

DIVAD TRAINING LIMITED

INITIAL ASSESSMENT POLICY

2018-2019

1. Policy

Last Updated: 30/11/2018
Updated by: David Joseph
Approved by: Board of Directors – November 2018

DIVAD TRAINING LIMITED is committed to accurately identifying what each learner needs to learn and to find out what the barriers to full engagement and successful progression may be, in order to put in place appropriate support from the start of the learning programme.

Through the initial assessment process the college gathers a range of information on each learner to ensure that the learner is following the most appropriate learning programme to achieve their goals. These include:

- The learners' attitude and commitment to the learning programme • The learners' career goals and aspirations
- What the learner has previously learnt and achieved (prior qualifications, achievements, and learning experience)
- The learners' relevant abilities, interests and skills including Maths, English and ICT skills
- Learning needs, any learning difficulties
- any other personal circumstances that may affect learning

2. Implementation

When conducting initial assessment, staff ensures that:

- Learners are fully involved in the initial assessment process.
- Learners understand the benefits of what they are being asked to do and how the information will be used.
- Initial assessment methods are appropriate to the learners' needs. Tests are available on paper and on-screen and are administered fairly and consistently by trained and qualified staff.
- The purpose of each method is explained to the learner.
- Assessment methods are monitored to ensure that they are effective and that they do not discriminate against certain groups of learners. Special consideration is given to learners and with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- The College uses nationally recognised norm referenced tests that are reliable and valid.
- Outcomes of initial assessment are shared with the learner immediately, included on the learner profile and used when developing the learner individual learning plan. The results are stored on the Functional Skills Tracker and accessible to the relevant course teams.
- If the learner is not placed on their desired course, constructive feedback is given in a positive and encouraging way and alternative recommendations and/or referrals are made.
- Learners' views are collected on the initial assessment process to help improve the procedures.
- Tutors are trained on understanding and using initial assessment

- results to inform their teaching and learning plans.
- The software is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is fit for purpose

3. Programme placement

Ensure that learners are placed on the right programme

The teaching teams annually analyse the impact of skills and GCSE results on past achievement and review the entry requirements accordingly.

At enrolment, account is taken of the learners' level of Maths and English in relation to the requirements of the course.

The enrolling lecturer should take into account factors that may have affected the initial assessment results. e.g. illness, time, learning difficulties and disabilities.

A standard enrolment is where the applicant possesses English/Maths at one level below the level of the course applied for. If this is not the case, it is a non-standard enrolment.

Non-standard enrolments

If the applicant is presenting with skills that are 2 or more levels below the target level of the course the enrolling trainer/assessor needs to take one of the following pathways:

Enrol on the course	Do not enrol on programme
Discuss with the applicant the implications of their current English/Maths skills levels. Also discuss the requirement to undertake extra work to achieve on the course applied for.	Let the applicant know why the course is not appropriate.
Ensure appropriate adjustments made and/or support can be provided to help learner to achieve a successful outcome.	Discuss alternatives e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lower level of study in the same vocational area• Short course to up-skill learner prior to enrolment on the desired course• Provision of additional learning support on the desired course, if appropriate

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Refer the learner to learning support or to Foundation Learning if these are judged to be appropriate after further screening.	Refer to Advice and Recruitment
Ensure the course team put in place additional measures to monitor progress of that learner.	

English and Maths initial assessment is undertaken by the Admission Team during main enrolment and with in-year applicants.

4. The results of the Initial Assessment are used to:

- Ensure learners receive appropriate and timely support for English, Maths, ESOL, dyslexia, etc.
- Ensure all learners support needs are met through diverse teaching and learning strategies including for example differentiation, incorporation of preferred learning styles in teaching methods, provision of additional and specialist learning support, teaching and learning resources, use of assistive technology and ILT
- Design English/Maths support modules to be put in place prior to enrolment and designed into the timetable for certain groups. For example, contextualised English and Maths packages, with particular relevance for specific vocational areas.

5. What Initial assessment means

Learners should be enrolled onto a course that is ONE level above their initial assessment result. In order to accurately interpret the data the equivalents are set out below:-

Level of programme applied for	Qualifications at this level	Learners should have skills ONE level below the course applied for
L3	A Level or Nat Dip	L2
L2	GCSE A*-C Key Stage 4	L1
L1	GCSE D-E Key Stage 4 & 5	E3
E3	KS 3	E2
E1-2	KS 1 & 2	E1

PE (Pre Entry)		
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Pre-Entry learners do not undertake the standard initial assessment test.

6. Initial assessment of vocational skills

Vocational staff may use the following methods of assessment to ascertain whether applicants are suitably prepared and qualified to join the programme

- Self assessment
- Peer assessment
- Observed activities as part of the interview process
- Oral questions during the interview process

- Witness statements
- Vocational tasters or projects

7. Initial assessment of personal and social development needs

- Discussions with the learner and their family/guardian (if under 18 or a vulnerable adult).
- Self assessment tools.
- Observation of learner in activities to assess personal and social skills.
- School profile and discussion with staff.
- Connexions and careers information.
- Assessment and intervention for emotional literacy.
- Any other appropriate methods.

8. Value Added

Value added is a 'measure' of quality in terms of the extent to which the educational experience enhances the knowledge, abilities and skills of learners. Measuring value requires having assessments of learners' development or attainments as they begin college, and assessments of those same learners after they have had the full benefit of their education on their course. Value added is the difference between their attainments when they have completed their education and what they had already attained by the time they began.

To improve value added, learners need to be set aspirational Target Minimum Grades (TMGs). Having set the learners their TMGs based upon their incoming GCSE scores, their progress would be monitored in a number of ways;

- Through formal termly Progress Assessment Reviews, where personal tutors meet with each learner and review their performance to date. Reports are written and sent to parents/carers.
- Learners are informally assessed through the setting of homework tasks, which are graded. Where a learner's work fails to meet their TMG, they are required to resubmit the work until the TMG is reached.
- Learners' progress checked at tutorials and issues which may be affecting a learner's performance are addressed, with learners being directed to other forms of support where necessary.
- Parents' evenings are also held, giving parents the opportunity to hear at first hand from personal tutors about the progress of the learners and to help form a partnership to help learners to achieve.

Where learners are identified as at risk of not completing their programme, an action plan is devised for each learner and closely monitored by the Personal Tutor. This enables teachers to put targeted support which is tailor-made for each learner into place quickly.

Learners would be required to fill an Excuse Slip for lateness or non-submission of work. Extra study sessions would be organised to help learners. Where a learner is deemed to require extra support, attendance at the revision session prior to January

and summer exams would be compulsory.

9. Summary

The main purpose of the policy is to ensure that learners are enrolled on to programmes of learning where they are given the appropriate tools and support to succeed. Initial assessment enables teaching staff to make informed decisions at enrolment, learning support to be accurately targeted and allocated, learning programmes to be designed to meet learner needs and puts learners on the right track to succeed on programme.

The software for initial assessment and diagnostic testing is currently BSKSBuilder. The information from the IA is placed on the Functional Skills Tracker. Teaching staff use this data to set up the diagnostic assessment level.

Diagnostic testing is undertaken with all full time learners and significant part time learners during Induction.