INITIAL ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

Initial assessment is the process of assessing the individual's existing knowledge, skills and behaviours with those required in the standard to achieve occupational competence and to ascertain whether the apprenticeship is the appropriate programme for the individual.

- Knowledge: The learner's knowledge is their current knowledge of technical detail and know-how required to do their job
- Skills: The learner's current skills refer to how competent they are at practically applying their knowledge to their role
- Behaviours: The learner's current behaviours are their current mindset, attitude, and approach within their current job role

In other words, it determines the learner's starting point for their learning programme in order to identify their learning and support needs, support the design of their individual learning plan and inform the structure for their learning. Port Training Services (PTS) will ensure, regardless of the learners starting grades or experience, all learners undertake the initial assessment, not only if the learner does not have 4/C grade or above or prior work experience/learning. This approach will ensure, as an effective training provider, PTS assess and document all learners starting points.

In cases where the learner has been employed in the same job role for a number of years a full detailed skill scan is undertaken in conjunction with the employer to identify areas for further development and areas where the learner is already fully competent or has a level of knowledge that directly correlates to the requirements of the apprenticeship. The Initial assessment identifies elements of the apprenticeship that the individual does not need, due to them already having the required level of competence in those areas. Any prior learning / skills identified will then be assessed to see whether the programme needs to be adjusted accordingly (including off the job training, content, duration and price). These will be reflected in the learners Individual Learning Plan and Training Plan.

As an apprenticeship provider PTS is committed to maintaining an initial assessment system that is rigorous and consistent to ensure fair assessment and identify support needs for effective learner progression.

The assessments are carried out before the apprenticeship begins to determine what the apprentice has already achieved and what their potential is to achieve in the future. Any progression will be documented within their reviews

The aim of the initial assessment is to gather an understanding of the learner with information recorded on the individual Learner Assessment Record (AP04):

- Current attainments (work experience / qualification(s) and prior education / previous apprenticeship undertaken
- Potential to complete their chosen qualification
- Learning needs
- Learning styles (AP05 – VAK Learning Styles questionnaire)
- Skills gaps

To be able to offer the learner:

- Appropriate advice and guidance
- An appropriate qualification at an appropriate level to their ability and understanding
- An appropriate assessor
- Tailored teaching to their identified learning styles
- Requirement of any additional support / resources

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of Training will ensure that all employees / instructors/assessors involved in the assessment of learners receive appropriate training, supervision and support regarding this policy and their role within it.

The assessor (with support from the QA Leader) is responsible for ensuring the policy is available to learners and employers.

Initial Assessment Toolkit

Initial assessments are a tool to be used to inform the social, physical and learning development needs of the learner, they will help the assessor build a relationship with the learners that are allocated to them and must be used as a starting point for the development of the ILP.
It is essential that the assessor puts the learner at the centre of the initial assessment process, to gain an understanding and rounded picture of the learner as a person.

PTS gather information for initial assessments by:

- A professional discussion with the apprentice to discuss knowledge, skills and behaviours gained in previous roles against the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the standard, (a self-assessment)
- Documentary information (certificates and personal learning record)
- Observation (direct evidence for apprentice)
- Numeracy and Literacy Initial Assessments – Including upskilling if necessary
- Skills Scan (review of prior learning to ensure that the learning is not duplicated and is suitably challenging)

If additional support is identified the assessor can discuss such support with the employer and the QA Leader to ensure that appropriate resources are made available to the learner. However, not all needs may be met by PTS or the learner's employer, and where appropriate learners may need to be referred / signposted to specialist, partner organisations.

Assessing English and Mathematics

As part of the initial assessment, PTS will establish the apprentice's current level of English and mathematics, review prior attainment and determine whether the apprentice is required, eligible or would benefit from undertaking standalone English and/or mathematics qualifications as part of the apprenticeship.

Where English and/or mathematics is required, the initial assessment will determine the appropriate level at which the apprentice should commence learning. The outcome will be recorded within the apprentice's training plan and individual learning documentation.

Where an apprentice is not required to undertake a standalone English and/or mathematics qualification, PTS will nevertheless identify and address relevant English and mathematics development needs through the apprenticeship programme where appropriate.Where required learners will have timetabled English and

Mathematics sessions at the level appropriate to them which is at or above the level required by their standard.

To achieve this PTS will:

- Provide high quality, impartial advice and guidance together with initial and diagnostic assessment (AP10 Numeracy and Literacy Questionnaire) to inform recruitment for each learner to the right level and appropriate qualification pathway for English and mathematics.
- Develop a consistent approach to the delivery of English and mathematics
- Have access to a team of specialist English and mathematics teachers to deliver English and mathematics across the organisation
- Raise success rates in English and mathematics
- Ensure that the delivery of English and mathematics is flexible in terms of location, time, method and vocational context so that learners' needs are met

The result of the initial assessment is discussed with the apprentices and their employer, documented in the ILP and Individual Learning Records /Training Plan and reviewed throughout the apprenticeship programme.

Where learners do hold a level C or above in English and/or mathematics and are thus exempt from the functional skills qualifications, PTS will endeavour to stretch and challenge learners throughout the apprenticeship programme by embedding basic mathematics and literacy principles in all classroom-based activities, by critiquing and feeding back on written work and during professional discussion topics relating to their apprenticeship programme.

Procedure

During the enrolment on to the apprenticeship programme the allocated assessor will meet with the potential learner and employer and go through the apprenticeship programme content and requirements. This initial meeting is used to ensure all parties are aware of the commitment required to complete the apprenticeship programme and assess the eligibility of the potential learner.

The assessor will complete an initial assessment of the potential learner on form AP04 Individual Learner Assessment Record to assess:

- Starting point for skills, knowledge, and behaviour requirements of the apprenticeship and associated qualifications
- Learning needs
- Learning styles (AP05 – VAK Learning Styles questionnaire)
- Skills gaps
- Numeracy and literacy levels (AP10 Numeracy / Literacy Assessment)

Following the assessment and skills analysis the assessor will hold a discussion with the learner and employer to discuss the suitability of the learner and whether they are to be enrolled on the apprenticeship programme. This approach will allow for discussion of areas where the learner may have experience that could be relevant to the programme but would still benefit from further development and training, so justifies why the element(s) of the apprenticeship are not reduced / removed. In such instances a declaration will be signed by the learner / employer and assessor.

The feedback of the initial assessment is transferred on to the following documents will form the basis of the planning of the learners training plan and structure of the apprenticeship delivery:

- AP04 (a) / (b) Personal Learning Plan – Appendix A
- AP07 Training Plan
- AP11/ AP20 Individual Learning Plan

During the induction the learner will be given the apprenticeship handbook (AP12) and will go through the induction presentation with the assessor (AP24). A record of the induction will be given to the learner via form AP21.

The content of the initial assessment will be reviewed as part of the scheduled reviews to enable to learner and instructor/assessor to track the learners progress throughout the apprenticeship and identify any areas of reasonable adjustments, accessibility requirements, additional learning support, communication needs or other support requirements throughout the learning journey – populated on AP17 and within the review section of the ILP (AP11/AP20)

Where a numeracy or literacy need has been identified following initial assessment, the assessor will enrol the learner on an appropriate level qualification within 6 weeks of enrolment on the apprenticeship and detail such on the above documentation. 6-week period is to allow learners time to submit any certificates that may be relevant

to any functional skills exemptions or evidence additional support needs. Feedback and progress of functional skills qualifications will be built into the 12 weekly reviews.

Training Plan

Following the completion of the initial assessment the assessor will work with the employer and apprentice (tripartite planning meeting) to plan the apprenticeship programme, agreeing the agreed learning goals of the apprentice, the requirements of the apprentice standard and factoring in any previous training, knowledge and qualifications.

The agreed training plan, including off-the-job training requirements, functional skills requirements and any supplementary training agreed with the employer will be documented on the Personal Learning Plan (AP04 (a) / (b) – Appendix A. AP04(a/b) is populated from initial assessment to plan the structure of the training and apprenticeship programme, plan and track dates for completion dates of the training and learning outcomes, plan progress reviews, log off the job training and detail the support given to the apprentice when completing the apprenticeship programme.

AP07 Training Plan, is populated to detail all relevant training providers and contacts who will be working with and supporting the learner through their apprenticeship programme and be signed as a declaration of the employer, learner and PTS to the commitment of fulfilling the requirements of the apprenticeship programme.

AP11 Individual Learning Plan is populated as a starting point of the learners level of understanding and competence in the industry sector and updated to track the learners progress throughout the NVQ and technical certificate qualifications.

Following the initial assessment, it is the assessor's responsibility to ensure all above documents are returned to the office and that a learner file is set up with 14 days of induction. If no paperwork is returned with this time frame it is the responsibility of the QA Leader to request such within 2 working days, and escalate further to the Head of Training if this is not actioned by the assessor.

The QA Leader is responsible for reporting on the timely return, content and quality of the above paperwork within the Formative Sampling Report.