



Assessment Policy

Most recent update: 10 September 2025

Scope

Assessment is the process through which a learner's skills, knowledge and understanding are reviewed in order to confirm what they have learned. Fair assessment is the process by which assessments within courses and qualifications are designed and administered to give all learners the fairest possible opportunities to show attainment.

Within regulated courses, the achievement of a set of outcomes as set by awarding bodies and their associated moderation systems ensure consistency and appropriateness of assessment decisions. Decisions regarding achievement within non-regulated and Tailored Learning provision are made within the RARPAP framework (see Achievement in Non-Accredited Learning policy statement).

Assessment is an ongoing process throughout all Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C) learning. It starts before a learner even enrolls on a programme with the learner self-assessing whether a programme is right for them based on the pre-course information given. This policy covers initial, diagnostic, formative and summative assessments and should be read in conjunction with the RARPAP process, Achievement in Non-Accredited Learning Policy and the Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers (May 2014).

Principles of Assessment

There are 8 principles that apply to all assessments:

- 1. Validity**
Assessment tasks should produce evidence that is clearly relevant to the Learning Outcomes being assessed and allows judgments to be made about whether or not they have been achieved at a given level.
- 2. Reliability**
It should be possible to repeat assessment tasks with similar target groups and different assessors and obtain comparable results. Where different assessment activities are used to assess the same unit, the relative demand of those activities should be comparable.
- 3. Sufficiency**
Assessment activity should result in sufficient evidence of achievement being produced to engender confidence that the learner has acquired the knowledge, understanding or skills being assessed. The timing of assignments and the amount of assessed work required should provide a reliable and valid profile of achievement without overloading the learners or their assessors.
- 4. Transparency**
Clear, accurate, consistent and timely information on assessment tasks and procedures should be made available to learners. The nature, extent and timing of the feedback provided for each assessment task should be made clear to learners in advance.



5. **Inclusivity**
Care should be taken that assessment tasks and procedures do not disadvantage any group of learners or individuals. Care should be taken with the content and language of assessment tasks to ensure that they are free from bias.
6. **Currency**
Assessment tasks should be regularly reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet up-to-date occupational, technical, and legislative requirements and have not been overtaken by developments in understanding.
7. **Authenticity**
Centres must have arrangements in place to ensure that the evidence of achievement produced by learners is their own work. Centres must provide learners with clear guidance on plagiarism and malpractice.
8. **Developmental**
Assessment should be treated as part of the teaching and learning process; use should be made of initial/diagnostic assessments to identify the learner's starting point; formative assessments to provide feedback on the progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding; as well as summative assessments capturing the learner's overall achievement. Feedback should be honest, clear and reliable, focussing on positive aspects as well as indicating areas for improvement. Such feedback should not be seen as criticism of the individual but as guidance on how the evidence of learning provided could be improved.

Initial Assessment In adult learning

Aim

To provide the appropriate information and guidance and use the results from a variety of relevant activities to ensure that learners are able to:

- Make effective and appropriate choices of their learning programme,
- Negotiate their own starting point on that programme which will take into consideration their past learning, current skills and experience,
- Identify any additional learning support requirements, including any health or disability needs, in order that they can achieve the goals of the programme.
- Be confident that their health and safety is of a high priority whilst on the programme.

All members of staff will assist in gathering information that will lead to the support of the learner in achieving the goals of the learning programme.

Key Procedures

- Providers will give overview information for each programme detailing aims, content, level, entry requirements and assessment procedures to enable learners to make informed enrolment choices.



- Providers will supply information for all programmes regarding any specific requirements for functional skills (English, maths, ICT) knowledge.
- To ensure fair and equal access to resources and activities for all learners, the Management Information System (MIS) enrolment and registration process are used together with learner support information and additional support requirements.
- The scheme of work will record the over-arching aims of the programme and a full assessment of risks involved in the delivery of the programme and will establish control measures to minimise risks.
- The induction programme will establish, communicate and record - on Individual Learning Plan (ILP) – the following:
 - Negotiated personal learning goals
 - Learner's individual starting point
 - Additional learning support needs
 - Progression information, advice and guidance
 - Health and safety issues, including adult safeguarding procedures
 - Equity Diversity and Inclusion policy

Formative Assessment In Adult Learning

Aim

To ensure that learning is taking place at the appropriate level and to communicate to learners that they are progressing in their acquisition of knowledge and skills which reflect the level of the course. Learners are able to:

- evaluate their own learning at regular intervals in the programme
- review distance travelled from starting point towards achievement of personal goals
- re-evaluate and reset their personal goals if progress has led to early achievement in the programme

Key Procedures

- Tutors will use a variety of assessment methods to gauge that learning is taking place including formal and informal methods; this will be recorded on session plans and scheme of work.
- Tutors will discuss progress and give regular written as well as oral feedback to learners so that they understand what they need to do to improve and are able to negotiate alternative goals where appropriate.
- Learners will review their learning on the ILP at regular intervals; tutors and learners will use the ILP learning log as a method of recording feedback on progress and skill acquisition.



Summative Assessment In Adult Learning

Aim

To ensure that learning has taken place throughout the duration of the course as planned and that learners are aware of their progression and acquisition of knowledge and skills at the end of the programme.

Learners are able to:

- submit a range of evidence for summative assessment against the agreed learning goals for the programme and note them on their ILP
- review the distance travelled from starting point to the achievement of personal and overarching goals
- understand the steps that need to be taken in relation to progression to further learning or employment, if appropriate
- gain a qualification through the examination process (regulated courses)

Key Procedures

- Tutors will use a variety of assessment methods to gauge that learning has taken place and record these on session plan and ILP.
- Tutor and learner will review evidence submitted for assessment alongside the learning goals at the end of the course, discuss next steps and complete individual learning plan accordingly.

Verification Of Assessment Decisions

Within accredited provision, awarding body quality assurance systems are implemented to assure all assessment decisions made. Learner portfolios will be submitted in accordance with awarding body requirements e.g. at peer review and sampled by both an internal verifier and, if necessary, an external verifier from the awarding body. Once quality is assured to the satisfaction of the awarding body, direct claims status may be given for internal verification procedures to act as the final determinant of achievement.

Within non-accredited provision, achievement of learning goals is assured through the internal moderation and quality checks using the RARPAP framework (see Achievement in Non-Accredited Learning Policy).

Moderation Of The RARPAP Process

The Quality Performance and Commissioning (QCP) team check that delivery and paperwork covers all 6 stages of the Recognising And Recording Progress, Achievement and Progression (RARPAP). The full RARPAP process is detailed in a separate document. QCP staff check practice through Observations of Teaching Learning and Assessment (OTLAs) and use a variety of general and themed walk-throughs, including a specific RARPAP walk-through. End of course paperwork is also checked for quality. These checks are to ensure that we have confidence in the achievement statistics from provider data returns.



QCP staff will ensure that

- tutors are fully qualified to deliver non-accredited provision
- initial assessment activities establish a realistic starting point (moderated through observation of practice within the learning environment, themed and general walk-through visits plus end of course sampling of relevant paperwork e.g. ILPs and Schemes of Work etc.)
- negotiated SMART goals are set based on robust initial assessment (moderated through observation of practice, sampling of ILPs and MIS, and checks made on the quality of goals set on submitted paperwork)
- progress is recognised and recorded on the ILP (moderated through observation of practice and sampling of ILPs)
- learner achievement evidence is in line with the level expected of the course, and is of the quality and sufficiency for achievement to be acknowledged in the professional judgement of the tutor. Tutor judgements are moderated through all of the processes outlined above and through the performance management process
- course retention is monitored to ensure that any drop out is not attributed to poor pre-course information

Staff Development To Support The Assessment Policy

Adult learning tutors should prioritise assessment as an integral part of effective and outstanding teaching and learning. To assist with this the QPC team host regular sessions for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) covering the following topics:

- Carrying out effective, initial, formative and summative, assessment activities
- English and maths skills awareness
- Support of learners' personal development, behaviour and attitudes
- Risk assessment
- Progression information, advice and guidance
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Writing SMART learning goals
- Using the ILP as an effective tool to record progress and achievement

Further information can be found on [our website](#) in the following related documents:

- Achievement in Non-Accredited Learning Policy