



Short Guide for Apprentices:
Initial Assessment to
Recognise Prior Learning and
Experience

Table of Contents

Recognising your prior learning and experience

Prior learning can affect whether you can do an apprenticeship

Preparation for initial assessment

The initial assessment

After the initial assessment

Recognising your prior learning and experience

Before you become an apprentice, you may already have covered parts of your knowledge, skills and behaviours set out in your apprenticeship – you could have gained these from relevant qualification or employment in the industry. It is important that you are given credit for what you already know and can do, so that you don't have to repeat the training.

This is known as recognition of prior learning and experience.

Your apprenticeship should be about learning new capabilities which support you to become full competent in your job, as described in the apprenticeship description (the standard). You should not repeat training on things you already know how to do competently. By only doing the training you need, you could complete your apprenticeship sooner, including via an accelerated apprenticeship.

Your training provider will assess what prior learning and experience you have before you begin your apprenticeship. Your employer will also be involved in the process by helping identify what you can do and agreeing this with your training provider.

Prior learning can affect whether you can do an apprenticeship.

The apprenticeship funding rules state that to start an apprenticeship you must:

- Need significant new training that lasts for at least 12 months
- Undertake the equivalent of 6 hours per week doing off the job training.

This doesn't have to be organised weekly but must be the equivalent of 6 hours per week over the duration of your apprenticeship.

If the amount of prior learning or experience mean that you do not need this much training, you will not be eligible for apprenticeship funding. In these circumstances there may be higher-level apprenticeships you could complete or a different training programme that is better suited to your skills and career aspirations.

Preparation for Initial Assessment

Your training provider and employer will support you prepare for and complete the initial assessments which include recognition of any prior learning or experience. You should be open and honest and try not to exaggerate or play down your learning and experience.

To help you prepare for initial assessment

You can ask your training provider what their initial assessment process will involve. This must include a skills scan for example, you may be asked to complete a self-assessment and have a follow up discussion.

You should read:

- The Occupational Standard you are looking to undertake
- Gather evidence of your previous education, training and work experience (paid and voluntary) and life experiences, which could be relevant to the apprenticeship.

The initial Assessment

You can help your training provider to make an accurate initial assessment by:

- Telling the about the relevant work experience (including volunteering), education and training that you have done.
- Completing any pre-initial assessment activities you are asked to do
- Being ready to talk about how your prior learning and experience is relevant to your chosen apprenticeship.

After the initial Assessment

Your training provider and employer will agree on:

- Whether your prior learning and experience can count towards your apprenticeship
- What changes are needed (if any) to your training plan
- Whether you are eligible for funding to start your chosen apprenticeship.

Your training provider and employer will:

- Inform you about the outcome of your initial assessment and explain how they have been assessed your prior learning and experience
- Explain whether your training plan has been changed because of your initial assessments and what you need to do to become competent in your occupation
- Work with you to identify the options available to you if you have too much prior learning to be eligible for funding for your chosen apprenticeship.