

ESSENTIAL SKILLS INITIAL ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

Initial assessment is about knowing your learners in order to be able to support them appropriately. It does not just 'happen' but must be planned and carried out in such a way that learners and staff (as well as guardians and employers) can see what the benefits are. When a learner commences their Training with Rutledge it is important to establish which level of Essential Skills they currently hold in regard to Literacy, Numeracy and ICT. Learners complete an Initial Assessment. The assessment tool Rutledge use is called "Skills for Life" and can be completed either on a computer or paper-based.

Rutledge carries out Initial Assessment to ensure that learners are on the right programme and properly supported while on it. If we design and manage the process well, we can use it to gather information to support the whole of the learners' experience and inform other stakeholders who are interested in the learners' progress and success.

Staff training in Initial Assessment is vital to ensure the best possible experience for our learners. Rutledge ensure staff conducting Initial Assessment are Qualified in the assessment and delivery of Essential Skills.

Matching the specific needs of our learners to the most appropriate assessment methods and planning to ensure this happens, leads to greater success and appropriate achievement.

There are 6 levels of Essential Skills in Literacy and Numeracy. They are:

- Below Entry Level
- Entry Level 1
- Entry Level 2
- Entry Level 3
- Level 1
- Level 2

Completing the Numeracy Initial Assessment:

The tool is designed to assess a learner's skills in: Number, Measures, Shape and Space and Handling data.

Completing the Literacy Initial Assessment:

The tool is designed to assess a learner's skills in: Listening, Reading and Writing.

All questions address criteria in the Adult Numeracy / Adult Literacy Core Curriculum and National Standards. Questions begin at Entry Level 1 and increase in difficulty to Level 2.

Completing ICT Initial Assessment:

For ICT there is a combined Initial/Diagnostic assessment. The assessment consists of 3 activities:

- Activity 1 Word Processing
- Activity 2 Email
- Activity 3 Spreadsheets

These activities are designed to allow learners to demonstrate their ICT skills. In Essential Skills ICT learners will work towards Level 1 and can progress to Level 2.

The Initial Assessments are conducted by qualified and experienced Essential Skills Teaching & Learning Facilitators (TLFs). It is explained to learners that the assessments are not tests, they are not timed, and learners can take as much time as they need.

All learners are given feedback on their performance. This is done in a one to one meeting with their Essential Skills TLF. It is explained that the results are confidential. Feedback is given sensitively and it is explained to learners that the Initial Assessment is simply a stepping stone to a more thorough Diagnostic Assessment.

The results of Initial Assessment are recorded and given to the Administrator, who enters the level the learner has achieved on TMS. Learner's results and the levels they are working toward are recorded on their Personal Training Plans (PTPs).

Initial Assessment is used to establish the level the learner is at now. Diagnostic Assessment is set at the level the learner is working towards and its purpose is to highlight the learner's strengths and identify areas for improvement. The results of Diagnostic Assessments are entered on Group Learning Plans. These are used to inform teaching throughout the year.

Learning Styles Assessment:

As well as completing Initial and Diagnostic Assessment learners are also asked to complete a learning style questionnaire. All learners are individuals and therefore learn in different ways. There are no right or wrong learning styles. The learning style questionnaire is used to identify a learner's particular learning style.

Visual learners work best when they can see what they are being taught. Auditory learners work best when they can hear what they are being taught. Kinaesthetic learners work best when they are able to have a go at what they are being taught.

Results of completed learning style questionnaires are discussed with individual learners in a one to one meeting with their Essential Skills TLF and results are recorded on their Personal Training Plan. All TLFs working with learners will access to the learners initial assessment and learning style outcomes.

Revised by: SMT (August 2012)

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