



# Apprenticeship End Point Assessment (EPA) Handbook

For apprentices and employers



Greater Manchester   
Apprenticeships



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# Introduction

Welcome to the Apprenticeship End Point Assessment (EPA) Handbook for Apprentices and Employers. This guide is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the EPA process, terminology, and the Apprenticeship Gateway. Whether you are an apprentice embarking on your apprenticeship journey or an employer supporting an apprentice's development, this handbook will serve as a valuable resource.



# What is EPA?

## EPA Terminology

Understanding the terminology used in the EPA process is essential. Here are some key terms and their meanings:

- + **Apprenticeship Standard:** The detailed specification of the knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSB) required for a specific occupation
- + **EPA Plan:** A document outlining the structure and components of the EPA, including assessment methods and criteria
- + **Gateway:** A significant point in the apprenticeship when the apprentice, employer, and training provider confirm the apprentice is ready to undertake the EPA
- + **Assessment Plan:** A document specifying the assessment methods and requirements for the EPA, aligned with the apprenticeship standard
- + **End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO):** An independent body responsible for conducting and grading the EPA

Apprenticeship End Point Assessment (EPA) is the final assessment that an apprentice must undertake at the end of their apprenticeship journey. The EPA is designed to ensure that the apprentice has achieved the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSB) required to work proficiently in their chosen occupation. It tests the apprentice's competency and proficiency in their field to determine whether they meet the standards set by their apprenticeship.

The way EPA works depends on the specific apprenticeship, and all the details are in the end-point-assessment plan that comes with each apprenticeship standard. You can find both of these documents on the Apprenticeship search / Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education website.

The End-Point Assessment (EPA) is carried out by a specialised organisation known as the End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO), which must be accredited by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

The EPA is a comprehensive evaluation of an individual's job proficiency, taking into account their knowledge, skills, and workplace conduct. This assessment employs various methods, such as reviewing the apprentice's work, conducting interviews, and assessing their ability to present what they've learned. These measures are designed to ensure that the apprentice has acquired all the essential skills, knowledge, and behavioural competencies during their training.



## Understanding the Apprenticeship Gateway

The Apprenticeship Gateway is a pivotal milestone in the apprenticeship journey. It signifies that the apprentice has reached a crucial point in their learning and development. The key aspects of the Gateway are as follows:

### — **Confirming Readiness:**

At the Gateway, the employer, training provider, and apprentice must confirm that the apprentice is fully prepared for the EPA. This involves ensuring all necessary on-the-job training, off-the-job training, and other learning activities have been completed successfully

### — **Assessment Plan:**

During the Gateway, the EPA plan is agreed upon, detailing the EPA's structure, assessment methods, and grading criteria. It is aligned with the apprenticeship standard

### — **Pre-EPA Activities:**

The apprentice should undertake any required pre-EPA activities specified in the assessment plan. This could include practice assessments or mock EPA assessments to help prepare for the actual EPA

— **Final Sign-Off:** The employer, training provider, and apprentice collectively sign off on the readiness for EPA. This signifies that the apprentice is fully prepared and meets the required standards

### — **Scheduling EPA:**

Once the Gateway is successfully passed, the EPA is scheduled with the independent End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO)

— **The Apprenticeship Gateway:** Is a vital point to ensure the apprentice is adequately prepared to demonstrate their skills and knowledge during the EPA. Proper preparation and support during this phase are critical to success



# Roles and responsibilities



## Apprentice

The apprentice is responsible for actively participating in their learning - seeking guidance, and working towards the apprenticeship standards. They must also be prepared and ready for the EPA.

### Responsibilities:

- Actively engage in both on-the-job and off-the-job training
- Demonstrate a commitment to learning and professional development
- Follow the training plan and meet set milestones
- Prepare for the End-Point Assessment (EPA) with guidance from the training provider



## Employer

Employers play a crucial role in an apprentice's development by providing on-the-job training, guidance, and support. Employers must also confirm the apprentice's readiness for the EPA. This includes the completion of the Gateway Declaration Form.

### Responsibilities:

- Develop and maintain a safe and supportive work environment
- Provide opportunities for the apprentice to gain practical skills and experience
- Mentor and guide the apprentice's professional development
- Collaborate with the training provider and EPAO to support the apprentice's learning journey



## Training Provider

Training providers offer off-the-job training and guidance to the apprentice. They must also provide evidence of the apprentice's development and progress.

### Responsibilities:

- Develop and deliver the training curriculum in line with the apprenticeship standard
- Monitor the apprentice's progress and provide support as needed
- Collaborate with the employer to ensure the apprentice's development is on track
- Prepare the apprentice for the End-Point Assessment (EPA)



## Independent EPAO

The End Point Assessment Organisation conducts the EPA, assesses the apprentice's performance, and provides the final grade.

### Responsibilities:

- Design and implement the EPA process based on the apprenticeship standard
- Appoint EPA assessors who are experts in the field
- Schedule and conduct the EPA at the appropriate time
- Evaluate the apprentice's performance during the EPA



## Gateway Assessor

A Gateway Assessor ensures that the apprentice has met the readiness criteria for the EPA.

### Responsibilities:

- Assess the apprentice's readiness for the EPA based on the criteria outlined in the apprenticeship standard
- Confirm that all required on-the-job and off-the-job training has been completed
- Ensure that the apprentice's portfolio of evidence meets the EPA requirements



## EPA Assessor

An EPA Assessor is an expert in the relevant field who conducts the EPA assessments.

### Responsibilities:

- Conduct the EPA, which may involve various assessment methods such as exams, interviews, and practical assessments
- Evaluate the apprentice's performance against the criteria outlined in the apprenticeship standard
- Provide a fair and unbiased assessment of the apprentice's abilities



## Preparing for EPA

Preparation is essential to succeed in the EPA we therefore suggest the apprentice:

- Engage in regular tripartite reviews and feedback sessions (apprentice, employer and training provider)
- Review the specific requirements of the apprenticeship standard
- Ensure all pre-EPA activities specified in the assessment plan is undertaken
- Practice sample questions and assessments to become familiar with the format and expectations
- Seek support from employer, training provider, and fellow apprentices
- Maintain a portfolio of evidence that demonstrates your competence and proficiency

## The EPA process

The EPA process typically includes the following steps:

### Registration

The apprentice is registered for the EPA with the EPAO.

### Preparation

The apprentice undertakes any required pre-EPA activities and continues learning and skill development.

### Assessment

The actual EPA assessments (if non-integrated degree) are conducted by independent assessors. These may include practical tests, interviews, presentations, or other methods as specified in the assessment plan.

### Grading

The assessments are graded according to the assessment plan criteria.

### Results

The EPAO provides the final results and certification to the apprentice.

## Appeals and re-sits

If the apprentice disagrees with the EPA results, there is formal appeals process in place. Re-sits may also be offered, and the procedures for these are outlined in the assessment plan. The apprentice should refer to the assessment plan for specific details on appeals and re-sits.

## Contact information

For any questions or further clarification on the EPA process, please speak with your Work Based Tutor or contact the Central Apprenticeship Team by email – [apprentices@bolton.ac.uk](mailto:apprentices@bolton.ac.uk)



# FAQs

## Frequently Asked Questions

We have compiled a list of frequently asked questions and answers regarding the EPA process below:

### What is the purpose of EPA?

The primary purpose of EPA is to verify that the apprentice is occupationally competent, as defined by the apprenticeship standard. It ensures that the apprentice has the necessary skills, knowledge, and behaviours to succeed in their chosen occupation.

### What happens during the Gateway stage?

The Gateway stage is a significant milestone where the apprentice's readiness for the EPA is confirmed by the employer, training provider, and apprentice. It involves assessing whether all necessary training and learning activities have been completed successfully.

### Who conducts the EPA assessments?

EPA assessments are conducted by independent assessors from an End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO). The EPAO is separate from the employer and training provider to ensure impartiality.

### What does the EPA assessment consist of?

The components of the EPA assessment are determined by the specific apprenticeship standard and are outlined in the assessment plan. Assessments may include practical tests, interviews, presentations, or other methods relevant to the occupation.

### How is EPA graded?

The grading criteria for EPA are defined in the assessment plan for each specific apprenticeship standard. The apprentice's performance during the assessments is compared against these criteria to determine their final grade.

### What happens if an apprentice disagrees with their EPA results?

If an apprentice disagrees with their EPA results, there is a formal appeals process in place. The details of the appeals process are specified in the assessment plan, and the apprentice should follow the outlined procedures.

### Can an apprentice re-sit the EPA assessments?

Re-sits may be offered, depending on the specific apprenticeship standard and assessment plan. The procedures for re-sits are outlined in the assessment plan, and apprentices should consult it for specific details.

### How can apprentices prepare for EPA?

To prepare for EPA, apprentices should engage in regular reviews and feedback sessions with their employer and training provider. They should review the specific requirements of their apprenticeship standard, undertake any pre-EPA activities specified in the assessment plan, practice sample questions and assessments, seek support from their employer and training provider, and maintain a portfolio of evidence demonstrating their competence and proficiency. (see annex A for EPA Checklist).

### What support is available during the EPA process?

Apprentices can seek support from their employer, training provider, and fellow apprentices during the EPA process. There may also be additional support provided by the EPAO or external resources as outlined in the specific EPA plan.

### How are EPA results communicated to the apprentice?

The EPAO provides the final results and certification to the apprentice once the assessment process is completed. The apprentice should receive detailed feedback on their performance along with their final grade.

### What is the difference between an Integrated and Non-Integrated Degree Apprenticeship?

**Integrated Degree** - If the apprentice is completing an integrated degree apprenticeship, The University of Bolton will be the training provider and also the EPAO. The assessor will be independent to the training delivered, ensuring impartial assessment.

**Non-Integrated Degree** - A non-integrated degree apprenticeship takes place when an existing degree program already covers the required knowledge for a specific occupation. In this scenario, you can enhance the degree with additional on-the-job training to fulfill the complete degree apprenticeship standards. To successfully finish a non-integrated degree apprenticeship, you'll be required to undergo an End-Point Assessment (EPA) in addition to the regular degree evaluation. The EPA is conducted by an external End Point Assessment Organisation that maintains complete independence from the university, ensuring impartial evaluation.

# Annex A

## EPA Checklist for Apprentices

The End-Point Assessment (EPA) is a crucial milestone in your apprenticeship journey. It's the point at which you demonstrate that you've acquired the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviours to excel in your chosen field. To help you prepare effectively and approach your EPA with confidence, we've put together this comprehensive checklist. By following these steps, you'll be well-equipped to showcase your capabilities and successfully complete your apprenticeship.



### How to prepare for their End-Point Assessment (EPA)

**Review the EPA Plan:** Familiarise yourself with the specific EPA plan for your apprenticeship standard. Understand the assessment methods and criteria.

**Understand the assessment process:** Get a clear understanding of how the EPA will be conducted and what each assessment method entails.

**Collaborate with your trainer/assessor:** Discuss your progress with your trainer or assessor regularly to ensure you're meeting the required standards.

**Gather evidence:** Collect and organise evidence that demonstrates your skills, knowledge, and behaviours related to your apprenticeship.

**Self-assessment:** Reflect on your strengths and areas that need improvement. Identify areas where you might need additional support.

**Time management:** Create a study schedule to manage your time effectively, allowing for revision and practice.

**Practice assessments:** Complete practice assessments and mock exams to become familiar with the assessment process.

**Seek feedback:** Request feedback from your trainer or assessor to identify areas for improvement.

**Record your progress:** Keep a log of your progress, including completed tasks, achievements, and milestones.

**Professionalism:** Ensure you exhibit professional behaviour and conduct during your workplace activities.

**Presentation skills:** If required, practice and refine your presentation and communication skills.

**Documentation:** Verify that all necessary paperwork and documentation are completed and organised.

**Mock interviews:** If interviews are part of your EPA, practice mock interviews to boost your confidence.

**Relaxation techniques:** Learn relaxation techniques to manage any pre-assessment nerves.

**Time management during EPA:** Plan how you will manage your time during the EPA, ensuring you allocate sufficient time to each assessment component.

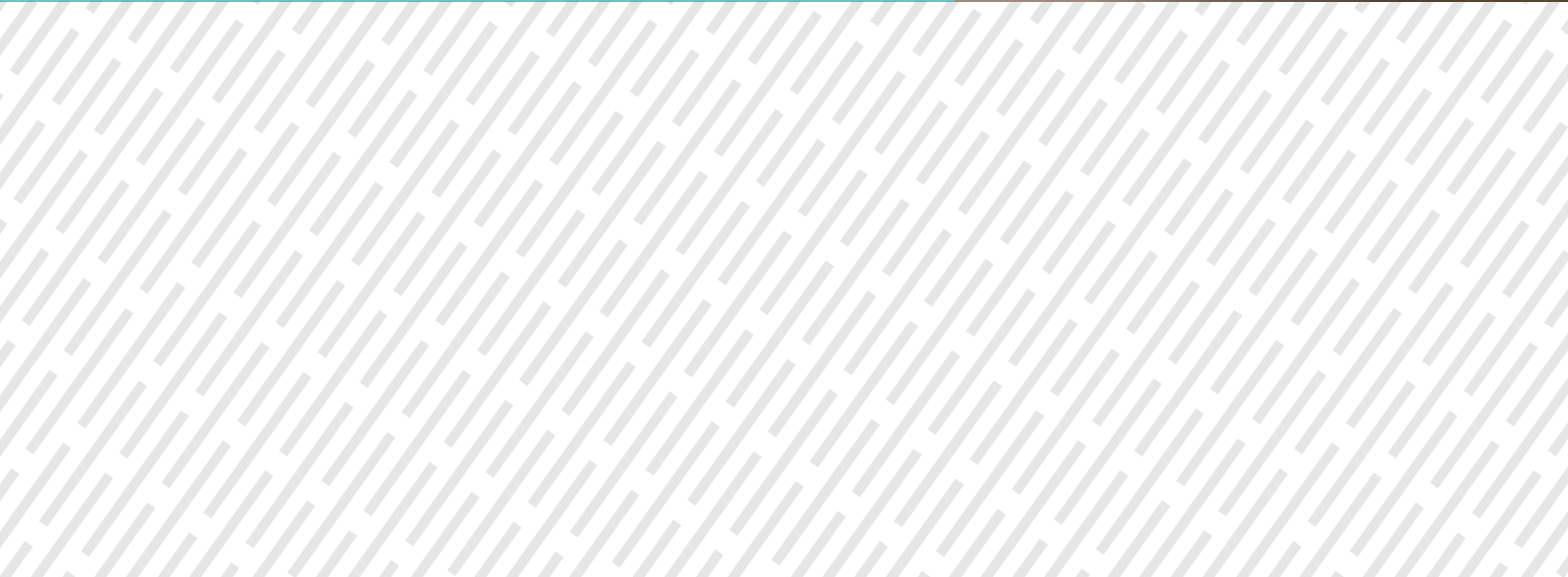
**Ask questions:** If you have any doubts or need clarification, don't hesitate to ask questions.

**Support system:** Lean on your support network, including colleagues, mentors, and family, for encouragement.

**Double-check the date and time:** Confirm the date and time of your EPA assessments well in advance.

**Remember, thorough preparation and a positive mindset are key to your success in the End-Point Assessment. Good luck!**





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