



INITIAL ASSESSMENT & RECOGNISING PRIOR LEARNING (APPS/MENG)

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POLICY AIM AND OBJECTIVES

ACCIPIO is committed to ensuring that apprentices are assessed prior to the commencement of their apprenticeship to ensure suitability and eligibility. The objectives of this policy are:

- *To assess learners' prior learning, knowledge, skills and behaviours against the apprenticeship.*
- *To review the learners individual learning record and assess any prior qualifications against the apprenticeship.*
- *To carry out initial assessments which identify and analyse skills gaps and how the apprenticeship will address these.*
- *To fully understand the individuals' personal circumstances in key areas.*
- *To ensure the full occupational profile and learning of all the skills, knowledge and behaviors required is fully addressed.*
- *To keep the individual fully informed throughout their initial assessment.*

The range of the policy covers all apprenticeship related courses offered within ACCIPIO but may well apply to other vocationally related courses should they become a part of the curriculum in future.

KEY POINTS

Throughout all initial assessment processes, ACCIPIO recognise that:

- *Recognition of prior learning extends beyond English, Maths and existing qualifications.*
- *All of the knowledge, skills and behaviours set out in an apprenticeship standard are to be considered when reviewing the prior learning of the apprentice.*
- *Recognition of prior learning is part of the learner eligibility assessment.*
- *Apprenticeships could be poor value for money and unnecessarily long if training covers areas that the apprentice already knows, and public funding should not be used for learning which is not new*
- *Initial assessment is vital to ensure high quality apprenticeships and Ofsted inspections look for evidence of a robust initial assessment*

WHAT IS INITIAL ASSESSMENT?

Before an apprenticeship begins, ACCIPIO will assess the individual's prior learning to establish the starting point of their learning journey. This will inform how much of the

apprenticeship training content the individual requires and checks that the apprenticeship is an appropriate training programme for the individual.

Initial assessment checks that the apprenticeship is on an appropriate programme for the individual. Apprentices should not be spending paid time doing training they do not need, and the apprentice will not have a good experience if they are repeating training. ACCIPIO recognise that apprenticeship funding should not be used to pay for, or accredit, existing knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Leaders and managers (including compliance) consider the 'distance travelled' by the apprentice in determining the value added by the training programme and without knowing the starting point of an apprentice they cannot correctly assess the distance travelled and the quality of the apprenticeship training that has been delivered. It is therefore important that we are able to evidence a robust initial assessment, clear mile stones and progress against these.

The initial assessment checks how much of the apprenticeship programme the individual requires to reach occupational competency. Assuming there is no prior learning, ACCIPIO must assess whether the individual still needs an apprenticeship with a minimum duration of 12 months with at least 20% of off-the-job training. In some circumstances, this amount of training will not be necessary for the apprenticeship programme and an alternative should be considered.

Our standard length of stay (SLOS) for our apprenticeship training courses:

| Standard | Duration (Practical) | Duration (EPA) |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Level 3 TLS | 15 months | 18 months |
| Level 5 OPS M | 18 months | 21 months |
| Level 7 SNR L | 18 months | 21 months |

WHAT COUNTS AS PRIOR LEARNING?

In recognising prior learning, the following will be considered against the knowledge, skills and behaviors set out in the apprenticeship standard:

- *Work experience, which is particularly important if the apprentice is an existing employee.*
- *Prior education, training or associated qualification in a related sector subject area.*
- *Any previous apprenticeship undertaken.*

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR COMPLETING THE INITIAL ASSESSMENT?

ACCIPIO Leadership Skills Coaches (LSC) are responsible for ensuring that the initial assessment is complete in full. LSCs are responsible for:

- *Assessing the prior learning of the individual before the apprenticeship can begin.*

- *Agreeing with the employer how the programme will be delivered to reflect any existing knowledge, skills and behaviours.*
- *Recording prior learning in the evidence pack and commitment statement.*

HOW IS INITIAL ASSESSMENT COMPLETED AND RECORDED?

Prior learning is assessed using a range of methods, all of which are recorded in the apprenticeship application and initial assessment documentation. As well as prior learning, other factors are taken into consideration when planning learning, all of which make up the learners' initial assessment. An apprentice is able to complete this document independently however, it is best practice for this to happen with the LSC present to ensure a deeper understanding of prior learning, knowledge and skills. Where an individual has completed the initial assessment documentation alone, this will always be followed up with a review and discussion with the training coordinator to ensure all evidence of prior learning is appropriately documented.

Prior Qualifications

- Qualifications and level
- Apprenticeships

Skills Analysis

- Skills Scan (360)
- Skills Gap Analysis (moderation)

Work Experience

- CV
- JD
- Professional Qualifications

Additional Learning Needs

Personal, social and employability assessment

Initial Careers Information, Advice and Guidance

Maths and English

Personal Learner Records

Prior Qualifications

Information about an individuals' qualifications and achievements will provide information about where a learner has completed a qualification which may be similar in content, or have some similarities on content to the apprenticeship in which they want to begin. This will ensure that a learner is not repeating learning in an area in which they are already competent and that Accipio are not over claiming funding for duplicate learning activity.

Prior qualification can also help in determining an individual's general level of ability and strengths in certain subject areas which may inform their choice of programme.

Maths and English

During initial assessment we identify an individuals' current level of Maths and English on a scale between entry level 3 and level 2. The aim is to:

- *Ensure that the individual has an appropriate level of Maths and English to be able to undertake the level of apprenticeship they wish to begin. Where an individual does not meet the requirements, they will be given a development plan to develop their Maths and English skills to the required level.*
- *Identify where an individual has any prior learning which will exempt them from a mandatory component of the apprenticeship framework or standard*
- *Identify the correct level of functional skill in which the individual is to be enrolled to ensure that all funding rules are met.*
- *Identify development areas which will be addressed throughout the apprenticeship programme to ensure the individual is progressing from their starting point.*

Work Experience

Information about an individuals' work experience will be assessed to ensure that through the delivery of the desired apprenticeship there is no duplication in the learning of skills, knowledge and behaviors and that the apprenticeship is teaching them new skills which are required for a genuine apprenticeship position. This is assessed through an individuals' job description, their CV and a guided discussion with the LSC. Any professional qualifications and in-house training will also be considered.

Skills Analysis

A skills analysis, either by way of a skills gap analysis for apprenticeship standards will determine skills, knowledge and behaviors which the individual already hold in line with the standards set out in the apprenticeship and where there are gaps which need to be addressed. This will ensure that there is no duplication of learning, or funding.

Personal Learning Records

An individuals' Personal Learning Record (PLR) will be viewed to confirm any qualification achieved. The PLR records all general and vocational qualifications which a learner has achieved. This will determine the qualification and level of learning where a learner cannot recall and be used to inform prior learning.

Additional Learning Needs

Some individuals have specific learning difficulties or disabilities which may necessitate specialist training provision and support. It is vital that these are identified during the initial assessment stage in order for that they are addressed in the individual learning plan. Where additional training needs are identified, additional learning support funding may be claimed and where this is the case, further evidence of training support will be provided.

Personal, Social and Employability Assessment

Skills in personal effectiveness are important in enhancing the employability of learners. These skills include self-confidence, motivation and communication to name a few and many learners need to develop these as part of their learning programme and therefore the identification of these are vital.

Some learners may have personal problems which need to be addressed through their learning programme; homelessness, behavioral difficulties, medical conditions etc... and these need to be identified at the earliest opportunity so that Accipio can work jointly with the individual to overcome the problem or find alternative solution

Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (Initial)

At the initial assessment stage, an individual will discuss the rationale behind wanting to embark on the apprenticeship and what is expected from them upon successful completion of the apprenticeship. This will enable the individual learning plan to appropriately record milestones for achievement and support with any additional learning which will support with an individual's career aspirations.

HOW DOES INITIAL ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING FEED INTO FUNDING NEGOTIATIONS

Accipio recognise that the band of an apprenticeship is based on an apprentice requiring the full content of the apprenticeship or all of the listed knowledge, skills and behaviours in an apprenticeship standard.

Where an individual has relevant prior learning, price of the apprenticeship will be reduced to factor this in. As well as the cost of the apprenticeship, the apprenticeship content and price will also be reduced to ensure there is no unnecessary duplication of funding and that an apprentice is not disadvantaged by being on programme for an extended period of time. The reduced duration must still meet the minimum requirement of 12 months and that 20% of the paid hours for this duration are spent on off the job training.