form sent to the ExR and the completed report returned to the administrator?
- Q4: ExR comments discussed/actioned with the facilitator?
- Q5: Level 5 evaluation questionnaires compiled and analyzed?

Section 4: Level 5 evaluation questionnaire analysis (applicable only if there are level 5 participants)

Administrator's summary of the level 5 evaluation questionnaires based on Group reporting and any additional items arising from individual evaluation questionnaires:

Q1: What went well from the learner's point of view? Please give examples.

Q2: Were there any difficulties arising from the learner's perspective? If so what were they?

Q3: Comments from facilitators: What improvements might be made?

Q4: What were the most significant outcomes? Please provide two or three examples.

Q5: Comment from the administrator: Are there any other issues that need to be addressed? If so, by whom?

Annual Administrator report (an online form)

The Annual report is a key strategic document, linking and interpreting the Quarterly administrator reports (QARs) and the Quarterly facilitator reports (QFRs). It should provide:

- (1) A strategic overview - with a concise summary of the extent to which objectives have been achieved.
- (2) Commentary on the QARs - highlighting variances, issues and action taken or proposed.
- (3) An operational overview - outlining challenges (e.g. delivery gaps, system or procedural problems).
- (4) Plans for the coming year - outlining suggestions for supporting priorities.
- (5) Action - needed to implement plans for the coming year.

1. Strategic overview

The aim here is to provide a concise summary of the extent to which action learning has enabled the user organization to achieve its objectives for the year. Aim to be candid and include any updates as they relate to your organizational profile (e.g. vision/mission; objectives; outcomes). Conclude by outlining the methods used to track performance during the year and any improvements that are needed or envisaged. Highlight the (indicative) return on investment in learning for the qualitative ('soft' or people measures) and quantitative ('hard' or financial measures) deployed.

2. Highlights of the year

Aim to review key events during the past year, highlighting any variances that arose and the action taken (with outcomes) or proposed (with intended outcomes).

3. Operational review

Comment briefly on the progress of each active set. Use feedback comments from learners, facilitators, specialist advisers, learning coaches and others (the 'stakeholders') to highlight issues arising. Review challenges during the past year (e.g. successes, gaps, system, process and procedural issues) using indicative comments (as quotations) from stakeholders, together with any other available data.

4. Plans for the coming year

Outline your plans for the coming year and indicate how any residual problems will be addressed.

5. Action

Highlight the actions needed to implement your plans for the coming year. This section should contain details of timescales, roles, responsibilities and deadlines.

Evaluation questionnaire (download and print this resource)

For completion at the level 5 external review meeting

Pathway details and progression

Q1: In which group were you enrolled?

Q2: What award and level have you now attained?

Q3: Community role/Work position held when you started:

Q4: Have you changed roles since commencing the pathway?

Q5: If yes, how did this come about?

Your action learning experience

Q6: Looking back over your action learning experience, what were the two most positive highlights or experiences that you can remember? Please explain each comment.

Q7: Looking back over your action learning experience, what were the two major frustrations that you experienced? Please explain each comment.

Your action learning outcomes

Q8: Overall, which output (levels 1-5 inclusive) was the most beneficial to you and/or the organization?

Q9: Why do you say that?

Q10: Can you identify changes in your behaviour/performance relating to your action learning experience, such as improved team dynamics, project facilitation, financial returns etc.?

Q11: What actions have you taken to implement the recommendations of your project work?

Q12: What opportunities have you had to share the learning created by any of your work?

Q13: What benefits have arisen (or can be expected to arise in the foreseeable future) as a result of the implementation of your work?

Q14: What additional actions and/or investments will be needed to implement your recommendations?

Q15: In what way(s) did the learning process improve the effectiveness of your performance - compared with the approach you might take in a routine work-related project?

Q16: In what way did the learning process enhance your own capabilities - now and for the future?

Other comments

Q17: Please use the space below to comment on anything else that you feel is important and/or would like to share with others (e.g. your overall experience of action learning)

ExR nomination form (level 5) (download and print this resource)

Please return your completed form to:

External reviewer details – for completion by the nominee

Contact details:

Surname:	
First name(s):	
Correspondence address:	
Telephone number (work):	
Telephone number (home):	
Email address:	

Qualifications:

Academic and/or professional qualifications:	
Membership of professional associations with grade of membership (as appropriate):	

Work experience:

Present position and place of work:	
Date of appointment:	
Current responsibilities:	

Prior external reviewing experience (as appropriate)

(1) Institution, level(s), dates	
(2) Institution, level(s), dates	
(3) Institution, level(s), dates	

Signature of applicant:	
Date:	

Endorsed by:	
Name of representative:	
Signature:	
Date:	

ExR report form (Level 5) (download and print this resource)

To be completed by the external reviewer (ExR) during/after the external review interviews and returned to the facilitator. Please complete the Profile section in CAPITALS

Profile:

1. Name of the external reviewer:
2. Name of the facilitator:
3. Action learning group reference:
4. Level 5 award (e.g. Bachelor, Master, Doctor):

Notes on the conduct of external review meetings:

The external review process normally consists of a mix of individual and/or small group external review meetings. The facilitator attends each and every external review meeting to ensure that the external reviewer and learners are fully supported. All external reviews for each group should conclude with a short written report prepared by the external reviewer. The external's report is submitted to the facilitator.

Appendix 1: Indicative GULL grade descriptors – please note that these do not apply to GULL narrative format work but the external reviewer is encouraged to provide an indicative mark and grade as part of the feedback process.

Part 1: Individual reports

Notes: Part 1 should be completed by the external reviewer during the ExR interviews.

Name of learner:	ExR comments (please add brief comments):	Indicative mark:	Indicative grade:

Part 2: General report

Notes: Part 2 should be completed by the external reviewer after the ExR interviews. Please give your completed report to the facilitator. If any of the questions are not appropriate please say in the reply section 'Not appropriate'.

Outputs:

Q1: Do the outputs: Address professional issues in an appropriate way/level? Hold you attention and interest? Adopt an original/innovative approach to the topic?

Q2: Do the outputs: Build on prior work in the topic area? Draw on relevant sources in support of the review /analysis undertaken?

Q3: Have the authors used factual evidence to support assertions and/or projections in a logical, objective way? If so, is the evidence cited reliable and accurate?

Q4: Are the outputs well written? Do they reflect clarity and economy of style? Are they clearly structured with an appropriate focus?

Q5: Is the argument/discussion consistent? Is the method of investigation well explained and does it satisfy workplace requirements? Is any data summarized clearly so that it is easily understood and interpreted by fellow practitioners?

Q6: Do the outputs: Contain generalized solutions? Provide a fresh perspective or new insight? Are conclusions and implications relevant to practice? Are they sufficiently well developed?

Q7: Do the outputs correspond to any checklist specification(s)? (E.g. approximate word length if appropriate)

Review:

Q8: Internal review: Are the comments, indicative mark and indicative grade appropriate?

Q9: Is the self and internal process for reviewing and grading consistent across the group? If not, how might the process be improved?

Summary:

Q10: What are your general observations about the group you have just reviewed?

Signature of the external reviewer:

Date:

Appendix 1: Indicative GULL grade descriptors

Notes:

The GULL grade descriptors do not apply to GULL narrative format work which is certified at 'Pass' level only.

Grade:	Marks:	Description:
<p>A Exceeds requirements</p> <p>Distinction 80-100</p>	80 - 100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This grade is reserved for <u>truly exceptional work</u>. It will be outstanding and clearly 'head and shoulders' above expectations in every respect: content, breadth of reading (referenced) quality of ideas, writing and/or presentation style, clarity of argument, etc. The learner's review of personal development is likely to include insights on <i>how</i> they learn. It probably includes reference to the impact on the learner's thinking and practice not <i>just</i> content. It is also likely to include examples of how the learner has used their learning – they may even be demonstrating this shift <i>in</i> the output i.e. <i>living it</i>. The work will also reflect careful thought given to continuing development and action planning for this purpose.
<p>B Exceeds requirements</p> <p>Credit 70-79</p>	70 - 79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is for <u>very good work</u> that is: thoughtful, well-constructed, with good ideas, well-argued points, clearly presented and/or written, ideally referenced. The internal reviewer would not expect to see many clumsy errors in spelling or grammar in any written work. Provides an in-depth review of the learner's learning which shows not only what they have learnt but how they have used it and what effect this has had. Further, the learner will have given some thought to what is next for them in learning terms.
<p>C Meets requirements well</p>	60 - 69	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Satisfactory to good work</u>. Areas for further development might include: greater depth of argument and/or a broader review of the issues. There is evidence of learning and recognition of this. There may be more emphasis on content than shifts in thinking or practice.
<p>D Satisfactory</p> <p>Pass 50-69</p>	50 - 59	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is for <u>work that is acceptable</u>. Areas for further development may include: depth of argument and breadth of review. There may also be a need for greater focus on structure of the project and/or presentation. Spelling and/or grammar might need development. Some learning has been achieved, but there may be evidence of learning opportunities being missed and / or limited thought as to what is next for the learner in terms of their own personal development.
<p>E Unsatisfactory (partial resubmission)</p>	40 - 49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Little evidence of and/or emphasis on learning</u>. The learner is aware that there are four or five key weaknesses and / or key questions that have not been addressed. Note: the internal reviewer might ask the learner to address these issues and resubmit.
<p>F Fail (Full resubmission)</p>	0-39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Poor work that fails to meet the key criteria</u>. Inadequate in structure, argument and presentation, and showing no evidence of learning. The faults are so irretrievable that the output needs a complete re-think, with help in the early stages from mentors/set members on objectives, structure and presentation.