

TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH ASSESSMENT

1. Initial assessment (generic)

The overall process of assessing individual learners' needs, abilities, aptitudes, preferences and prior learning in order to plan and provide an appropriate learning programme to meet their needs.

Initial assessment in relation to basic skills, literacy and numeracy

Screening

A process, often informal, that indicates the likelihood that an adult may have a literacy, language or numeracy skills need. Does not relate the adult's skills to any particular 'level'. Adults may decide, after screening, to ask for an 'initial assessment'.⁸

Initial assessment

Initial assessment gives the teachers or trainers early warning signs that someone has poor basic skills. It helps teachers and trainers position learners against the National Standards for Adult Literacy and Numeracy so that an appropriate learning programme can be identified.⁹

Diagnostic assessment

Diagnostic assessment builds on initial assessment, to provide more in-depth information about an individual's strengths and weaknesses, enabling teachers and trainers to design a programme of work suited to the needs of the individual learner.⁹

Learning styles inventory

A diagnostic instrument used to assess learners' preferred learning styles.

Vocational aptitude tests

A diagnostic instrument used to assess learners' aptitude for a particular vocational or job-related area.

2. Formative assessment/assessment for learning

Regular checking of individual learners' progress throughout their programme, within and outside teaching and learning sessions, and followed by feedback.

Individual review, action planning and target setting

A type of formative assessment that takes place outside the classroom where learners review their individual progress and identify actions for improvement with timescales.

3. Summative assessment

An end test or assessment, usually given at the end of a unit, module or programme, to record a learner's attainment for that particular unit of learning. Aggregated data may be used for management accountability purposes.

⁸From 'A professional guide for frontline staff providing IAG in support of Skills for life', the Learning and Skills Council.

⁹The Basic Skills Agency – www.basic-skills.co.uk