

Apprenticeship Initial Assessment Recognition of Prior

Learning Policy – POL047

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1 Policy Statement

Complete Skills Solutions is committed to maintaining and providing an initial assessment and recognition of prior learning system that is effective, consistent, ensures fair assessment and identifies support needs to enable effective learner progression, which is carried out for each individual apprentice and learner.

In doing so, Complete Skills Solutions recognises that apprentice and learner recruitment and selection procedures are required to be as welcoming and effective as possible. As such, Complete Skills Solutions adopts a sensitive approach to the recruitment of apprentices and learners from varied backgrounds and needs and as such will undertake recruitment without prejudice or bias towards any individual or group of apprentices or learners.

Our recruitment and selection procedures facilitate apprentices and learners taking responsibility for their own learning.

All employees involved in the initial assessment and assessment of recognised prior learning process will be skilled, experienced and appropriately qualified and have relevant up-to-date knowledge.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all apprentices and learners are appropriately assessed for prior learning and that this assessment is accurate, consistent and free from bias.

Complete Skills Solutions believes that by carrying out an initial assessment with every apprentice and learner, we can build an accurate and realistic understanding of an apprentice's or learner's:

- current attainments
- potential to complete their chosen qualification/apprenticeship
- skills development needs
- learning needs
- English and maths skills

development needs Enabling

the identification of:

- appropriate advice and guidance
- an appropriate qualification at an appropriate level
- appropriate support

This then leads to the formulation, implementation, review and continual development of an effective individual skills development plan and the identification of teaching, learning and assessment methods and opportunities.

3 Scope

This policy applies to the induction process of all apprentices and learners to formal apprenticeship training provided by Complete Skills Solutions.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

Complete Skills Solutions is responsible for ensuring that all employees involved in the assessment of apprentices and learners receive appropriate training, coaching and support regarding the policy and their responsibilities.

All members of the Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that a copy of this document is available to all and for ensuring the adherence of this policy by all employees.

The Head of Quality is responsible for ensuring that all apprenticeship inductions follow this policy.

The Marketing and Business Development Executive is responsible for ensuring the policy is available to apprentices, learners and employers on the website.

Employees are required to act in accordance with the policy and to provide appropriate support to the apprentices and learners. Failure to do so may be considered as an act of misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

5 Policy Implementation – Procedures

It is essential that all employees put the apprentice or learner at the centre of the initial assessment process, the process is an important part of the skills trainer gaining and understanding the starting point of the learner. Apprentices (but also learners) need to be guided and supported to complete several initial assessments:

- BKSB Functional Skills Initial Assessment or similar platform, to discover current levels of attainment in maths and English and inform a starting place for further appropriate diagnostic assessments (BKSB)
- Candidate skill scan/starting point assessment (self-assessment), which includes discussion about:
 - Occupational background
 - Current qualifications held – Courses attended
 - Further training and experience are needed Assessment needs
 - Learning needs
 - Training needs
 - Aids needed
 - Differentiation / Support needs
 - Present post summary
 - Objectives and outcomes that the apprentice or learner wants to achieve

Trainers must also be aware of other modes of assessment available to them:

- Discussion of social needs
- Records of prior learning and achievement (qualifications and courses).
- Discussion of learning outcomes.
- Observations of apprentice's or learner's working practice.
- Records of Dyslexia Assessments, discussion of dyslexic needs.

5.1 Points to Remember

5.1.1 Trainers

- Initial assessments are a tool to be used to inform the social,

physical and learning development needs of the apprentice or learner. They will help Trainers to build a relationship with apprentices and learners that are allocated to them and must be used as a starting point for the individual skills development plan.

- If additional support is identified Trainers should discuss those needs with the Quality Manager to ensure appropriate resources are made available. Not all needs may be met by Complete Skills Solutions or the apprentice's or learner's employer. Where appropriate apprentices may be referred to specialists, partner organisations.
- The employer should be involved to identify where they can support the apprentice or learner with their needs, between contact with their skills trainer
- Initial assessment can be revisited during the programme as a review tool.
- Initial assessment leads the apprentice or learner to:

Negotiating learning

When an apprentice or learner becomes self-aware through initial assessment, they become more focused on improving their own learning and development and negotiating learning and assessment. The skills coach should ensure that in each session there is agreement of what needs to be achieved in the session and before the next session and what needs to be accomplished to enable attainment.

Continuous assessment

Throughout the programme the skills coach will ensure that progress is regularly reviewed using the review paperwork and individual skills development plan, giving and encouraging 360-degree constructive feedback.

Developing a relationship

Trainers will build on the trust and cooperation garnered during the initial assessment process and include pastoral support.

5.2 Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning

5.2.1 Introduction

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment (leading to the award of a qualification) that considers whether apprentices and learners can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning.

This policy and process applies to all Complete Skills Solutions qualifications. However, qualifications that require an external or practical assessment will still require the apprentice or learner to undertake the assessment to verify competency.

RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, units or a whole qualification. Partial unit completion is not acceptable.

Complete Skills Solutions encourages the use of RPL where it is of value to apprentices or learners in facilitating assessment. The use and application of RPL enables apprentices and learners to gain all or part of a qualification without having to undertake a formal learning programme. RPL focuses on assessment and awarding prior learning which may count as evidence towards:

- A unit accumulated towards a full qualification
- A full qualification.

We seek to enable apprentices and learners to avoid the duplication of learning and assessment. There are two ways in which this will be achieved.

1. The opportunity to transfer credits, i.e. to recognise previously accredited achievement from within or outside the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) to count towards other qualifications.

2. For individuals with learning or achievements that have not been certificated / accredited it may be possible to assess and validate these through the RPL process. These achievements may then count towards a qualification/EPA but the organisation must adhere to the ESFA funding rules and reduce the funding/length of stay as applicable.

Complete Skills Solutions when carrying out RPL will ensure that:

- Identification of any achievement through RPL is prior to apprentices registering to taking a qualification
- Records of assessment are maintained, as for any other unit/qualification
- Certification and claims are made according to normal procedures
- All relevant evidence is assessed before assessment decisions are confirmed
- There are designated personnel with the appropriate expertise to support and assure the RPL process.

5.3 Evidence of Learning

All evidence must be evaluated using the stipulated learning outcomes and assessment criteria from the qualification or unit being claimed. In assessing a unit using RPL the assessor must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the apprentice or learner meets the assessment standard established by the learning outcome and its related assessment criteria.

Example of evidence that may be submitted include:

- Certificates — copies of previous qualifications
 - Qualification Specifications — in order to map the learning outcomes and assessment methods, the assessor must see qualification units and previous assessment methods
 - Witness Statements — signed by a reliable person such as a line manager as evidence of practical experience.
- All evidence of learning must be:

Valid

Addresses the elements and performance criteria. Reflects the skills, knowledge and context described in the qualification specification.

Authentic

The evidence being submitted is in its original format, can be verified as genuine and can be confirmed as the work of the apprentice or learner.

Sufficient

The skills trainer must see sufficient evidence to cover all aspects of the unit, units or qualification being claimed. The evidence must demonstrate competence over a period of time and that is able to be repeated.

Current

The evidence must demonstrate the apprentice's or learner's current skills and knowledge and must comply with current best practice guidance. For example, witness statements for practical experience must be within the last 5 years.

Reliable

Evidence must be from a reliable source and in a reliable format, on organisation headed paper or certification. All translated documents must be translated by an official translator to ensure authenticity.

5.4 RPL Process

Step 1 Completion of an RPL application form

Step 2 Submit completed RPL application form and all supporting evidence

Step 3 Assessment of Evidence
The trainer will review and evaluate all evidence and map prior learning to qualification units. The assessment process will be subject to the standard quality assurance procedures to ensure the integrity of the qualification/units.

Step 4 If the evidence **is** sufficient, the trainer will notify the apprentice or learner of the assessment requirement in order to gain the qualification/units.
If the RPL evidence is judged **not** to be sufficient to meet all the requirements of the relevant qualification/unit, then the apprentice or learner will be required to complete the normal course of learning.

6 Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is up to date and compliant with the latest legislation.

The policy was last updated in July 2024 and is due for renewal in July 2025.

This policy may also be updated before the renewal date if legislation changes or if monitoring and review of performance suggests that practices should be altered.