

HTP Apprenticeship College Initial Assessment Strategy

Introduction

HTP Apprenticeship College Ltd (HTP) is an Independent Training Provider delivering a range of Apprenticeships, Traineeships, Study Programmes, stand-alone qualifications and bespoke courses for employers in a number of vocational sectors. HTP provides all stakeholders with access to good quality careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) to enable them to be prepared to face challenges and opportunities for learning, working and living.

HTP is committed to meeting the Gatsby Career Benchmarks and Matrix Quality Standard for advice and support services. All learners undergo a period of initial assessment, the purpose of which is to identify their existing skills, knowledge and behaviours and identify their learning and support needs, the first stage in the learning cycle on which all other stages are built. Initial Assessment determines the learner's starting point for their learning programme.

Aim

The aim of HTP's Initial Assessment process is to work with the learner, and employer where appropriate, to collect a wide range of information which provides a coherent picture of the individual learner. This ensures:

- they are placed on an appropriate learning programme enabling them to develop new skills, knowledge and behaviours in an appropriate occupational area;
- agreed learning plans meet individual needs and aspirations.

Scope

The learner, and employer if they are employed status, lie at the centre of the learning process and therefore are required to be fully engaged in the initial assessment process and the development of the learning plan.

A wide range of initial assessment methods are available. The Recruitment and Careers Advisor/Training Consultants select the method most appropriate for each individual to ensure a comprehensive picture of their learning and support needs is formed.

Initial Assessment Process

Initial assessment commences at the first point of contact with the prospective learner and continues until the individual learning plan has been completed.

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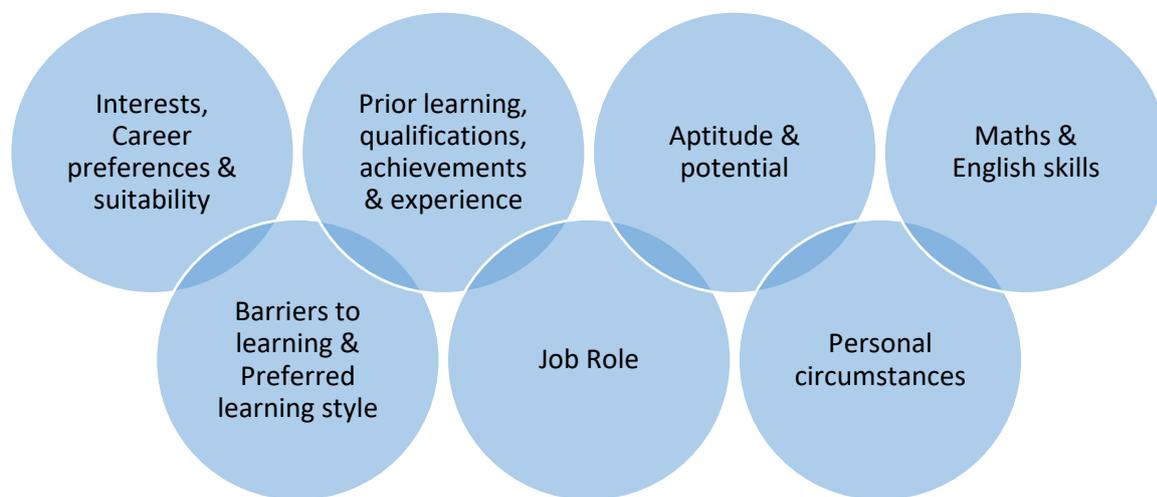
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Further learning and support needs which are identified through the progress review process are reflected in updates to the individual training plan.

An individual’s learning and support needs are identified from the collection and analysis of a wide range of information. Figure 2 below depicts the different types of information which are considered during the initial assessment process.

Figure 2

Learner Information Considered During Initial Assessment



Interests, Career Preferences & Suitability

Information on the learner’s interests, career preferences, ambitions and aspirations is collected to assist the process of guiding them to make suitable career and learning choices.

Recognition of Prior Learning, Qualifications, Achievements & Experience

Information about a learner’s qualifications, achievements, prior experience and learning provides an indication of their general level of ability and existing skills, knowledge and behaviours. These are assessed to ensure that the learner is placed on a programme which provides them with new knowledge, skills and behaviours and avoids repeating learning in areas in which they are already competent. Learners may have experience which already meets part of an apprenticeship and this will inform the content and length of the individual training plan.

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Ability & Potential

Some learners' educational qualifications and achievements may not reflect their true ability or potential. Failure to achieve qualifications may be the result of many different issues. A learner's ability and potential is initially assessed using a range of tools, for example a detailed vocational skills scan, so that accurate decisions can be made about the type and level of programme from which they will most benefit.

Maths, English and Digital Skills

During initial assessment the learner's current levels of maths, English and where appropriate digital skills are assessed. A diagnostic report is then compiled to identify strengths and areas in which they require help and support. Outcomes from the assessment and diagnosis are then mapped to specific resources ensuring each learner receives tailored support to meet their individual needs.

Barriers to Learning

It is vital that any barriers to learning are identified during initial assessment in order that they can be addressed in the individual's training and support plans.

Preferred Learning Styles

These are identified to ensure learning is effective. Training Consultants require an awareness of the ways in which their learners are best able to learn so that they can use appropriate teaching styles.

Job Role

For employed status learners it is important to consider whether their job role/workplace opportunities will allow them to develop new skills, knowledge and behaviours to meet the requirements of the training programme. This will enable the Training Consultant to consider how the learner will be given the opportunities to develop competencies in the areas where there are gaps when developing the individual training plan.

Personal Circumstances

It is important that personal circumstances are identified which affect learning or working in certain areas in order that ways can jointly be found to overcome or find ways around any problems.

Equality of Opportunity

Identification of individual needs through initial and ongoing assessment is important to ensure that learners are not discriminated against or discouraged. Access to learning is an important part of promoting equality of opportunity. Data is systematically collected and analysed to address any indication of stereotyping in terms of gender, ethnicity, disability, age and geographical factors.

Initial Assessment Methods

Different methods are used to undertake initial assessment. Typically a combination of methods are chosen which are appropriate to the needs and circumstances of the learner to provide an accurate picture of needs and ensure equality of opportunity.

HTP Quality Processes relating to initial assessment must be followed by all staff to ensuring assessments are valid, reliable and free from bias.

Figure 3 below illustrates the range of Initial Assessment methods used:

Figure 3

	Application Form	Certificates / Personal Learning Record	Interview	Local Authority EHCP	Formal tests	Skill Scan
Interests, career preferences & suitability	*		*			*
Recognition of prior learning, qualifications, achievements & experience	*	*	*			*
Aptitude & potential		*	*	*	*	*
Maths, English & Digital Skills	*	*	*		*	
Barriers to Learning	*		*	*		
Preferred Learning Style			*		*	*
Job Role	*		*			*
Personal Circumstances	*		*	*		

Using Initial Assessment Information

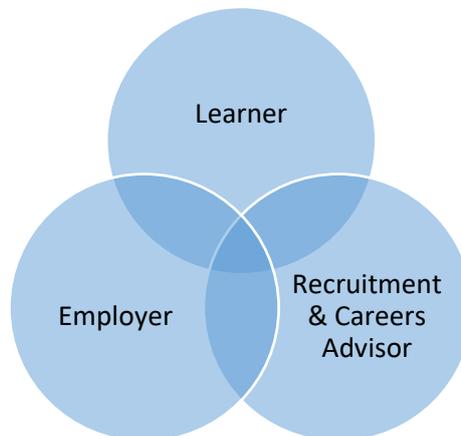
Information collected during the initial assessment process should allow the learner to:

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- be placed on an appropriate learning programme which provides the opportunity to acquire new skills, knowledge and behaviours;
- be signposted to an alternative learning provider if they are better placed to meet identified needs;
- work towards a level of qualification which is appropriate;
- be placed in work in an appropriate occupational area where this is relevant to the learning programme;
- enable a comprehensive individual learning plan to be designed.

Roles and Responsibilities



Learner

The learner is at the heart of the initial assessment process. Engaging them is critical to ensure learning is effective and they see the relevance of their learning plan. Effective initial assessment helps the learner to:

- have a better understanding of their career options;
- make realistic choices about their career aims;
- identify the skills, knowledge and behaviours they have and what they need to learn;
- recognise their strengths and development needs;
- feel valued and motivated by the support given to them in identifying their individual needs;
- play a part in the development of their learning plan through understanding their own learning and support needs;
- take responsibility for their own learning;
- measure their progress by providing a clear baseline of where they are at the start of their learning programme;

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- complete their learning programme, achieve and progress.

Employer

Employers have a critical role to play in the initial assessment process to:

- ensure job/training programme is suitable for the learner;
- support the learning needs of the individual;
- ensure the appropriate learning opportunities are made available, both on and off the job;
- provide appropriate support in the workplace;
- motivate learners to feel positive about achieving their training plan;
- engage in the End Point Assessment process.

HTP Apprenticeship College

HTP has overall responsibility for gathering information at initial assessment from the learner, employer and other relevant sources.

Recruitment and Careers Advisor Responsibilities:

- carrying out initial assessment using appropriate methods to provide an accurate picture of the learning and support needs of each learner and ensuring equality of opportunity;
- ensuring learners receive impartial information, advice and guidance and are signposted to the most appropriate training provision;
- liaising with Training Managers and Consultants to ensure they are aware of the learner and employer needs, aspirations and goals and have the information they require to develop effective individual learning programmes.

All Recruitment & Careers Advisors are required to hold or work towards a CEIAG qualification at Level 4 or above.

Director Responsibilities:

- ensuring all staff who undertake initial assessment activities have the appropriate skills and knowledge;
- ensuring all staff have access to this policy document and clear, written procedures for carrying out Initial Assessment;
- reviewing the effectiveness of Initial Assessment annually as part of the whole organisation self-assessment process;
- monitoring start and completion data to ensure learners are placed on an appropriate learning programme, achieve and progress.

Senior Managers Responsibilities:

- ensuring staff follow HTP's Initial Assessment Quality Processes;
- analysing information obtained through Initial Assessment and start paperwork to ensure learners are placed on an appropriate training programme;
- monitoring learner progress and ensuring appropriate support is in place to meet learner needs, enable learners to achieve and progress;
- reviewing learner and employer feedback to ensure the continuous improvement of training and services provided by HTP;
- reporting any areas of concern to Directors.

Training Consultants Responsibilities:

- understanding the learner needs and the support they require;
- developing and delivering learning programme which meets the needs of learners and employers;
- measuring and reporting progress in relation to the learner's starting point;
- improve learner retention and achievement levels;
- improve relationships with employers by providing appropriate ongoing advice, guidance, training and support;
- carrying out continuous assessment to identify emerging needs and agreeing appropriate adjustments to the learning plan.

To ensure Training Consultants have the competencies to undertake effective practice in initial assessment and the design of individual training plans they are required to hold or work towards an appropriate Learning & Development qualification at Level 4 or above.

Data & Support Team Responsibilities:

- monitoring and reporting data to ensure equality of opportunity, retention and achievement rates;
- providing monthly reports to Directors and Senior Management on learner and employer feedback in relation to Initial Assessment.