



RDNA

Self-Assessment Tool

User Guide



Introduction

Context

The Regulators' Development Needs Analysis (RDNA) self-assessment tool is one facet of a collaborative project to introduce common regulatory competence standards for the professionals undertaking local regulation.

The work is ongoing and being led by the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO) in partnership with the World Class Coalition, established by LBRO in 2008 to simplify the complex regulatory system. It comprises 18 professional and representative bodies, including national regulators.

The overall approach to competency is closely linked with the relevant qualifications frameworks provided by the professional bodies – including the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Trading Standards Institute – and supported by the key players in the local and national regulatory landscape, giving transparency and confidence to all. Its key features are:

- core, generic regulatory skills and leadership skills sections;
- technical knowledge sections, specific to areas of regulation;
- the RDNA self-assessment tool;
- the Guidance for Regulators – Information Point (GRIP), designed to help meet development needs identified; and
- a development process for regulators and managers.

The aim is to ensure that the needs of regulators in local authorities and elsewhere are identified and addressed through self-assessment; via simple, flexible and user friendly web-based tools that can be used in conjunction with existing approaches; with access to innovative and cost-effective solutions for meeting development needs; and as an integral part of continuous professional development (CPD).

The overall approach has been designed to be sufficiently flexible to work with existing approaches to personal development.

Function

The RDNA self-assessment tool is an interactive website that provides a robust process enabling a regulator to identify and prioritise his or her development needs (or for a manager to do this in relation to a member of his or her team). Its purpose is to pinpoint issues for attention; it does not give work-related advice or guidance. It is free to use and in the public domain, although site registration is required at the outset.

After tailoring the process to his or her role, the user considers a series of statements, and selects responses from a standard drop-down menu with five options. These indicate his or her confidence in relation to the performance of certain tasks, or knowledge of specific technical topics.

On completion of the self-assessment process a report is created that can be printed and downloaded to your PC. The report will highlight any potential areas of development need, which should then be discussed and agreed with your manager as part of your development review process. Following that discussion, the GRIP can be used to identify resources to help meet the needs identified in a cost-effective way. It mirrors the RDNA structure providing links to 12 types of learning materials. The means by which the development needs will be met should then guide the production of a personal development plan.

Structure

There is agreement within the World Class Coalition that there is a set of generic core skills required by regulators irrespective of the function within which they regulate: it is primarily only their underpinning technical knowledge that differs, depending on specialism.

This is reflected in the structure of the RDNA self-assessment tool, which is divided into sections. Two cover skills and are generally applicable: core regulatory skills and leadership skills. Six cover technical knowledge and are specific to particular environmental health and trading standards functions: animal health and welfare, food, health and safety, housing, metrology (weights and measures) and port health. (New functions will be added in 2012, including agriculture, fair trading, licensing (Licensing Act 2003), pollution prevention and control, and product safety.)

Each section is sub-divided into modules.

The core regulatory skills cover the full range of common regulatory activities:

- assessing risks
- planning, organising and prioritising
- promoting compliance
- advising and influencing
- conducting interventions
- enforcing legislation
- working effectively with business
- working effectively with citizens, partners and stakeholders
- using and managing knowledge effectively
- personal development, innovation and learning
- IT literacy and numeracy
- providing Primary Authority services

The technical knowledge sections reflect the way work is commonly organised and structured within local authorities, allowing for the fact this does vary between authorities. This is practical and makes the RDNA self-assessment tool widely relevant but does mean that there can be a small amount of duplication between modules. Further information is provided in the section overviews.

Each module includes a series of statements, presented as tasks in the skills sections, and topics in the technical knowledge sections. These provide the means for regulators to identify development needs in relation to their specific roles. They include some knowledge that is commonly needed by regulators but is not regulatory in nature.

RDNA Section Overviews

1. Skills Sections

Core Regulatory Skills: The 12 skills included in this section are generic and are of relevance to the majority of regulators. Note, however, that it is only those regulators who work for a Primary Authority and act in this capacity who need to self-assess themselves against the *providing primary authority services* module.

Leadership Skills: These are generic skills relevant to those regulators who are leaders or potential leaders within their local authorities.

2. Technical Knowledge Sections

Health and Safety: This section covers the technical knowledge required of officers working within occupational health and safety regulation. Arrangements are in place to ensure the content remains consistent with the technical knowledge covered within the separate RDNA tool used by Health and Safety Executive Inspectors.

Food: This section covers the knowledge required of food regulators who work within both environmental health and trading standards. Some of the modules may not therefore be relevant in some cases, e.g. the *food standards* module applies mostly to trading standards work, and the *food safety and hygiene* module to environmental health work. Any module that is not applicable can simply be disappplied using the 'click if module does not apply' button.

Housing: This section covers the knowledge required of regulators who work within private sector housing. Note that although some of the knowledge specified is not regulatory in nature, it has nevertheless been included on the basis that it is knowledge commonly needed by regulators who work within housing.

Animal Health and Welfare: This section contains modules which cover the knowledge needed by regulators who work within animal health (i.e. the *farm animals* module) and animal welfare (the *companion animals* module). For many regulators, only one of these modules will apply, and again the 'click if module does not apply' button can be used to disapply any module that is not relevant. Note that within the *farm animals* module, knowledge relevant to feed and food hygiene (primary production) is covered.

Metrology (Weights and Measures): This section will be of relevance to regulators working within trading standards who cover the weights and measures function.

Port Health: This section covers the knowledge required of regulators who undertake port health work. Note that it primarily covers knowledge that is specific to port health; other more generic knowledge that port health officers may need, e.g. relating to food hygiene, food standards, pollution, etc. is (or will be) covered within the relevant sections within the RDNA tool. Port health officers will therefore need to self-assess themselves against the relevant topics within those other sections where they undertake such generic work.

Self-assessment

By what criteria should an individual regulator determine whether he or she has a development need in relation to the various statements? Ultimately, this requires a personal judgment, made in the context of the job description and level of authorisation, and the expectations of the employing local authority and any relevant national regulator.

More specifically, in relation to the technical knowledge topics, the competence standard for consideration is the working knowledge the regulator requires to undertake his or her routine activities. In some cases, a basic working knowledge may be sufficient, supplemented by research as and when required. In other cases, the level of working knowledge may need to be more extensive and cover all aspects of a topic, particularly for more specialised regulators.

It should always be remembered that the purpose of using the RDNA self-assessment tool is to identify development needs.

Options

The modules in the core regulatory skills and leadership skills sections begin with the following words:

By selecting the appropriate option from the drop-down menus on the right, and in relation to your current role or a role you are developing towards, please indicate how confident you are that you can perform the following tasks effectively.

The modules in the technical knowledge sections begin with the following words:

By selecting the appropriate option from the drop-down menus on the right, and in relation to your current role or a role you are developing towards, please indicate how confident you are that your knowledge of the following topics is sufficient, considering the frequency and extent of your involvement with them.

A series of statements follows the above, presented as tasks or topics, and accompanied by the standard drop-down menu with five options. The options are explained in the table below and qualified according to whether the assessment being undertaken is a self-assessment or a manager assessing a member of his or her team.

<p>1) I'm not confident – development need</p>	<p>Regulator: You do not agree that you have the skills or knowledge required for this task or topic and there is a development need you would like to discuss with your manager.</p> <p>Manager: You believe this officer has a development need in this area.</p>
<p>2) I'm confident – no development need</p>	<p>Regulator: You agree that you have the skills or knowledge required for this task or topic and there is no development need to discuss with your manager.</p> <p>Manager: You believe this officer has no development need in this area.</p>

<p>3) I'm confident – development need</p>	<p>Regulator: You agree that you have the skills or knowledge required for this task or topic but would like to gain additional expertise, so there is still a development need you would like to discuss with your manager.</p> <p>Manager: You believe this officer has the skills or knowledge required for this task or topic, but would like to discuss opportunities for developing additional expertise.</p>
<p>4) I'm confident – and already exceed</p>	<p>Regulator: You agree that you have the skills or knowledge required for this task or topic, and expertise over and above the standard indicated. This could possibly be used to assist other officers.</p> <p>Manager: You believe this officer has additional expertise in this area, and may wish to discuss how it could be used to assist others in the team or beyond.</p>
<p>5) This is not applicable to my role</p>	<p>Regulator: You believe that this task or topic is not relevant. (If this option is selected, a dialogue box will appear allowing you to make supporting comments, which will be included in your self-assessment report. Your manager may have a view on the relevance of the task or topic, especially for 'grey areas'.)</p> <p>Manager: You believe that this task or topic is not relevant to this officer's role.</p>

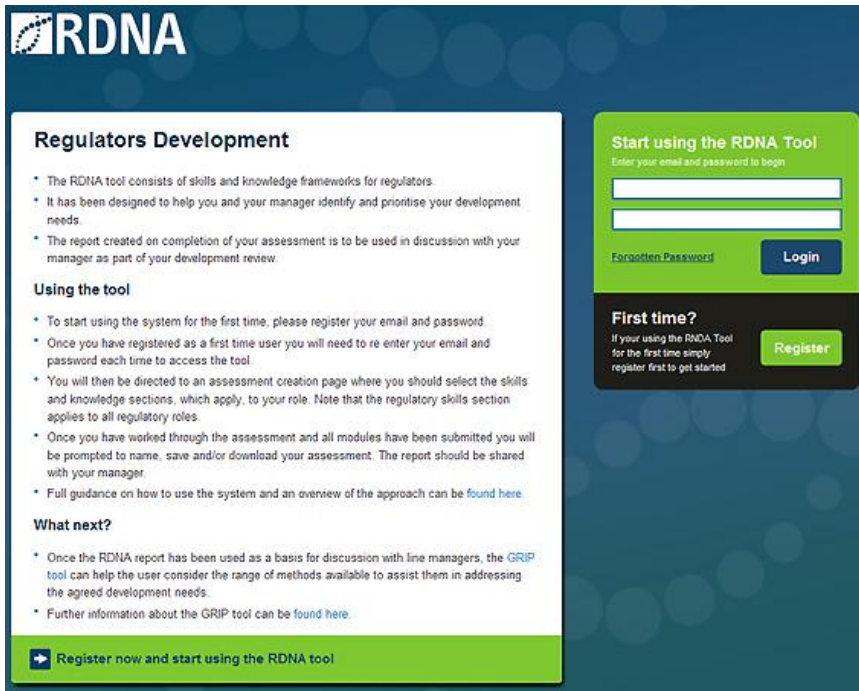
Endorsement and CPD

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Trading Standards Institute support the RDNA self-assessment tool and GRIP and have been central to the development of the skills and knowledge sections.

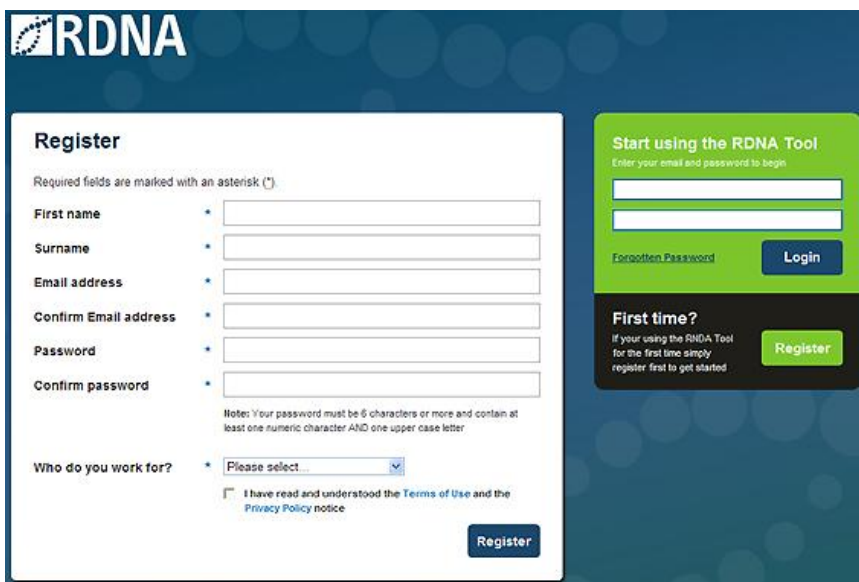
One hour of core CPD is available for the self-assessment process since it encompasses a reflective review of a member's professional development. CPD hours are also available in respect of activities undertaken to address identified development needs where a personal development plan is produced.

The Self-Assessment Process

Registration



If you are using the RDNA self-assessment tool for the first time, you need to click on the green 'register' button on the RDNA home page and complete the registration process.



Enter your details into the fields shown and select an option from the drop-down menu in response to the question 'who do you work for': local authority / public sector organisation / private sector / self-employed / other.

If you indicate that you work for a local authority, two further drop-down menus are presented. Select the appropriate options for the type and location.

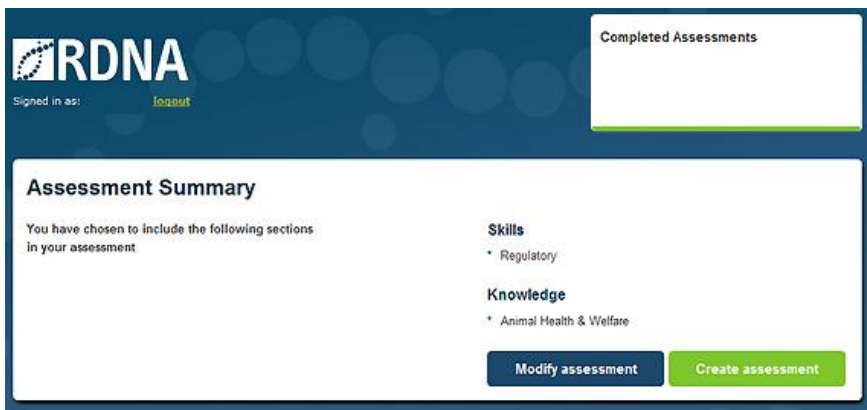
Click on 'terms of use' and 'privacy policy' to view pop-up screens with these items. Once you have read and understood them, tick the statement box.

To continue, click on the blue 'register' button.

Assessment creation

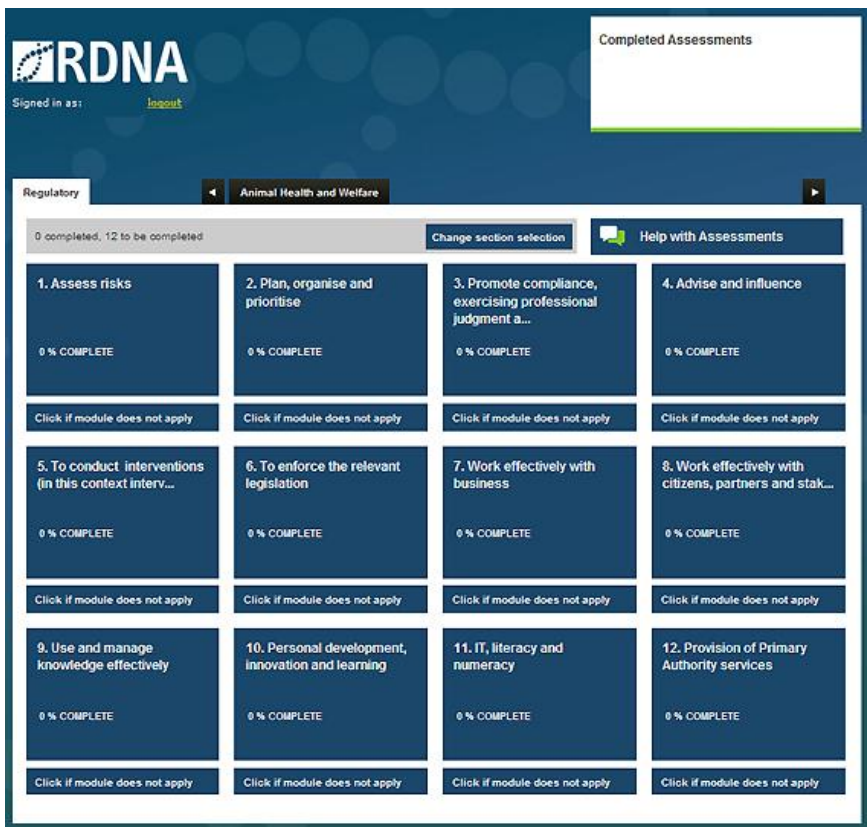
Tick the boxes to indicate which skills and technical knowledge sections you would like to include in your tailored assessment, and click on the blue 'continue' button.

From now on, you are logged into the RDNA self-assessment tool. To log out at any stage, click on 'logout' just below the logo on the left.



The next page shows you a summary of your tailored assessment. (In this case, *regulatory skills* and *animal health and welfare* have been chosen.) If your selected sections are not correct, click on the blue 'modify assessment' button to return to the previous page. If they are correct, click on the green 'create assessment' button.

Using the dashboard and module assessment pages



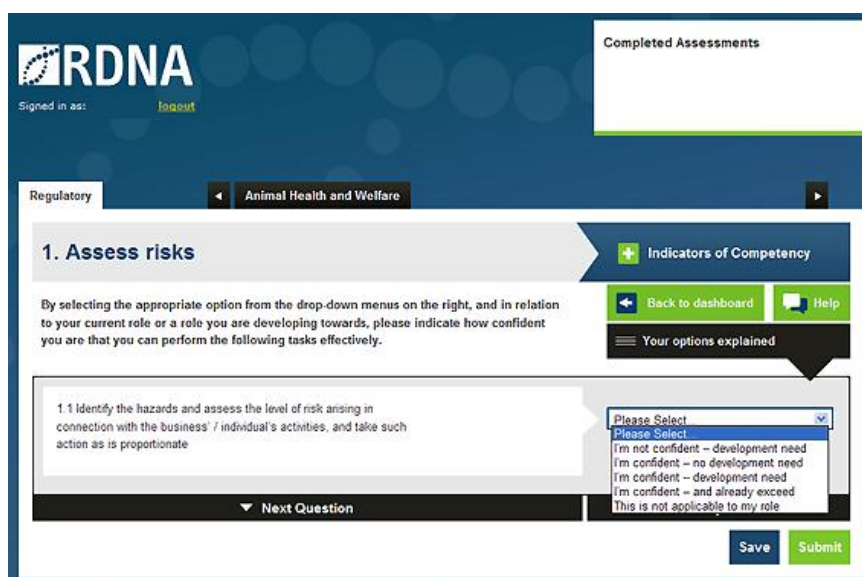
The dashboard lists all the modules in your selected sections. (The 12 modules in *regulatory skills* are shown.)

To move between sections, click on the tabs containing their titles towards the top of the page.



In the event that a specific module is not applicable to your role, it can be deselected at this stage by clicking on ‘click if module does not apply’. It can subsequently be reselected by clicking on ‘click to re-apply module’.

To begin your tailored assessment, click on any module box. Let’s assume that you click on *assess risks*, the first module in *regulatory skills*.



The module presents a series of statements. You need to indicate how confident you are that you can perform each task effectively by selecting an option from the standard drop-down menu:

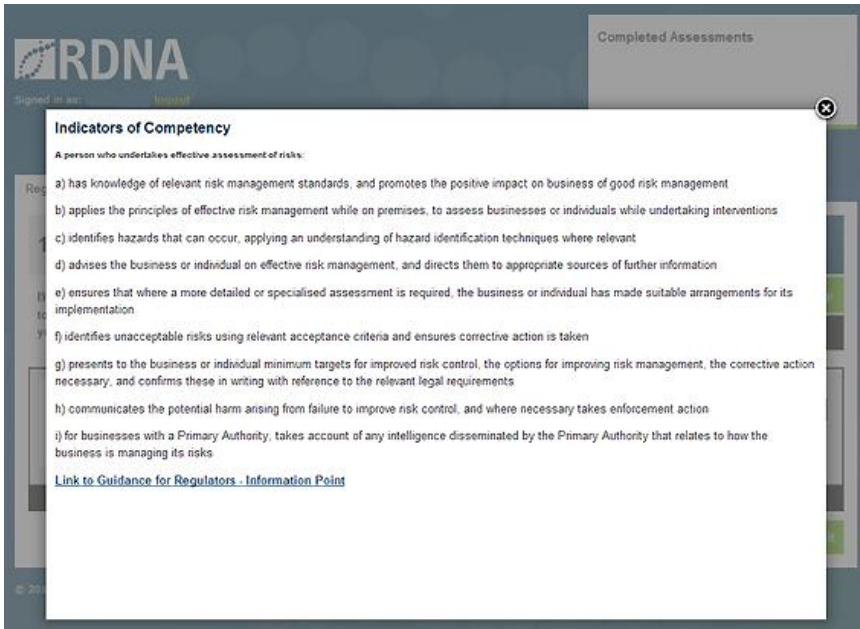
- I'm not confident – development need
- I'm confident – no development need
- I'm confident – development need
- I'm confident – and already exceed
- This is not applicable to my role.

With the exception of the second, a text box will then open allowing you to comment on your answer if required.

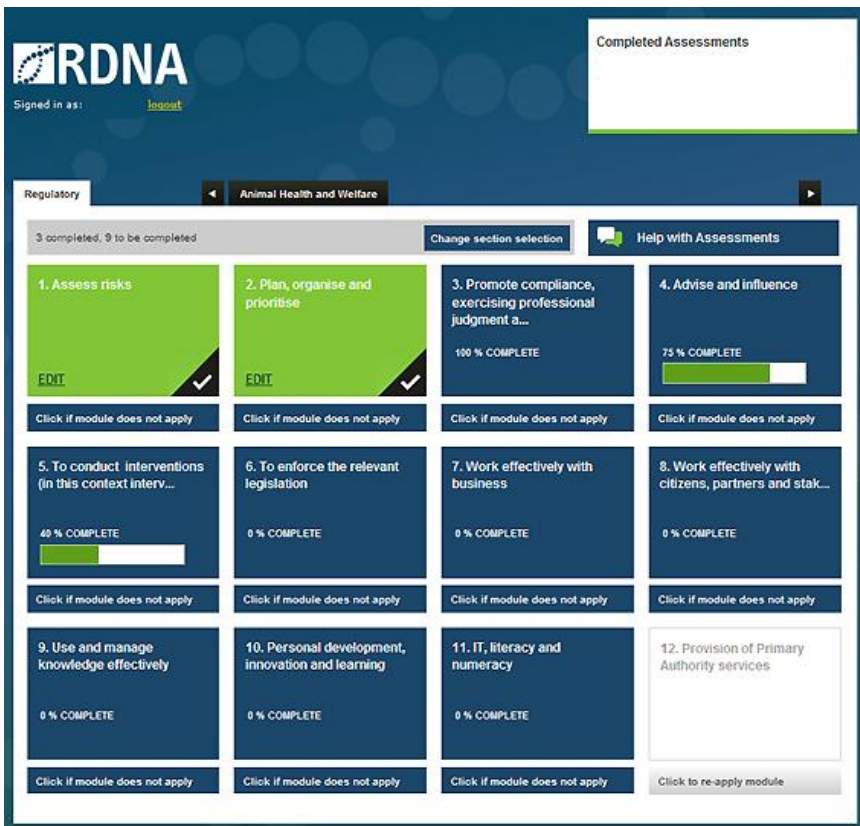
To view a pop-up screen with more explanation of these phrases, click on the black button ‘your options explained’.

If you wish to return to the module at a later time to reconsider it, having responded to some or even all of the statements, click on the blue button ‘save’. If you have finished responding to all the statements, click on the green button ‘submit’. In either case this will return you to the dashboard.

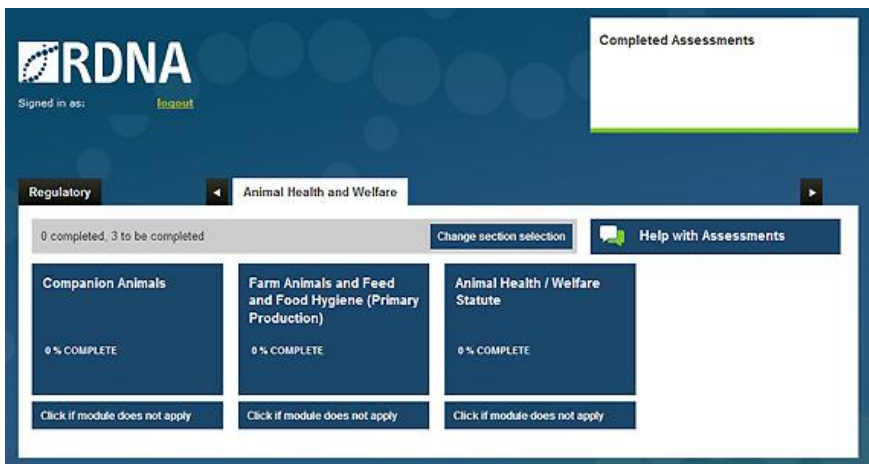
To view a pop-up screen with more information about what is required to assess risks effectively, click on the blue button ‘indicators of competency’.



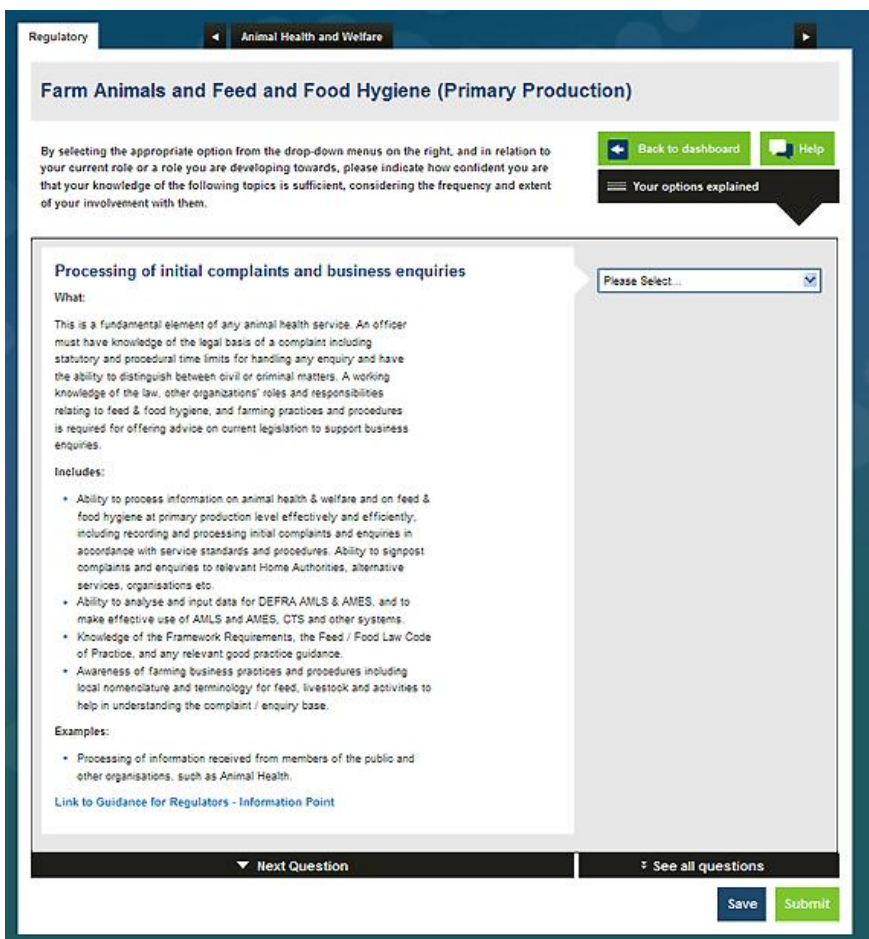
Each module in regulatory skills has its own list of indicators, accompanied by a link to the relevant page on GRIP.



Your progress can be monitored 'at a glance' by returning to the dashboard. (In this case, modules one and two have been submitted, module three has been completed and saved, and modules four and five have been part-completed and saved.)



Let's now assume that, having switched to the technical knowledge section *animal health and welfare* (by clicking on the tab containing its title), you then click on the second module *farm animals and feed and food hygiene*.



Like *assess risks*, the module presents a series of statements, but in this case you need to indicate how confident you are that your knowledge of each topic is sufficient by selecting an option from the standard drop-down menu. In addition, there are overviews for consideration rather than 'indicators of competency'.

Producing a report

This page will appear automatically once you have completed and submitted every module in your tailored assessment. Name it in the field shown and select an option from the drop-down menu to indicate whether it was done for yourself or someone else. Click on the green 'save' button to continue.

Your report is now listed in the box on the right. To download it as a PDF – sample opening page shown below – click on 'download your report'. Alternatively, you can click on 'start a new assessment' to return to the assessment creation page.



Assessment Name: 2011 Assessment

Date of Submission: 16 November 2011 11.00

Undertaken for Self

Regulatory Skills: 1. Assess risks

Against the following statement: 1.1 Identify the hazards and assess the level of risk arising in connection with the business' / individual's activities, and take such action as is proportionate

You selected: Agree - No development need

And commented:

Against the following statement: 1.2 Explain the concepts of 'hazard' and 'risk'

You selected: Agree - No development need

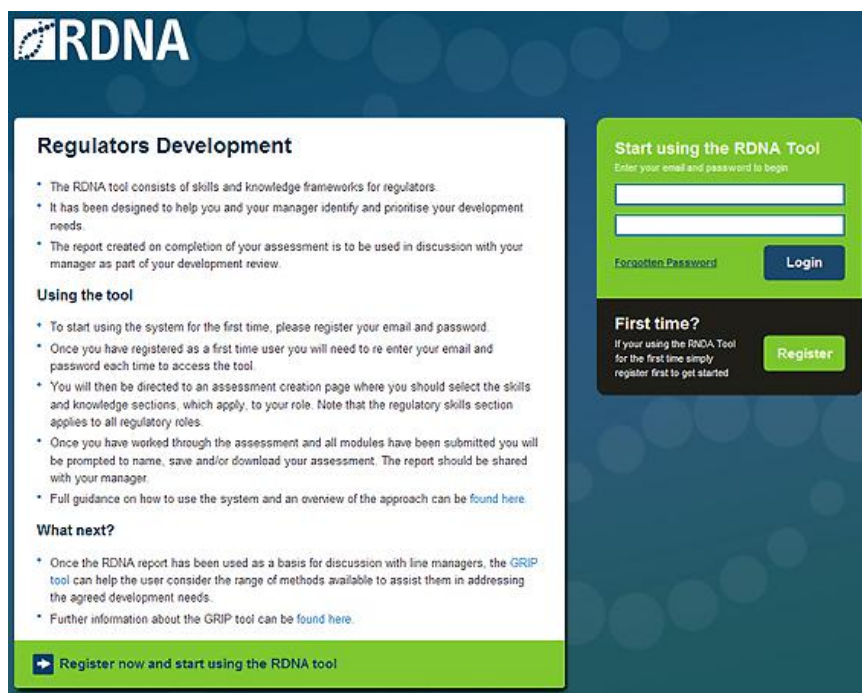
And commented:

Against the following statement: 1.3 Explain, and be able to apply, the principles of effective risk management to the relevant business environment

You selected: Agree - No development need

And commented:

Existing users



The screenshot shows the RDNA self-assessment tool interface. On the left, there is a white box titled 'Regulators Development' containing a list of bullet points and a 'Using the tool' section. On the right, there is a green box titled 'Start using the RDNA Tool' with a login form and a 'First time?' section. At the bottom left of the white box, there is a green button with a right-pointing arrow and the text 'Register now and start using the RDNA tool'.

Regulators Development

- * The RDNA tool consists of skills and knowledge frameworks for regulators.
- * It has been designed to help you and your manager identify and prioritise your development needs
- * The report created on completion of your assessment is to be used in discussion with your manager as part of your development review.

Using the tool

- * To start using the system for the first time, please register your email and password.
- * Once you have registered as a first time user you will need to re enter your email and password each time to access the tool.
- * You will then be directed to an assessment creation page where you should select the skills and knowledge sections, which apply, to your role. Note that the regulatory skills section applies to all regulatory roles.
- * Once you have worked through the assessment and all modules have been submitted you will be prompted to name, save and/or download your assessment. The report should be shared with your manager.
- * Full guidance on how to use the system and an overview of the approach can be [found here](#).

What next?

- * Once the RDNA report has been used as a basis for discussion with line managers, the [GRIP tool](#) can help the user consider the range of methods available to assist them in addressing the agreed development needs.
- * Further information about the [GRIP tool](#) can be [found here](#).

Start using the RDNA Tool
Enter your email and password to login

[Forgotten Password](#)

First time?
If your using the RDNA Tool for the first time simply register first to get started

[Register now and start using the RDNA tool](#)

If you are returning to the RDNA self-assessment tool, enter your email address and password in the fields shown in the box on the right and click on the blue 'login' button. If you forget your password, click on 'forgotten password' and follow the instructions.

The session 'time out' is set to one hour and will log you out automatically at this point if there has been no activity on your PC.

If you need additional support, please email rdnasupport@lbro.org.uk