



Skills England

Draft Preview

DRAFT APPRENTICESHIP ASSESSMENT PLAN FOR THE ANIMAL TRAINING INSTRUCTOR APPRENTICESHIP

ST0398/V2

APPRENTICESHIP REFERENCE NUMBER	LEVEL OF THIS APPRENTICESHIP	INTEGRATION
ST0398	4	None

Assessment Plan

Assessment details

Introduction

This Apprenticeship Assessment Plan (AAP) sets out the requirements for the assessment of the level 4 animal training instructor apprenticeship. It should be read in conjunction with the General Requirements for Apprenticeship Assessment. Where there is conflict between this AAP and the General Requirements, this AAP takes precedence. Assessment organisations must also comply with the relevant regulatory framework for apprenticeship assessment.

It is important that the assessment of apprentices is proportionate, valid, and provides reliable evidence of an apprentice's attainment of the relevant knowledge and skills. As such, assessment organisations must design assessments to ensure:

- employers have confidence that the apprentice has reached the expected performance standard
- apprentices are sufficiently secure in their knowledge and skills, so that they could demonstrate their competence in different contexts, for example, a different workplace

Assessment Outcomes

The assessment outcomes group and summarise the knowledge and skills that must be demonstrated in assessments. All assessment outcomes must be assessed.

Knowledge and skills statements in **bold** are mandatory and must be assessed in every version of the assessment that is made available.

Assessment Outcome	Mapping
AO1 Animal welfare, health and ethical training practice Applies animal welfare principles, health knowledge, and ethical considerations to assess animals' suitability for training and protect their physical and psychological wellbeing. Makes decisions where animal welfare, guardian expectations, and professional responsibilities may conflict.	K1, K7, K8, K9, K10, K11, K12 S1, S6, S19
AO2 Safe working practices, legislation and risk management Applies relevant legislation, organisational policies, and risk assessment processes to maintain safe working environments and practices. Identifies and controls health, safety, and biosecurity risks to protect animals, people, and others involved.	K2, K3 S2, S3, S4, S5
AO3 Behavioural science and learning theory in training practice Uses knowledge of animal behaviour, ethology, and learning theory to understand how animals learn and respond. Uses reinforcement strategies informed by learning theory to support behaviour change and avoid creating unintended outcomes.	K13, K14, K15, K20, K21, K22 S11
AO4 Training planning, delivery and evaluation Develops and implements evidence-based, individualised training plans based on case histories, agreed objectives, and available resources. Prepares training sessions, monitors progress and adapts plans to achieve agreed outcomes.	K16, K17, K18 S7, S8, S9, S10
AO5 Guardian communication, instruction and support Communicates with guardians and others to identify information needs and explain training approaches. Adapts instructional techniques, confirms understanding, and supports guardians to implement training while prioritising animal welfare.	K23, K24, K25, K26 S13, S14, S15
AO6 Professional practice, record keeping and continuous development	K4, K5, K6, K19, K27, K28

Maintains training records and reports using digital tools and data protection principles. Engages in reflective practice, applies current evidence, supports sustainability, and contributes to ongoing professional development.	S12, S16, S17, S18, S20
--	--------------------------------

Assessment requirements

Assessment organisations must set apprenticeship assessments. Assessment organisations should consider how technology and digital tools can support innovation and efficiency.

Assessment organisations must design apprenticeship assessments to include **at least one observation**.

Any additional assessment, or assessments, must be selected from the following list of methods, to ensure the assessment outcomes are met in full. Assessments available in the list may be used more than once:

- additional observation
- simulation
- professional discussion
- presentation
- project
- portfolio
- question and answer

Apprentices may be assessed at any appropriate point during their apprenticeship programme.

Assessments may be designed to allow a centre or training provider to mark assessments. The assessment organisation is responsible for ensuring all assessments are sufficiently reliable and valid, and for the accuracy of any centre or training provider marking.

Performance descriptors

Performance descriptors describe the level of performance required to achieve a pass or distinction grade. Assessment organisations must design assessments that align with these descriptions.

Performance Category	Pass	Distinction
Applied Knowledge	Demonstrates sound application of occupational knowledge to address well-defined but complex and non-routine problems, reaching appropriate and generally effective outcomes in animal training and welfare practice.	Applies knowledge with confidence and precision, consistently producing high-quality outputs in response to well-defined but complex and non-routine problems, often enhancing outcomes or improving training effectiveness.
Applied Skills	Identifies and applies suitable cognitive and practical skills in animal training activities, adapting as necessary to meet requirements. Methods are generally appropriate, with results that meet organisational or sector expectations.	Adapts and applies cognitive and practical animal training skills with a high degree of flexibility and operational fluency, ensuring methods are both effective and optimised for quality and efficiency of outcomes.
Regulatory and Procedural Awareness	Applies relevant legislation, regulation, and organisational procedures relating to animal welfare, safety, and biosecurity with sound judgement, adapting appropriately to varied and occasionally complex situations.	Interprets and applies animal welfare, safety, and organisational requirements with insight and appropriate flexibility, identifying implications and making informed decisions in varied and occasionally complex situations.
Communication and Collaboration	Communicates clearly with guardians and stakeholders and collaborates	Communicates and collaborates with confidence and insight, tailoring approach to diverse

	effectively to support training activities and service delivery.	guardian and stakeholder needs and contributing to improved collaboration and service outcomes.
Information Use and Decision Making	Analyses and interprets relevant animal training and behavioural information to make informed decisions, showing a clear awareness of the occupational context and the broader scope of the role.	Analyses, interprets and evaluates information from a range of sources, providing insightful justification for decisions and demonstrating a strong awareness of broader implications within animal training practice.
Responsibility and Autonomy	Takes responsibility for actions and decisions within set parameters. Manages own work and, where relevant, supports training activities with adequate awareness of risks and priorities.	Proactively takes responsibility for actions and decisions within set parameters. Manages own work and the coordination of others, independently using sound judgment about risks and priorities in animal training contexts.

Crown copyright 2026 You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. Visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence.