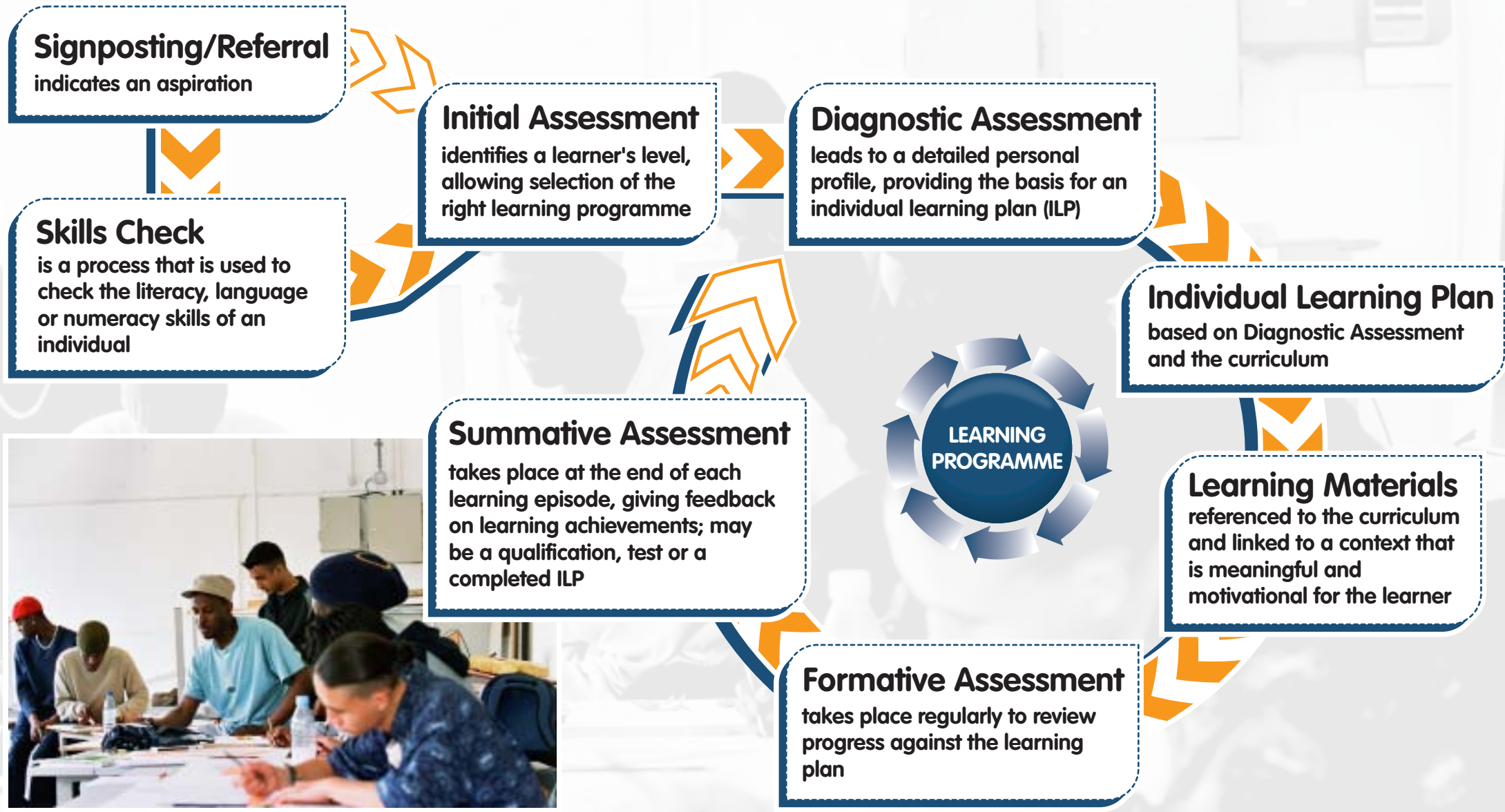


# The Learning Journey



**Signposting/Referral**  
indicates an aspiration

**Initial Assessment**  
identifies a learner's level,  
allowing selection of the  
right learning programme

**Diagnostic Assessment**  
leads to a detailed personal  
profile, providing the basis for an  
individual learning plan (ILP)

**Individual Learning Plan**  
based on Diagnostic Assessment  
and the curriculum

**Skills Check**  
is a process that is used to  
check the literacy, language  
or numeracy skills of an  
individual

**Summative Assessment**  
takes place at the end of each  
learning episode, giving feedback  
on learning achievements; may  
be a qualification, test or a  
completed ILP



**Learning Materials**  
referenced to the curriculum  
and linked to a context that  
is meaningful and  
motivational for the learner

**Formative Assessment**  
takes place regularly to review  
progress against the learning  
plan



# The Learning Journey

The various stages of the learning journey are defined in many different ways. The Department for Education and Skills uses these definitions:

## 1. Signposting/Referral

Individuals are signposted when they are given information on where they can find further information, advice, guidance or learning provision. The individuals act on their own behalf to follow this information up.

Individuals are referred when they are transferred to a source of more in-depth information, advice, guidance, related services or learning provision. This process is mediated by the adviser, who makes an appointment for the client or gives the client's details to a provider. Referral always requires the client's permission. The adviser then contacts the agency to ensure that the referral has taken place.

The first unit of the Level 2 Adult Learner Support Qualification provides ideal training in Skills for Life awareness and signposting.

## 2. Skills Check

A skills check is a process that is used to check the literacy, language or numeracy skills of an individual. It is used to identify learners who might benefit from more in-depth assessment of their skills. The process usually takes about 10 minutes.

Only a trained practitioner may administer a skills check. The Level 2 Adult Learner Support Qualification provides practitioners with these skills.

## 3. Initial Assessment

Initial assessment helps to place learners in learning programmes that are at the right level for them. It does this by measuring a learner's separate skills in writing, reading, numeracy and language against a level or levels within the national standards.

Initial assessment should be administered by a practitioner (i.e. the assessor) trained to at least Level 3, under the supervision of a Level 4 subject specialist teacher. If assessors are using a paper-based initial assessment process, they should allow about 40–50 minutes to assess each skill; if they are using the computer-based tools, which are non-linear, the process should take 30–40 minutes for each skill. In both cases, however, many learners will need less time than the time indicated.

Initial assessment is usually followed by detailed diagnostic assessment.

## 4. Diagnostic Assessment \*

Diagnostic assessment identifies a learner's strengths and weaknesses and highlights any skills gaps. It helps provide a detailed learner profile against the standards and curriculum documents and should also be used to inform and structure a learner's individual learning plan (see point 5) to use as a basis for a programme of study. This process takes several hours and should be carried out as part of a learner's learning programme.

## 5. Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

An individual learning plan is an outcome of Initial and Diagnostic assessment. It sets out the learner's plan to learn, a timetable for learning, ways of learning and resources required.

ILPs are compiled, reviewed and developed by the specialist teacher in consultation with the learner.

## 6. Formative Assessment \*

Formative assessment helps both learner and teacher to review progress and is a central part of the learning process. It will take place during a learning programme on a regular basis. It helps learners and their teachers to identify progress in relation to the learning plan. Progress should be recorded and new learning goals identified.

## 7. Summative Assessment \*

Summative assessment provides evidence of what a learner has achieved at the end of each learning episode. It provides feedback to a learner and teacher on achievements in relation to the standards and curriculum documents. Summative assessment may take the form of a record of achievement, a unit of qualification, a whole qualification or a test.

**\* Ongoing Diagnostic, Formative and Summative assessments should be carried out by a Literacy/Numeracy/ESOL specialist teacher.**

The DfES Assessment Tools will be available free of charge from DfES Publications (Prolog). Tel: **0845 6022260**

For details please visit [www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus)