



UNIVERSITY_{OF}
WINCHESTER

**Apprenticeship Initial Needs
Assessment Procedure**
(incl. Functional skills)

Document Title:	Apprenticeship initial Needs Assessment (Inc. Functional Skills) Procedure
Responsible Role and Department:	Apprenticeship Compliance Manager, Center for Degree Apprenticeships
Approving Body:	Senate
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Applies to:	University of Winchester University of Winchester Services Limited <i>Note: This policy applies to all the organisations listed above, collectively known as the 'university' or the 'university of Winchester' for the purpose of this policy.</i>
Indicate whether the document is for public access or internal access only Indicate whether the document applies to collaborative provision? <i>(Strikethrough text, as appropriate)</i>	Public Access Internal Access Only Applies to Collaborative Provision
Summary: The purpose of this document is to set out the procedures for performing Initial Needs Assessment for apprenticeship applicants. This document should be read in conjunction with the recognition of prior learning (RPL) procedures which define the procedures and guidance for submitting and approving requests for a learner to be exempted from individual modules or permitted direct entry to the second or subsequent year of an apprenticeship programme on the basis of prior certified and/or experiential learning. <i>Note. this policy is underpinned by our commitment to promoting a university wide approach to health, safety and wellbeing and is supported by the principles of the University Mental Health Charter. Care has been taken to ensure that the policy is written compassionately, with consideration of the potential impact on staff and students.</i>	

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out procedures for performing the Initial Needs Assessment (INA) for apprenticeship applicants. The Initial Needs Assessment is a requirement of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and is used to assess the individual apprentice starting point against the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the apprenticeship standard. The INA will also inform the learning plan, which sets out the planned Off-the-Job (OTJT) learning for the individual apprentice.
- 1.2 The University of Winchester recognises the value of learning wherever it occurs. It is also important for the planning, creation, tracking and evidencing of Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) of the relevant apprenticeship standard undertaken by the learner both on- and off-the-job.

2. Responsibility

- 2.1 The University of Winchester has responsibility for assessing how much of the apprenticeship programme each apprentice requires to reach occupational competency – as outlined in the relevant apprenticeship standard.
- 2.2 As part of the on-boarding process, the apprentice will undertake a number of required assessments as part of their INA. These include:
 - i. Skills Scan against the apprenticeship standard
 - ii. A English and maths functional skills assessment
 - iii. A cognitive diagnostic assessment
- 2.3 All apprentices, regardless of having an exemption from the DWP requirement to have L2 English and/or maths must complete the functional skills assessment. **This assessment has no impact on the admissions process or decision but will inform the programme team of any extra support the apprentice may need during their apprenticeship.**
- 2.4 Apprentices will complete the above assessments via the apprenticeship management system and should normally be completed **within 1 month** of the start date of the programme. If an alternative format is required, please discuss with the Centre for Degree Apprenticeships.
- 2.5 The Programme Leader will review the Skills Scan and English and maths assessment and will:
 - i. Identify skills the apprentice already has and any gaps, including English and maths, to be filled to enable the apprentice to complete the apprenticeship. Assess the prior learning of each individual, making recommendations for RPL where appropriate and in accordance with any PSRB requirements.
 - ii. Where RPL is being applied, assess whether the apprenticeship is still appropriate for the individual.
 - iii. Agree with the apprentice and their employer how the programme will be delivered to reflect individual needs and any relevant existing knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- 2.6 The cognitive diagnostic assessment will be reviewed by the Disability Team, who will contact the apprentice to discuss learning support, and will follow the standard process for implementing Learning Agreements. **The cognitive diagnostic assessment has no impact on the admissions process or decision.**
- 2.7 The employer will only be given access to the cognitive diagnostic assessment report if the applicant has given permission to do so. Employers will remain responsible for implementing

any reasonable adjustments in the workplace via their normal HR processes.

3. Individual Needs Assessment Process:

3.1 Once the applicant apprentice has completed the INA:

- i. The Programme Leader (or qualified nominee) with the apprentice and their manager, will review the skill scan, looking at the scoring against each knowledge, skills and behaviours and identify evidence of competency; and
- ii. Where the need for significant and sustained new learning is established (8 months or more off-the-job training), the Programme Leader will confirm that the apprenticeship is still relevant for the individual.
- iii. Where there is prior learning and/or evidence of the apprentice meeting some knowledge, skills and behaviours, an RPL application will be submitted by the Programme Leader, confirming the modules that are to be exempt. The Centre for Degree Apprenticeships will confirm with the employer the new apprenticeship duration and/or reduction in off-the-job hours and the new levy fee.

4. What happens following the INA

4.1 Following the INA and a decision that the individual is eligible for the apprenticeship.

- i. The Programme Leader will:
 - Complete eligibility review confirming INA decision; and
 - Confirm that the scoring of the skill scan is an accurate reflection of the competence of the applicant; and
 - Where appropriate, complete the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) application; and
 - Discuss and confirm with the employer whether the applicant requires English and maths L2 qualifications; and
 - Confirm the offer on the apprenticeship
- ii. The Employer will:
 - Confirm that the scoring of the skill scan is an accurate reflection of the competence of their employee; and
 - That the applicant has the support of the employer to enroll onto the apprenticeship; and
 - Confirm that the applicant has the right to work, that there is an employment contract in place which will ensure the applicant is able to complete the apprenticeship; and
 - Confirm that the applicant will spend 50% or more time working in England.
- iii. The Centre for Degree Apprenticeships will:
 - Complete final DWP funding eligibility checks based on evidence submitted by the applicant and the above eligibility checks from the Programme Leader and Employer; and
 - Register the applicant onto the apprenticeship programme and where appropriate reflect the agreed reductions in cost and hours in the Learning Plan due to any RPL that has been agreed; and
 - Confirms offer with Admissions.

5 What happens with the INA during the apprenticeship

- 5.1 All apprentices must have a Tripartite Progress Review every three months, where the Skills Coach, apprentice and their line manager will discuss progress against the knowledge, skills and behaviours. The basis of these reviews will be the skills scan undertaken by the apprentice as part of the INA and will be used to measure their progress throughout their apprenticeship journey.
- 5.2 The apprentice may redo their skill scan at the end of each year of the apprenticeship; to record their progress and to identify any gaps in their learning to inform future action plans and/or change to their Learning Plan to ensure they are able to meet the required competencies by their planned end date.

6 Support and Guidance

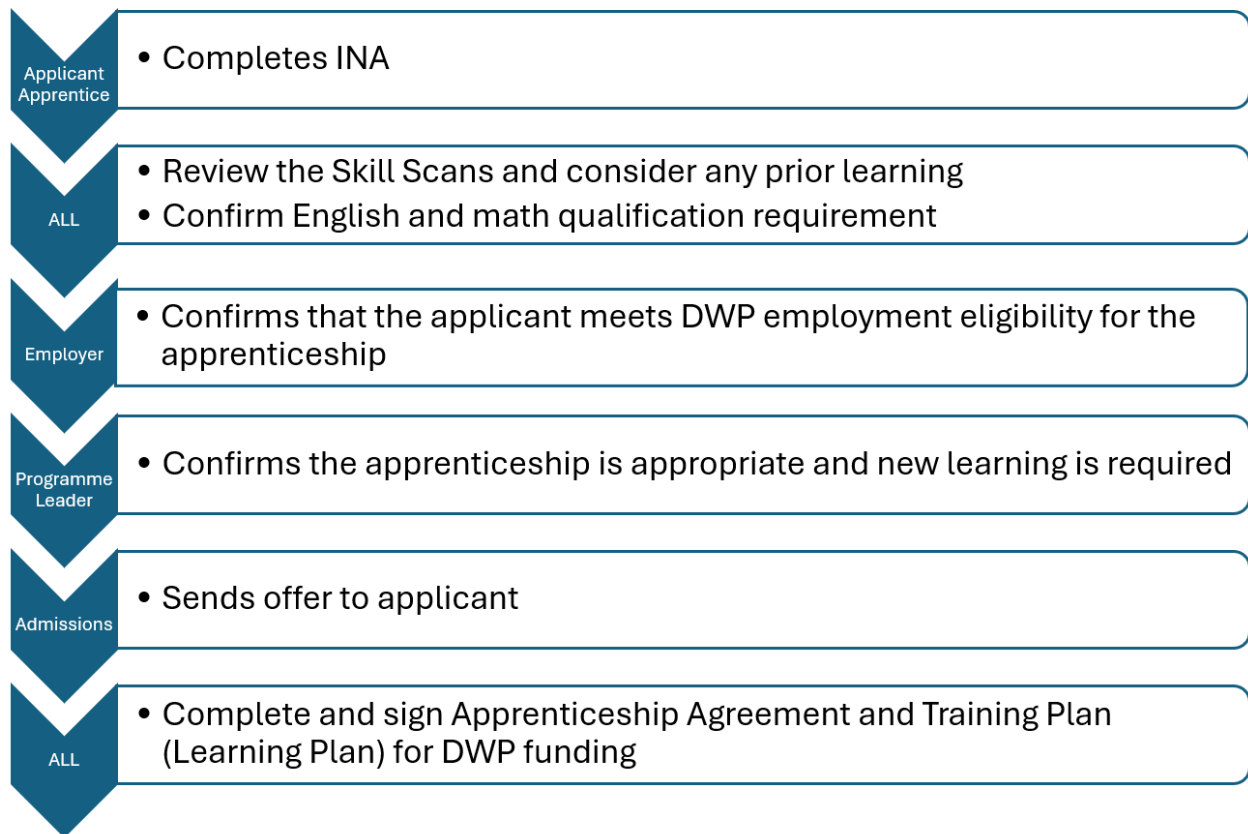
- 6.1 The Centre for Degree Apprenticeships has a number of support guides and videos available to support both the apprentice and the employer during the INA process. They can also be contacted via ApprenticeshipAdmin@winchester.ac.uk if individual support is required.
- 6.2 Normally, Programmes will invite both apprenticeship applicants and employers to an application day on campus. The Centre for Degree Apprenticeship will be made available during these events to support apprentices and/or employers in the INA process.

7 Complaints

- 6.1 The University of Winchester is committed to delivering to its apprentices a high quality, efficient and fair admissions and INA process. Apprentices and/or employers who wish to complain about how an INA has been processed may do so in accordance with the Student Complaints Policy.

Equality Impact Assessment	
Summary of processes undertaken to determine equality impacts:	Reviewed by the Apprenticeship Compliance Manager. Department for Work and Pensions requires all apprentices to complete an INA for funding purposes and there is no opt out of this process.
University Committee (name/ date) where equality impacts discussed (maybe Committee of approval, or another):	ARPP – 1 June 2026
Identified equality impact(s) on colleagues and students (i.e. any specific impacts related to this policy that may cause disadvantage for people due to one or more particular protective characteristic)	
Protected Characteristic	Impact(s) identified and any action(s)/mitigation(s) to address these impact(s), as necessary.
Age	High proportion of apprentices at the UoW are 24+ (72%) with a high proportion of those returning to study. To mitigate any impacts details of support is provided. Timeframes are dependent on employer partner process and the start date of the programme.
Disability	Alternative formats can be put in place where required and support is available during the process. A flow chart has been included for visual representation of the process. The new INA process will ensure that apprentices with disabilities have an individual learning plan and support in place from the start of their programme.
Gender Identity	None
Marriage/Civil Partnership	None
Pregnancy and Maternity	None
Race (incl. nationality)	To mitigate any impacts details of support is provided within the policy. Timeframes are dependent on employer partner process and the start date of the programme.
Religion and Belief	None
Sex	High proportion of apprentices are female (72%). To mitigate any impacts details of support is provided. Timeframes are dependent on employer partner process and the start date of the programme.
Sexual Orientation	None

Appendix A Flowchart for the INA Process



Appendix B Process Map of Onboarding Process for Apprenticeships

