

Initial Assessment & Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure

Version: 3

Effective date: Mar 2019

Review date: Feb 2027

RPL.docx

Title	Initial Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning			Ref. No	TQI02
Approved by	V Clarke	Date	13/02/2026	Issue	3

Summary of Changes

Ser	Issue	Date	Summary of changes
1	1	06/02/19	-
2	2	27/03/19	Full review in line with updated ESFA guidance on initial assessment and prior learning
3	2	23/05/21	Review – no changes required
4	2	18/12/23	Review – no change other than to MKC Training logo
5	2	31/12/2024	Review – no changes required
6	3	02/12/2025	Full review in line with removal of apprenticeship delivery
7	3	12/02/2026	Terminology and process alignment with related documentation

Contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Scope of Policy	4
3. Initial Assessment.....	6
4. Recognition of Previous Learning (RPL).....	6
5. Learning Programme Development.....	7
6. Enrolment and funding adjustments.....	8
7. Additional Learning Support.....	8
8. Associated Policies, Procedures and Documentation	9
9. Policy Validity	10

Not controlled when printed

Reviewed by	VC	VC							
Date	02/12/25	19/02/2026							

Title	Initial Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning			Ref. No	TQI02
Approved by	V Clarke	Date	13/02/2026	Issue	3

10. Policy Owner and Reviewer10
11. Policy Monitoring, Review and Evaluation10

Not controlled when printed

Reviewed by	VC	VC							
Date	02/12/25	19/02/2026							

Title	Initial Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning			Ref. No	TQI02
Approved by	V Clarke	Date	13/02/2026	Issue	3

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy identifies how MKC Training Services (MKCTS) will determine a trainee's:
- Previous learning and skills gaps
 - Potential to complete their learning programme
 - Learning support needs
- 1.2. This information will support us to:
- Review previous learning and experience against the trainee's new learning programme
 - Make necessary adjustments to learning programmes in line with regulatory requirements
 - Deliver an individualised training programme
 - Ensure the training meets the full occupational profile, skills, knowledge and behaviours

2. Scope of Policy

- 2.1. This policy applies to all MKCTS training programmes.

- 2.2. The process consists of the following stages and is summarised in figure 1:

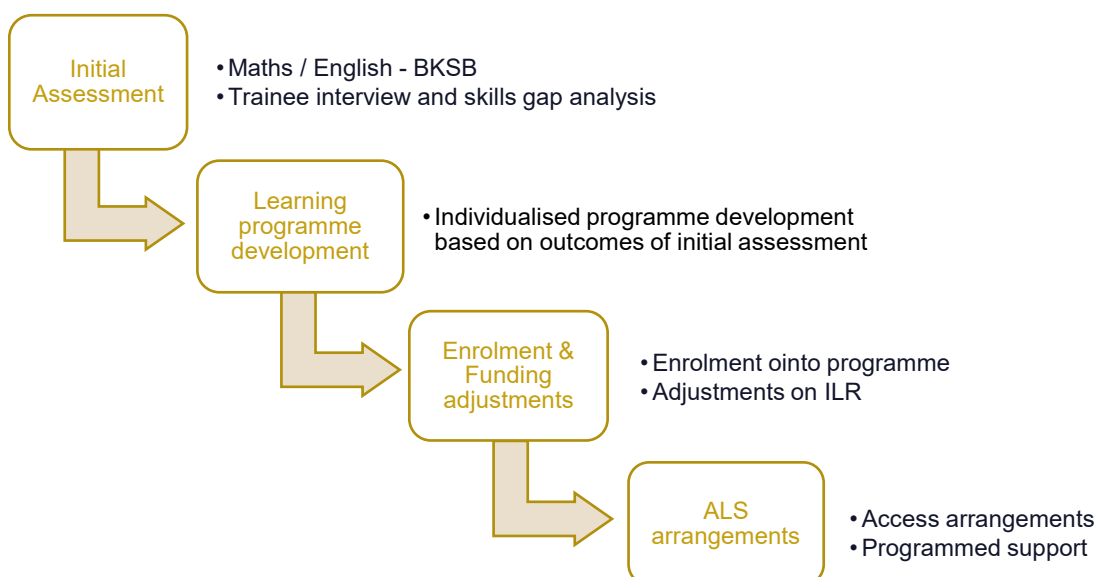
Not controlled when printed

Reviewed by	VC	VC							
Date	02/12/25	19/02/2026							

Title	Initial Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning			Ref. No	TQI02
Approved by	V Clarke	Date	13/02/2026	Issue	3

- Trainee Initial Screening Assessment – to gather information on the trainee, including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
- Learning programme development – applying the outcomes of initial assessment and RPL to plan an individualised training programme to meet the full qualifications, skills knowledge and behaviours requirements.
- Enrolment – confirming the learning programme with the trainee and making any necessary adjustments.
- Additional Learning Support (ALS) – where initial assessment indicates potential support needs, assessments for Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) are carried out. Access arrangements and on-going support are arranged.

Figure 1 – Summary of MKCTS approach to initial assessment and recognition of prior learning



Not controlled when printed

Reviewed by	VC	VC							
Date	02/12/25	19/02/2026							

Title	Initial Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning			Ref. No	TQI02
Approved by	V Clarke	Date	13/02/2026	Issue	3

3. Initial Assessment

- 3.1. Prior to enrolment, all trainees will be made aware that relevant prior learning can count towards their training.
- 3.2. All trainees complete a Trainee Initial Screening Booklet process, including interview(s). The process is used to assess the individual's prior learning to establish the 'starting point', or baseline, of the trainee. This informs us how much of the training content the individual requires. It checks that the training is an appropriate programme for the individual.
- 3.3. It is the responsibility of the Programme Leader to oversee the initial assessment process.
- 3.4. The Trainee Initial Screening usually includes:
 - English and Maths Initial Assessment, to discover current levels of attainment. If identified, copies of exemption certificates will be retained in the evidence pack. In the absence of exemptions, the initial assessment will inform the starting place for further appropriate diagnostic assessments.
 - Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessment. This covers the knowledge, skills and behaviors set out in the standards or other training and will consider the trainees:
 - Work experience
 - Prior education, training or associated qualification(s) in a related sector subject area
 - Additional Learning Support (ALS) skills scan, to identify potential learning, assessment and support needs.
 - Interview to discuss any wider support needs or concerns.

4. Recognition of Previous Learning (RPL)

- 4.1. The relevant qualification specification, standard or assessment criteria will be used as the basis for RPL. The information will be gathered through

Not controlled when printed

Reviewed by	VC	VC							
Date	02/12/25	19/02/2026							

Title	Initial Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning			Ref. No	TQI02
Approved by	V Clarke	Date	13/02/2026	Issue	3

trainee interview(s) and a self-assessment or skills scan. These will determine:

- The goal(s) that the trainee is trying to achieve
 - Where they are currently against this goal
 - How much of the content is new to them
 - Whether they require significant and sustained new learning
- 4.2. The Programme Leader will review any prior learning identified during initial assessment and record this on the Individual Learning Plan (ILP). This will also include a review of prior learning through the Learning Records Service (LRS).
- 4.3. Where a qualification(s) is offered alongside training the extended process for RPL is shown in Annex A.
- 4.4. Military training - RPL may be used to exempt a trainee from formative activities. However, they will be required to achieve all summative assessments to pass.

5. Learning Programme Development

- 5.1. It is the responsibility of the Programme Leader to plan the learning programme, based on initial assessment outcomes, to meet the full occupational profile, skills knowledge and behaviours of the qualification or training.
- 5.2. The training material will be reviewed to ensure sufficient opportunities exist to consolidate their learning.
- 5.3. Details of the learning programme will be recorded on the trainees ILP. This will include key milestones for the trainee so their progress can be reviewed regularly.

Not controlled when printed

Reviewed by	VC	VC							
Date	02/12/25	19/02/2026							

Title	Initial Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning			Ref. No	TQI02
Approved by	V Clarke	Date	13/02/2026	Issue	3

6. Enrolment and adjustments

- 6.1. It is the responsibility of the Programme Leader to input required initial assessment, RPL and ALS information onto the ILR.
- 6.2. The Programme Leader will adjust the content and duration of the course to reflect prior learning. This information will be recorded onto the ILR.
- 6.3. Military training – it is the responsibility of Training Clerks to complete and record any necessary enrolment requirements and adjustments.

7. Additional Learning Support

- 7.1. Using the outcomes of initial and diagnostic assessments, the following indicators will be used to determine whether further investigation or SpLD support is required:
 - A score of <3 in the English and / or Mathematics initial assessment
 - Consistent spelling, punctuation and/or grammar difficulties; handwriting that is difficult to read; poorly structured written responses in the free writing task
 - Trainees who are unable to complete the writing task within time
 - A dyslexia checklist/screening score >45
 - A declaration of previous dyslexia or learning difficulty assessment
 - Low mathematics and English attainment in the BKSB diagnostic assessment
- 7.2. Where one or more of these indicators are identified, the trainee's initial assessment record will be passed to the Additional Learning Support (ALS) Coordinator.
- 7.3. A learning support specialist will review the evidence and, if the trainee agrees, will refer them for the appropriate specialist initial and / or diagnostic assessment:
 - Dyslexia Adult Screening Test (DAST) with a specialist adviser (Military trainee)
 - A Meares Irlen screening with a specialist adviser
 - A formal, specific, learning difficulties (SpLD) diagnostic assessment will be undertaken by a level 7 qualified ALS specialist who is approved by the

Not controlled when printed

Reviewed by	VC	VC							
Date	02/12/25	19/02/2026							

Title	Initial Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning			Ref. No	TQI02
Approved by	V Clarke	Date	13/02/2026	Issue	3

Professional Association for teachers and assessors of students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) (PATOSS).

7.4. Dependent upon the results of this process, the following actions may be taken:

- A programme of specialist learning support will be established throughout the learning programme, tailored to specific support needs, for example, Mathematics, English, memory techniques, or communication strategies.
- A package of specialist support resources and software, for example, ReadWriteGold, coloured overlays, reading pens and Dragon Dictate, will be offered where appropriate
- The trainee's trainers and assessors will be provided with a support strategy report, offering practical tips and advice on how to best meet the trainee's individual needs during teaching, learning and assessment activities.
- Based on the outcomes of the SpLD diagnostic assessment, exam access arrangements will be applied for, in line with Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and awarding organisation regulations.

7.5. In some cases, no further support will be required, though the trainee's progress will be regularly monitored and support provided if circumstances change.

8. Associated Policies, Procedures and Documentation

- WI18 - Training Assurance & Improvement
- Reasonable Adjustments & Special Considerations
- WI16 - Complaints and Appeals policy and procedure
- Awarding Organisation Recognition of Prior Learning: Assessment Policy Guidance Document
- WI14 - Exams Procedure
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy

Not controlled when printed

Reviewed by	VC	VC							
Date	02/12/25	19/02/2026							

Title	Initial Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning			Ref. No	TQI02
Approved by	V Clarke	Date	13/02/2026	Issue	3

9. Policy Validity

9.1. This policy is due for review in December 2026.

10. Policy Owner and Reviewer

10.1. The Senior Manager responsible for this policy is the Head of Training Support and Development.

11. Policy Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

11.1. A review of this policy will form part of the annual process of self-assessment for the curriculum function and will involve input from a range of stakeholders including staff, trainee, awarding organisations, regulatory bodies and others.

Not controlled when printed

Reviewed by	VC	VC							
Date	02/12/25	19/02/2026							

Title	Initial Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning			Ref. No	TQI02
Approved by	V Clarke	Date	13/02/2026	Issue	3

ANNEX A

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process – where qualifications are delivered during training

Stage 1 – Awareness, Information and Guidance

- The trainee will be informed of the RPL process and support available to them.
- Assessors and IQA staff may be consulted to provide sector specific information and guidance.

Stage 2 – Skills gap assessment, gathering evidence and giving information

- A skills gap assessment will be carried out against the relevant qualification
- The trainee will be supported in the collection of evidence against the requirements of the relevant unit(s). In some cases, the development of an assessment plan and tracking document or similar may be required.
- Any evidence gathered will need to meet the standards of the unit, or part of a unit, that the evidence is being used for.

Stage 3 – Assessment of evidence and delivery of skills-gap training

- Assessment as part of RPL is a structured process for gathering and reviewing evidence and making judgments about a trainee's prior learning and experience in relation to unit standards.
- The assessor may look at:
 - Work experience records
 - Previous portfolios of evidence
 - Essays and reports
- Assessment must be valid, current and reliable to ensure the integrity of the award of

Not controlled when printed

Reviewed by	VC	VC							
Date	02/12/25	19/02/2026							

Title	Initial Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning			Ref. No	TQI02
Approved by	V Clarke	Date	13/02/2026	Issue	3

credit and, as above, the evidence gathered needs to meet the standards of the unit, or part of a unit, that the evidence is being used for. The assessment process will be subject to MKCTS' quality assurance procedures for IQA and Awarding Organisation requirements.

- Evidence gathered through RPL should be clearly referenced and signposted to aid internal assessment and internal and external verification.
- Based on the skills-gap assessment, training will be provided to address knowledge, skills and behaviours not achieved through RPL. This programme of training will be agreed with the trainee.

Stage 4 – Claiming Certification

- Once the internal and external quality assurance procedures have been successfully completed, certification claims can be made.
- Assessment and internal verification records, along with any additional RPL records completed, should be retained for the standard three-year period following certification.
- The assessor must ensure that all learning outcomes and assessment criteria being claimed for each unit are achieved and that the records of assessment are maintained in the usual way.

Stage 5 – Appeal

- As with any assessment decision on procedural grounds, if a trainee wishes to appeal against a decision made about their assessment, they should follow the MKCTS Complaints and Appeals policy and procedures.

Not controlled when printed

Reviewed by	VC	VC							
Date	02/12/25	19/02/2026							