

# A GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE TO ASSESSING PRIOR LEARNING, DOCUMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS AND SETTING A PRICE

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**Based on the 2019 to 2020 Funding Rules V1**

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# Agenda

Policy and Rules

Triage

Review

Common Scenarios

Recommendations & Pricing

Pitfalls & Good Practice

# RULES

# Rules

## Prior Learning is now part of Programme Eligibility

P22 You and the employer must be satisfied that the apprenticeship is the most appropriate training programme for the individual; that the training programme aligns to an approved apprenticeship at the most appropriate level and recognition of prior learning has taken place.

### **Assessment**

P61 You must assess the individual's prior learning and experience before starting the apprenticeship. You must quantify and evidence the proportion of prior learning already attained, quantify the proportion of off-the-job training content that will not be covered, and quantify the amount that the funding will be reduced by.

P62 You must include a thorough appraisal of the apprentice's existing knowledge, skills and behaviours against those required to achieve occupational competence. Where applicable, you must include in your appraisal any knowledge, skills and behaviours gained from the following:

P62.1 work experience, particularly where the apprentice is an existing employee;

P62.2 prior education or training and associated qualifications in a related sector subject area; and

P62.3 any previous apprenticeship undertaken.

The initial assessment must be documented in the evidence pack and must demonstrate how prior learning has been taken into account to adjust the training content, duration and cost.

# Rules

## The Commitment Statement

- P65.4 The amount of off-the-job training that will be delivered to meet the minimum 20% requirement (see paragraphs P47, P48 and P54 for what can and cannot be included in this calculation). The individual's prior learning must be taken into account before calculating the off-the-job requirement and designing the programme.

## Price

- P203.1 You must account for prior learning and experience when negotiating a price with the employer (see paragraphs P58 to P62). You must reduce the content, duration and price where the individual has prior learning necessary to achieve **the apprenticeship**. Funds must not be used to pay for **skills** already attained by the apprentice. You must document how you have assessed the individual's prior learning and include this in the evidence pack.
- P58 Funds must not be used to pay for training for **skills, knowledge and behaviours** already attained by the apprentice. We may take action to recover apprenticeship funding where this happens.
- P59 You must account for prior learning and experience when negotiating a price with the employer. You must reduce the content, duration and price, where the individual has prior learning necessary to achieve **occupational competence**.

# Evidence Pack

**Programme eligibility (including off-the-job training, apprenticeship agreement, commitment statement, apprenticeship duration and employment hours, and recognition of prior learning and experience)**

P289 The evidence pack must include the following: P289.1 An initial assessment that evidences that the apprenticeship and level is the most appropriate for the apprentice and their existing abilities.

P289.8 Confirmation that you have recognised prior learning, and that where it affects the learning or the funding of any of the apprenticeship that you have adjusted the content, duration and price accordingly.

P289.8.1 You must include a copy of the initial assessment recording the apprentice's prior learning measured against the knowledge, skills and behaviours against those required to complete the apprenticeship. This should include (where relevant):

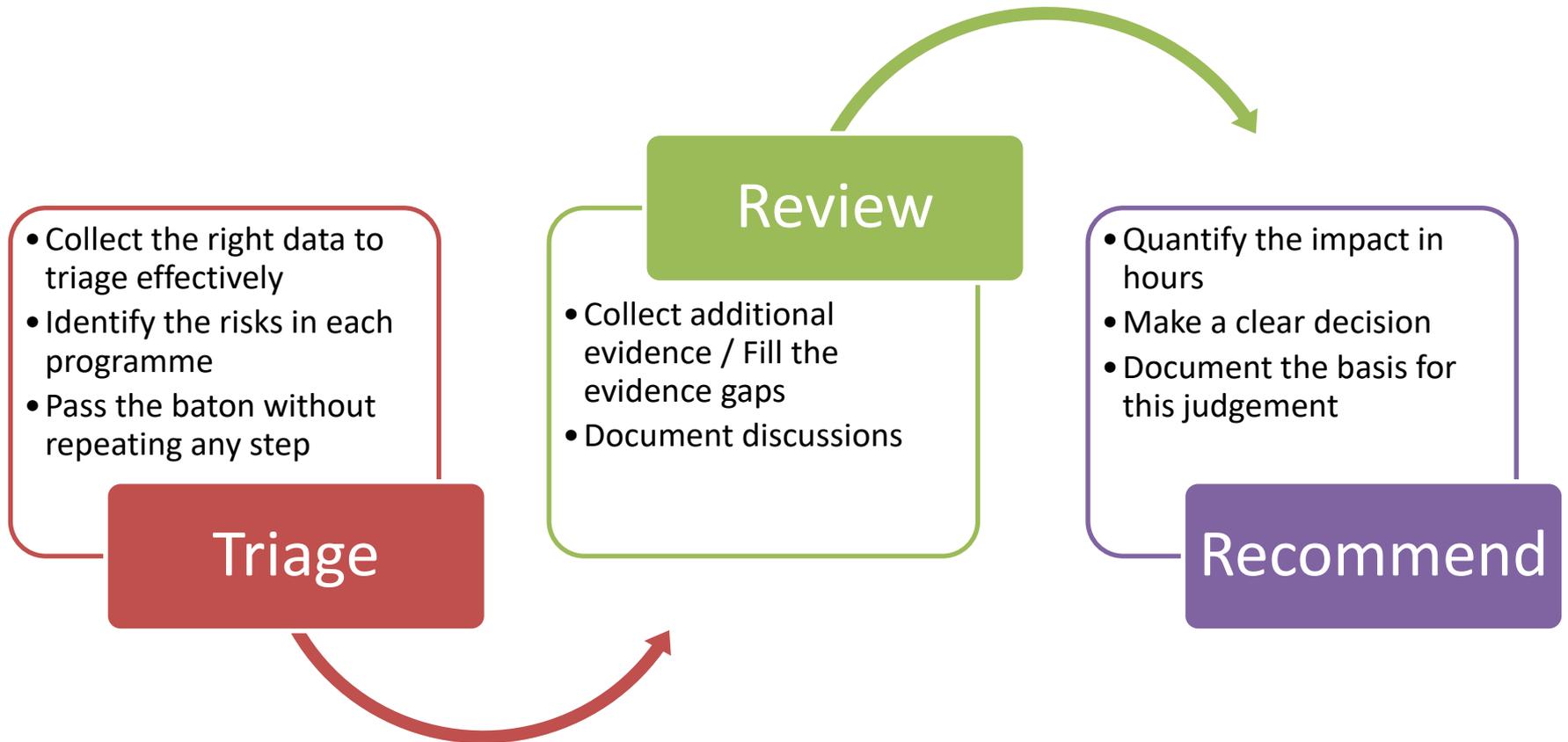
- Work experience;
- Prior education, training or associated qualification(s) in a related subject area (this must be more than English and maths); and
- Any previous apprenticeship taken

P289.8.2 Confirmation that you have accounted for any prior learning, and that where it affects the learning or the funding of any of the apprenticeship that you have detailed the adjustments to the content, duration and price accordingly.

# The rules summarised



# Managing the Monster



# TAKING ACTION

# Application & Employee Declaration

Information collected should confirm that the applicant :

- Is placed on the right type of programme based on their gaps which matches their skills, knowledge and abilities (the 'suitability' test)
- Work towards an apprenticeship level that is appropriate to the level of skills, knowledge required to under take their role
- Have all their learning and support needs identified to enable a comprehensive ILP to be created

Additional Data to collect :

- Length of service in their current role - and whether this is a new role /promotion
- Applicants view of their skills gaps and how the apprenticeship will help
- Confirmation that the apprenticeship content is at the right level for their role
- Line manager view of the applicants skills gaps and how the apprenticeship will address these

# Employer Declaration / TNA

Information collected should confirm that the employer :

- Has considered options for addressing business needs and confirm why the apprenticeship is the preferred route – i.e. their objectives for the programme
- The apprenticeships are at the right level for the roles proposed

Additional Data to collect :

- Employer declaration to confirm that the apprenticeship is the preferred routes based on the options considered
- Document the outcomes of the TNA discussion evidencing that you did discuss other routes and their suitability is decision by the employer
- Consider a tick box in the declaration

# PROCESS & DOCUMENTATION

# Triage

- Access to the application information as part of the Triage at least
- Focus on the likely risk areas – including the age / seniority / role of the applicant
- Triage into two piles : requiring more evidence; those with and without relevant prior learning and move them out quickly
- Create a price matrix for each apprenticeship module so that hours can exempted can quickly move to price
- With existing employees, especially those not moving into a new role, be hyper vigilant :
- **ENSURE THAT THE INA includes significant breakdown of module content - 5 pages**

# Triage



## Prior Learning Triage Assessment

Triage	Guidance	Assessment	Action
Does the applicant have any qualifications that <i>may</i> indicate relevant prior learning and skills?	This includes those stated in the application prior qualification sector and any inferred/stated elsewhere in the self-assessment  Please check the following documents:	<input type="checkbox"/> NO - proceed to next check <input type="checkbox"/> YES - the overlap is very clear <input type="checkbox"/> POSSIBLY – the information is insufficiently detailed or there is conflicting information in the application so further information is required from the applicant	YES: please list the modules / elements of the programme to be exempted for this applicant and any action to be discussed with the applicant or their employer  POSSIBLY: Please set out the additional information and evidence required from the applicant to provide clarity and how this will be obtained.
Has the applicant undertaken any training that <i>may</i> indicate relevant prior learning and skills?		<input type="checkbox"/> NO - proceed to next check <input type="checkbox"/> YES - the overlap is very clear <input type="checkbox"/> POSSIBLY – the information is insufficiently detailed or there is conflicting information in the application so further information is required from the applicant	YES: please list the modules / elements of the programme to be exempted for this applicant and any action to be discussed with the applicant of their employer  POSSIBLY: Please set out the additional information and evidence required from the applicant to provide clarity and how this will be obtained.
Does the apprentice's application contain any experience that <i>may</i> indicate relevant experiential learning?	This includes considering their job role, seniority, length of time in role, age, the pattern of scores in their self-assessment and any additional comments, their statement and their line managers statement	<input type="checkbox"/> NO - proceed to next check <input type="checkbox"/> YES - the overlap is very clear <input type="checkbox"/> POSSIBLY – the information is insufficiently detailed or there is conflicting information in the application so further information is required from the applicant	YES: please list the modules / elements of the programme to be exempted for this applicant and any action to be discussed with the applicant of their employer  POSSIBLY: Please set out the additional information and evidence required from the applicant to provide clarity and how this will be obtained.



<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Triage By:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> No further action required - pass for standard price	<input type="checkbox"/> Full assessment required - pass to XXX for investigation	<b>Assessment Deadline:</b>

# Review

- Purpose is to check that the prior experience is sufficient for the apprentice to pass the apprenticeship EPA without further learning ...i.e. they are competent now
  - To establish what they still need in learning skills and practice
- Additional data to collect might arise from :
- ‘Professional Discussions’ with the apprentice
  - Written statements of their role scope and achievements
  - A technical test
  - Record all evidence, conversations and conclusions

# Review

**Review** Detail the additional evidence collected following the triage ( documentary or by phone / email)

Date of call

Notes

Summary conclusion

1. Does the applicant have evidence of prior learning in the modules set out in the Triage
2. If yes : what is the number of hours of relevant exemptions in each module
3. Can the exemptions be applied ? If not explain why with reference to the evidence collected
4. Confirm the number of hours exemptions that will be applied for this apprentice

# PRICING

# Typical Prior Learning /Price Challenges

1. Apprentice has a prior qualification or learning that maps to elements of several modules

2. Apprentice exemptions would jeopardise other assessments or competency areas required

3. Formal RPEL procedures require a strong 'test' and the application assessment doesn't count

4. Apprentice role title and experience conflicts with their self-assessment scoring

5. Apprentice has a relevant qualification but its over 5 years old

6. Apprentice has a relevant qualification but did not work in this area subsequently or at this level

# Typical Price Scenarios

1. Where the apprentice has partial prior KSE but not the whole module:  
quantify first – how many hours overall ? What % is this of each module ? Make a judgement BUT explain this in the rationale
2. Where the degree has a quality mark that forbids the exemption: employer pays, or they do not attend the module, or you provide this free
3. Where the apprentice has prior qualifications (or KSE) that are now out of date for current competence, and practice:  
one module ; this is a skills gap ! Especially if they will not pass the apprenticeship – lots of modules; conduct a careful mapping and charge the employer – or seek ESFA advice
4. Where exemptions for this module would make other modules hard to teach:  
Collect further evidence - have a further conversation/ use an assessment tool to actually test the apprentices knowledge. Then charge the employer or seek advice.
5. Where an apprentice with an exemption fails a linked module or assignment:  
skills gap with an action plan and possibly a rationale for a price increase

# **WHY YOU NEED TO MANAGE A PROCESS AND DOCUMENT**

# Common Issues – Ofsted

- Only 15% of providers conduct initial assessment systematically with 10% conducting no initial assessment at all.
- Nearly 25% of all providers have no procedures for accrediting prior learning or experience, and have no staff qualified to carry out this task
- whilst most learners have learning plans, few are individualised to take account of each learner's needs
- individual learning plans are seldom used as working documents or updated to reflect growing accomplishments or new learning targets

## Key Issues

- Provider managers do not make sufficient use of data to monitor and manage the provision and they have been too slow to implement effective improvement strategies
- Learners' and apprentices' starting points are not clearly identified and used to set academic/ vocational or personal targets or to plan individual learning

# Common Issues - Audit

- The proportion of funding had not been reduced to take into account learners achieving units and progressing onto other qualifications, returning from a break in learning, or re-starting a learning aim

## Key Issues

- Insufficient focus on the KSB in the apprenticeship
- Failure to quantify what can be exempted from the apprenticeship ...
- Commitment Statement plan / Individual Learning Plan in sufficiently detailed
- Apprentice unaware of what they already have achieved
- Off the Job Learning not included in learning / progress
- Initial Needs Assessment too brief to provide useful information or a robust assessment

# General Good Practice

- The INA is sufficiently detailed and granular
- There is a matrix of price / hours to enable a quick response
- Line manager and apprentice agree the gaps before submission
- Line manager and apprentice briefed on the INA and what it is / isn't
- Prior learning is escalated to Course Leader for assessment – the process is clear
- Named and accountable academic is responsible for conducting and reviewing the mapping between the prior qual and the apprenticeship
- Clarity in price and duration in proportion to the % prior learning are clear.
- All decisions are documented, signed and stored on the apprentice file and reflected in the commitment statement section Individual Learning Plan on and in the contract

# UVAC MEMBERS Questions & Further Information



Queries and Questions to: [r.rhodes@bolton.ac.uk](mailto:r.rhodes@bolton.ac.uk)



**UVAC Member WEBINAR Resources: Slide Pack & Rationale Template**



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