

Hierarchical Outcomes

EAC Outcomes and EAC VisualData help you report and analyze outcomes data from surveys and tests. If your goal is to report and analyze outcomes that include hierarchical relationships (e.g., Standard 1.A is a child of the parent Standard 1), then we suggest you adopt the following naming convention for your outcomes:

- <Prefix>.<Standard>
- <Prefix>.<Standard>.<Substandard>
- <Prefix>.<Standard>.<Substandard>.<Sub-substandard>

We illustrate this naming convention below with information literacy Standard One, Performance Indicator 1, and Outcomes a through f developed by the Association of College & Research Libraries ("ACRL").

Standard One

The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed.

Performance Indicators:

1. The information literate student defines and articulates the need for information.

Outcomes Include:

- a. Confers with instructors and participates in class discussions, peer workgroups, and electronic discussions to identify a research topic, or other information need
- b. Develops a thesis statement and formulates questions based on the information need
- c. Explores general information sources to increase familiarity with the topic
- d. Defines or modifies the information need to achieve a manageable focus
- e. Identifies key concepts and terms that describe the information need
- f. Recognizes that existing information can be combined with original thought, experimentation, and/or analysis to produce new information

Outcome names in your CMS for ACRL Standard One could include all of the following:

- ACRL.ONE
- ACRL.ONE.1
- ACRL.ONE.1.a
- ACRL.ONE.1.b
- ACRL.ONE.1.c
- ACRL.ONE.1.d
- ACRL.ONE.1.e
- ACRL.ONE.1.f

The structure of these names is explained below, where "==" means consists of:

- <Prefix> := a unique acronym representing the entire standard set (e.g., "ACRL" represents the Association of College & Research Libraries standards as a whole, and this acronym can easily be distinguished from other standard sets such as "NCATE", "ABET", etc.)
- <Standard> := an English word (e.g., "One" representing "Standard One" above)
- <Substandard> := an Arabic numeral (e.g., "1" representing the "Performance Indicator 1" above)
- <Sub-substandard> := a small case letter (e.g., "a" representing the outcome "Confers with instructors and participates in class discussions..." above)

Some examples of how EAC Outcomes interprets and reports these outcome names, first where a single outcome is assigned to one item (i.e., question) and second where multiple outcomes are assigned to one item:

a. The single outcome of "ACRL.ONE.1.a" (without the quotes) would stand for and measure the extent to which a student **confers with instructors and participates in class discussions, peer workgroups, and electronic discussions to identify a research topic, or other information in order to define and articulate the need for information in determining the nature and extent of the information needed** (the bolded sections are a, 1, and ONE respectively).

b. The single outcome of "ACRL.ONE.1" (without the quotes) would stand for and measure **defines and articulates the need for information in determining the nature and extent of the information needed** (the bolded sections are 1, and ONE respectively). This outcome represents a roll-up of any or all the outcomes a - f in Performance Indicator 1.

c. The single outcome of "ACRL.ONE" (without the quotes) would stand for and measure **determining the nature and extent of the information needed** (the bolded sections is Standard ONE). This outcome represents a roll-up of all the outcomes a - [whatever] in performance indicators 1- 4 of Standard One.

d. Multiple outcomes consist of a list of single outcomes. In EAC Outcomes, multiple outcomes would appear in various ways depending on the function or report used. We use a comma separated list below for further examples.

- Any item (i.e., question) can have as many outcomes as you care to assign.
- "ACRL.ONE.1.a,ACRL.ONE.1,ACRL.ONE" (without the quotes) would assign a question with the most specific to the most general possible in Standard One.
- If the outcome list above were assigned to one question and this "ACRL.ONE.1.d,ACRL.ONE.1,ACRL.ONE" (without the quotes) were assigned to another, then EAC Outcomes would present aggregate statistics (i.e., a roll-up) for ACRL.ONE.1 and ACRL.ONE.
- It is possible that a single question could pertain to more than one standard. It's perfectly acceptable to assign "ACRL.ONE.1.a,ACRL.ONE.1,ACRL.ONE,ACRL.TWO.3.c,ACRL.TWO.3,ACRL.TWO" to a single question. The statistics would be calculated appropriately for each entry in the list and "rolled-up" appropriately across the whole assessment.