

Revenues and Welfare Benefits Practitioner Apprenticeship

Level 4

End-Point Assessment Plan

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Summary

This Assessment Plan sets out the requirements for the end-point assessment (EPA) for the Revenues and Welfare Benefits Practitioner standard that has been developed by a cross-sector group of employers, together with input from Training Providers. It is written for end-point assessment organisations (EPAOs) who will need to know how EPA for this apprenticeship must operate. It will also be of interest to apprentices, their employers and Training Providers.

Full time apprentices will normally spend 12–18 months on-programme working towards the apprenticeship standard, with a minimum of 20% off-the-job training.

The EPA should only start once the employer is satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at, or above, the level set out in the standard, and that the pre-requisite gateway requirements for EPA have been met and can be evidenced to an EPAO.

As a gateway requirement, apprentices without level 2 English and maths will need to achieve this level prior to taking the end-point assessment. For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the apprenticeship's English and maths minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. A British Sign Language qualification is an alternative to English qualifications for those whom this is their primary language.

The purpose of the EPA is to assess whether the apprentice has met the requirements of the standard. The assessment should:

- Truly test competence in the role
- Give assurance to employers that the apprenticeship is consistent and appropriate
- Only begin when the employer confirms that the apprentice is consistently operating at or above the level described in the standard.

The EPA must be conducted by an organisation approved to offer services against this standard, as selected by the employer, from the Education and Skills Funding Agency's (ESFA) Register of End-Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO).

The EPA consists of 3 distinct methods:

- Presentation / question and answer on real cases
- Project assignment
- Professional discussion

Performance in the EPA will determine the apprenticeship grade of fail, pass or distinction.

The major components of the apprenticeship and the roles of each of the major parties are shown in the diagram below. The timings are an example only.

Month	Apprentice	Employer	Training Provider	End-Point Assessment Organisation
0	Understand job role and apprenticeship commitment	Induct apprentice and understand role in apprenticeship	Explain apprenticeship, roles, timetable, and commitments. Complete ESFA admin requirements.	
1-12	Work to role objectives / KPIs / training plan Develop knowledge, skills, behaviours Achieve appropriate English / BSL and maths qualifications	Manage apprentice, including monthly performance reviews	Monitor progress, identify gaps, deliver learning and support as required. Complete ESFA admin requirements.	
13-14	Work to role objectives / KPIs / training plan Develop knowledge, skills, behaviours	Gateway Employer confirms that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level of the standard and triggers the gateway. Apprentice has achieved English and maths L2 or entry Level 3 or maths and British Sign language qualifications as appropriate.		
	Gateway Apprentice proposes and agrees cases for presentation with their employer and prepares evidence to support presentations	Cases for presentation agreed. Project assignment agreed with EPAO		Project assignment context agreed with the employer and set by EPAO to apprentice
15	Prepare presentations on cases and deliver these. Complete project assignment and submit for assessment.			Conduct and assess presentations / Q&A and project assignment
16	Prepare for and participate in professional discussion			Conduct professional discussion. Determine grade for apprentice and notify employer.
17		Inform apprentice of grade achieved	Complete ESFA admin requirements	Inform the employer of the outcome, subject to moderation

End-Point Assessment Gateway

This is the green section in the timetable diagram above. The EPA should only start once the employer confirms that the apprentice is ready for end-point assessment. While they may take advice from the Training Provider, the final decision will be made by the employer.

Gateway requirements:

To make this decision:

- **The employer** must be satisfied that the apprentice:
 - Has the required knowledge detailed in the standard to the required occupational competence
 - Consistently demonstrates the required skills and behaviours detailed in the standard
 - Has achieved Level 2 maths and English or the appropriate alternatives where required

- Is ready for end-point assessment
- Has the opportunity to prepare cases for the presentation.
- **The Training Provider** must provide:
 - the apprentice's completed mock assignment.

The apprentice has 3 months to complete the EPA from when the EPAO confirms that apprentice has successfully passed the gateway.

The employer will also agree the project assignment with the EPAO at this stage. Employers will ensure that the apprentice has opportunity to complete the cases required for Method 1 of the EPA.

End-Point assessment

This is the blue section in the timetable diagram above. The EPA contains three main components which are described in more detail in this plan. Each assessment method will cover the knowledge, skills and behaviours mapped at Appendix 1.

Assessment Method	Area Assessed	Assessed by	Grading
1. Presentation / question and answer on real cases	Key knowledge and skills	EPAO	Fail Pass Distinction
2. Project assignment	Key knowledge and skills	EPAO	Fail Pass
3. Professional discussion	Key knowledge, skills and behaviours	EPAO	Fail Pass Distinction

How will assessment be carried out?

The purpose of the EPA is an independent confirmation that the apprentice can meet the requirements of the standard and can demonstrate this. It will take place in the last 3 months of the apprenticeship, once they have passed through the Gateway, and consists of three assessment methods. Assessment methods can be undertaken in any order.

Assessment Method 1 - Presentation / question and answer on real cases

This method will require the apprentice to present evidence of how they have applied their knowledge and skills mapped at Appendix 1 in specified real work situations.

The cases must be real life examples from the apprentice's workplace which have been completed after gateway. They will consist of short presentations based on cases the apprentice has dealt with, each followed by a question-and-answer session. The cases will be selected by the apprentice in consultation with their employer. This may be presented to an Independent Assessor (IA) in person or via video communication. The presentation will be supported by 3 to 6 pieces of evidence from each case, such as evidence of action taken on a computer system, notes made of the action taken, or communication with the customer recorded on the case. All evidence must have any personal data removed in line with data protection legislation. The employer will provide confirmation that the cases presented are genuinely from the apprentice's work.

Content and timing of presentations

The presentations must include all the following scenarios, but more than one scenario may be covered by one case:

- a. At least one case dealing with the customer's initial dealings with the department (e.g. a new claim or new account).
- b. At least one case dealing with a change for an existing customer.
- c. At least one case dealing with a matter considered unusual by the employer.
- d. At least one case where a customer has disputed a decision made by the department.
- e. At least one case that involved working with another team, department or organisation to achieve the required outcome.
- f. At least one case where professional and personal customer service has been provided by the apprentice.
- g. At least one case where support with finance has been provided or signposted.
- h. At least one case that has involved both revenues and benefits activity (either both taken by the apprentice personally or where one aspect has been referred to the relevant team by the apprentice).

5 cases must be presented, which cover all of the above scenarios.

The presentation on each case must be 10 minutes (+/- 2 minutes) and must include the following information:

- An overview of the situation / case being addressed.
- What action was taken.
- Why the apprentice took this action, including evidence used to make this decision.
- What legislation applied to the action taken (including reference to specific paragraphs where appropriate).
- What policies or procedures applied to the action taken.

Where the same policies or procedures apply in multiple cases, they only need to be fully explained on one of the cases presented.

Content and timing of question-and-answer discussion

The IA will follow the presentation on each case with a question-and-answer discussion. Each question-and-answer discussion will last 10 minutes (+/- 2 minutes). This will be in addition to the time for each presentation. During this discussion, the IA may ask questions to clarify the explanations provided during the presentation. For example, if the apprentice refers to the title of a piece of legislation only, the IA may ask for the specific regulation that is relevant. Or if it was unclear from the presentation how professional and personal customer service had been provided, the IA may ask why the actions taken were useful to this specific customer.

The IA may draw inferences from the information given where the apprentice's intention is clear but must record any such inference in their record of the assessment. This will not impact on grading.

Total timing of presentations / question-and-answer discussion

The minimum total time taken for this part of the EPA will be 1 hour 20 minutes. The maximum total time taken for this part of the EPA will be 2 hours, consisting of 5 cases presented for 10 +/- 2 minutes each, with 10 +/- 2 minutes question and answer for each case.

EPAOs must ensure that the presentation and questioning elements are conducted in a suitable, controlled, environment, i.e. a quiet room free from distraction or influence, with the necessary equipment e.g. presentation aids, if required. Presentation aids may include presenting evidence on paper, on a computer screen or projected onto a larger screen. The presentation will be attended by the IA and the apprentice only, unless there are exceptional circumstances in which the apprentice needs the support of another person, e.g. a sign language translator.

Grading of presentation / question and answer on cases

The IA must grade each case based on the presentation and question and answers inclusively. An apprentice will **not** achieve a lower grade because the IA has asked questions.

Each case will be graded against the KSBs from the table below.

The IA will determine which KSBs are relevant to each case presented. For example, 'Legislation, policies and procedures' is likely to be relevant to every case presented. 'Financial support' may only be relevant to the case dealing with scenario 'f' of the required scenarios. However, all KSBs listed must be assessed during this assessment method.

The table below indicates the criteria for what will constitute a fail, a pass or a distinction.

To achieve a distinction, all pass criteria must first be met

	Fail description	Pass description	Distinction description
	Required elements are not all covered in the presentations.	All required elements are covered in the presentations	
Legislation, policies and procedures (Knowledge)	Showed an insufficient understanding of basic legislation. Applied inappropriate legislation to cases. Made no reference to policies or procedures.	Interpreted and applied correct legislation to the case presented, including relevant acts, regulations and other legislation. Referred to legislation clearly and accurately. Applied appropriate elements of relevant policies and procedures.	
Systems and processes (Knowledge)	Actions taken by the apprentice do not match the requirements of relevant policies or procedures.	Interpreted and applied the correct system and/or process in each of the cases presented. Dealt with tasks that involved other parts of the organisation appropriately and efficiently, in line with the employer's processes.	
Customers (Knowledge) / Quality service delivery (Skills)	Has dealt with customers unprofessionally or inappropriately or did not meet the requirements of	Identified why the customer needed support from the department. Dealt with customers politely and considerately. Adapted speech or actions to meet the customer needs,	Inferred customer needs that were beyond the need presented. Evaluated options for dealing with that need.

	the pass description.	while considering the organisational needs. If possible, achieved what the customer wanted. If not, explained the reasons why and recommended an alternative if possible.	Selected and implemented the most effective resolution for that customer.
Financial Support (Knowledge and Skills)	No assistance or signposting to assistance given.	Analysed customer circumstances and identified suitable options for financial support, whether provided by a local authority department, another organisation or information to help the customer manage this themselves. Recommend support by signposting to an appropriate service.	As appropriate, either supported the customer with personal budgeting or made a referral to an appropriate service on behalf of the customer, providing all appropriate information.
Gather and analyse information (Skills)	Did not gather required information. Did not record information gathered clearly. Did not distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information.	Assessed what information was required to deal with the case. Obtained all required information from the customer. Recorded this clearly and accurately. Considered the customer's reasons for disputing a decision. Either amended the decision or explained why the decision could not be amended. Identified information as sensitive. Handled all such information securely and legally. Evaluated information provided and determined which information was relevant. Evaluated whether there are indications of potential fraud and referred to appropriate department if required.	Identified opportunities to gather information from a source other than the customer. Obtained information from this alternative source. Drew conclusions from information provided. Confirmed the validity of the information and any conclusions drawn.
Apply knowledge to achieve outcomes (Skills)	Did not achieve the required outcome for the case presented.	Analysed and used the information obtained to deal with the required action correctly, in line with all applicable legislation. If inferences have been drawn, has explained why they have done this. Calculated the amounts due to / from the Council correctly. Decided the best method of recovery of any amounts due to the Council and started the recovery process.	

Communication (Skills)	Information provided was unclear or ambiguous or used inappropriate communication methods.	<p>Provided information clearly by composing the content and format.</p> <p>Selected an appropriate method by considering the potential outcomes of each option and judging which was most suitable.</p> <p>Analysed communication needs of the customer.</p> <p>Evaluated the available options.</p> <p>Adapted the presentation of information to meet the customer needs.</p> <p>Communicated confidently where required by being personable and asking insightful questions.</p> <p>Negotiated effectively if required.</p>	Evaluated their proposed communication to ensure possible ambiguity or misunderstandings are avoided.
Problem solving and decision making (Skills)	Did not explain how they reached their decision. No evidence of problem solving techniques applied.	<p>Evaluated the information available.</p> <p>Made accurate decisions based on this evaluation.</p> <p>Demonstrate how they have developed and used problem solving skills in day to day operations</p>	Demonstrate the ability to analyse the problem and make recommendations for solving it, implementing new ways of working where appropriate.
Using systems and procedures (Skills)	Did not use systems correctly. Did not justify actions taken with reference to relevant policies or procedures.	<p>Used systems proficiently to achieve tasks.</p> <p>Justified the action to be taken with reference to relevant policies or procedures.</p>	Contributed at least one suggestion for improving systems or procedures
Collaborating and partnering (Skills and behaviours)	Did not explain how they worked with another team, department or organisation.	<p>Offered support to team members by considering what the outcome for the team will be.</p> <p>Requested assistance or authorisation when needed, in the way determined by the employers processes.</p> <p>Worked with another team, department or organisation to achieve a required outcome.</p>	Evaluated the effectiveness of any collaboration.

Assessment Method 2 – Project assignment

The project assignment will require the apprentice to prepare a written response to an assignment set by the EPA. This will consist of two parts:

- Part 1 – Prepare an evidence submission list for a mock dispute / appeal case with an explanation of reasons for decisions
- Part 2 – Answer three questions on the appeal legislation, process and activities

The EPAO will develop a bank of assignments which apply to each of the roles which may be covered in this apprenticeship. These will provide the apprentice with all the necessary information, including:

- For part 1, the issue being disputed, and
- The argument that is to be supported by evidence, and
- The legislation that applies to the case
- For part 2, three questions related to the dispute / appeal process.

The assignment **must** be relevant to the apprentice's role. The EPAO is responsible for checking with the employer what this role is and then providing an appropriate case.

The EPAO will hold a bank of assignments (both cases for part 1 and questions for part 2) sufficient to prevent predictability. This will be reviewed and refreshed regularly and at least once per year to ensure that the contents of the bank are fit-for-purpose.

The EPAO must ensure that the assignment is not testing the apprentice's knowledge of Revenues and Benefits assessment legislation but tests their knowledge and understanding of the legislation which covers how the dispute / appeal process works.

The employer will provide confirmation that the assignment is genuinely the apprentice's work. The answer to part 1 will have a total word count of 1000 words (+ / - 10%). The answer to part 2 will have a total word count of 1500 words (+ / - 10%).

Timing of the project assignment

If this is the first assessment method to be conducted, the date for the project assignment start date will be agreed by the employer and the EPAO. If it is the second or third assessment method to be conducted, the EPAO will provide the assignment within 7 working days of the apprentice completing the previous method.

The apprentice must submit the completed assignment to the EPAO for assessment in no more than 3 weeks. This gives the apprentice some flexibility to complete the assignment at their own pace and allows for work commitments.

Grading of project assignment

The apprentice must meet the pass criteria in each area to pass. The highest grade available on this assessment method will be a pass.

The table below indicates the criteria for what will constitute a fail or a pass. To achieve a distinction overall, all pass criteria must first be met.

	Fail description	Pass description
Submission of the written assignment	Assignment response not submitted by deadline.	Assignment response submitted by deadline.
Understanding of the relevant appeal process	Incorrect or insufficient understanding of the appeal process, e.g. confusing the revenues and benefits appeal processes.	Explains the process clearly and correctly with reference to the organisation who hears the appeal.
Understanding of the way dispute and appeal tasks are completed	Incorrect or insufficient understanding of the way tasks are completed, e.g. who is responsible for what, referring to out-of-date forms or requirements.	Analyses the information provided in part 1 of the assignment to determine what evidence should be included. Evaluates potential evidence that could be included and makes a judgment on which to include. Evaluates the impact of a decision on other similar cases and recommends follow-up actions.
Detailed knowledge of the relevant legislation that determines how disputes and appeals must be dealt with	Incorrect application of legislation.	Correctly applies appropriate legislation to situations given in the assignment.

Assessment Method 3 - Professional discussion

The professional discussion will assess the skills / behaviours mapped in Appendix 1.

To ensure consistency of approach, the EPAO will provide a bank of standard questions that the IA will use to cover these skills / behaviours. There should be a minimum of 7 questions in each professional discussion. The question bank should be maintained by the EPAO and be of sufficient size as to prevent predictability. This will be reviewed and refreshed a minimum of once per year to ensure the questions are fit-for-purpose. The IA may write their own questions pertinent to the KSBs being assessed and use supplementary questions to draw out details from the apprentice.

The professional discussion may be carried out face to face, typically at the employer's premises, or remotely, using video conferencing, telephone or Skype. EPAOs must ensure appropriate measures are in place to prevent misrepresentation when the assessments are undertaken remotely. The professional discussion will be 50 minutes (+/- 10%) including supplementary questions.

EPAOs must ensure that the professional discussion is conducted in a suitable, controlled, environment, i.e. a quiet room free from distraction or influence.

Grading the professional discussion

The table below indicates the criteria for what will constitute a pass or a distinction.

	Fail description	Pass description	Distinction description
Personal development	Does not explain how they have taken up opportunities to maintain the currency of their knowledge.	Takes opportunities to maintain the currency of their knowledge. Evaluates the effectiveness of opportunities taken.	
Accountability	Does not explain how they have taken responsibility for their actions.	Takes responsibility for their actions. Recognises how their actions impact on others. If made a mistake, takes action to correct this.	Self-assesses and provides one example of what they could do better and how they intend to do so.
Change and improvement	Does not explain how they have responded to changes positively. Displays a negative attitude towards change.	Explains what changes they have faced. Evaluates their response to change.	Gives an example of an improvement they would like to make, or have made, and how they would implement or have implemented this. Outlines benefits to the customer and organisation that this improvement will make.
Delivering at pace	Does not explain how they have worked at an appropriate pace. States that they do not work at an appropriate pace.	Evaluates evidence of their work to ensure appropriate pace is consistent. Analyses their working practices to identify how to improve their pace. Reflects on outcomes to identify whether changes have achieved an increase in pace.	Identifies issues that would arise from not working at an appropriate pace. Identifies risks of being too focused on pace, and mitigates against these risks.
Dependability	Does not explain how they have met personal commitments. States that they have not met personal commitments.	Meets personal commitments by an acceptable level of attendance, being consistently punctual, being prepared for tasks and contributing in team projects and/or meetings. Reflects on the reasons for meeting these commitments and gives an example of doing this.	
Honesty and integrity	Does not explain how they have shown honesty or integrity. States they have taken actions which would question their honesty or integrity.	Evaluates how they have displayed honesty or integrity. Gives examples of how they have done the right thing even when difficult. Reflects on these situations, their own actions and the outcomes.	

Professional scepticism	Does not explain how they have showed caution or checked accuracy of information received.	Shows caution and checks accuracy of information received. Draws conclusions on the potential effects of not doing so.
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Cumulative effect of assessment methods

The combination of these assessment methods builds a cumulative picture of performance against the standard. They require apprentices to demonstrate the application of knowledge, skills and behaviours in an integrated manner to deliver the required outcomes, enabling the EPAO to make a holistic judgement about how well the apprentice meets or exceeds the standard.

End-Point Assessment Organisation - Roles and responsibilities

The employer and the Training Provider will ensure that the apprentice is ready for EPA, but the decision that the apprentice is ready lies solely with the employer. However, the EPA will be carried out by an independent EPAO selected from the RoEPAO.

The EPA roles are:

Role	Responsibilities
Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the apprentice to achieve readiness for EPA through performance management, reviews and providing opportunities for development. Decide when the apprentice should be entered for EPA, following consultation with the Training Provider and the apprentice if needed. Confirms that the apprentice has reached the standard needed for gateway.
Training Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the apprentice to achieve readiness for EPA through training and learning support Advise the employer on whether the apprentice has reached the competence described in the standard if asked.
Independent assessor (on behalf of EPAO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct and grade the presentation / Q&A. Review and grade the project assignment. Conduct and grade the professional discussion. Determine the overall grade to be awarded to the apprentice.

The IA must meet certain criteria to ensure their competence in the assessment process, including:

- 3 years experience working in Revenues and Welfare in a training and/or supervisory capacity, either currently or with the end of this period being within the last 3 years
- Familiarity with the role being assessed.
- CPD activity showing they are up to date with current developments in the sector.

- Assessment qualifications (such as A1 or equivalent), or equivalent experience within the last 3 years, or be working towards such as a qualification and have their assessment decisions verified before they are finalised.
- No conflict of interest, including past or current relationship with the apprentice, their employer and their Training Provider.
- Attendance at EPA organisation standardisation meetings at least once a year.

Internal Quality Assurance

The responsibility for the robustness of the assessment process is held by the independent EPAO. This ensures that there is true independence, validity and reliability in the assessment. To ensure quality, the EPAO must:

- Develop and maintain the assessment tools that are to be used to carry out assessments, ensuring their currency and relevance
- Review the assessment tools on an annual basis, update and amend them as needed to maintain currency
- Only use assessors that meet the requirements of this assessment plan
- Provide verification of trainee assessor decisions
- Apply internal quality assurance processes, including standardisation events held at least annually, a minimum of 15% assessments carried out by each Independent Assessor moderated annually, obtaining feedback on performance
- Have in place an appeal process for any appeals that arise from assessment decisions
- Provide training for independent assessors in terms of good assessment practice, operating the assessment tools and grading.

External Quality Assurance

External quality assurance of the EPA for this apprenticeship standard will be undertaken by the Institute for Apprenticeships.

Implementation

Affordability

The following factors will contribute to the affordability of the EPA:

- Use of employer's premises for EPA activity where possible
- Use of technology is allowed, reducing travel costs
- The cases are based on real work carried out by the apprentice as part of their role, adding value to the employer.

Consistency

By detailing the requirements of the independent assessor, the methods to be used, the knowledge, skills and behaviours to be assessed and the grading criteria to be used, the EPA should be consistent regardless of the organisation undertaking the assessment.

Volumes

We expect approximately 70 apprentices in the first year of this apprenticeship, rising to between 100 and 200 in the second and subsequent years.

Resits and retakes

In the event of a resit, which doesn't require additional learning, or a retake which does require additional learning, being required, then a fail on one of the assessment methods will require that assessment method to be repeated.

If all assessment methods are failed, then the entire EPA must be repeated.

A resit or a retake is at the employer's discretion. The apprentice will get a maximum EPA grade of distinction if the re-sit or re-take is the project assignment, however if the resit or re-take is for presentation/questions and answers or professional discussion (or both) the apprentice will get a maximum EPA grade of a pass unless the EPAO determines there are exceptional circumstances.

It is therefore important that an apprentice is not progressed through the Gateway until the employer, with supporting information from the Training Provider (if appropriate) is confident that they are ready for the EPA.

Where a retake is required, a development plan must be agreed between the employer, Training Provider and apprentice. This plan must be shared with the EPAO. Where a resit or retake is required, the employer will agree the resit/retake period with the EPAO. A re-sit is typically taken within 3 months of the EPA outcome notification. The timescale for a re-take is dependent on how much re-training is required and is typically taken within 4 months of the EPA outcome notification.

Failed assessment methods must be re-sat or re-taken within a 6-month period from the EPA outcome notification, otherwise the entire EPA will need to be re-sat or re-taken in full.

The final grade will be determined in accord with the table below:

Presentation / question and answer on cases	Project Assignment	Professional Discussion	OVERALL GRADE
Any one or more methods with Fail			Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Distinction	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Distinction	Distinction

Appendix 1 – Assessment methods mapped

There are three assessment methods to be used. This appendix gives detailed guidance on which knowledge, skills and behaviours will be covered in each assessment method.

Assessment Method	Key
Presentation / Q&A based on case studies	P/Q&A
Project assignment	PA
Professional discussion	PD

Knowledge	Assessment Method
Legislation, policies and procedures	P/Q&A
Systems and processes	P/Q&A
Dispute and appeal process	PA
Customers	P/Q&A
Financial support available	P/Q&A

Skills	
Quality service delivery	P/Q&A
Gather and analyse information	P/Q&A
Apply knowledge to achieve outcomes	P/Q&A
Communication	P/Q&A
Personal development	PD
Problem solving and decision making	P/Q&A
Team working and collaboration	P/Q&A
Using systems and procedures	P/Q&A
Financial Support	P/Q&A

Behaviours	
Accountability	PD
Change and improvement	PD
Collaborating and partnering	P/Q&A
Delivering at pace	PD
Dependability	PD
Honesty and integrity	PD
Professional scepticism	PD