

## INTRODUCTION

S4T Limited (trading as Skills Beyond School) hereafter referred to as Skills Beyond School, as an End-Point Assessment Organisation, is required to deliver an independent, objective assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours set out in the relevant Apprenticeship Standard. This is intended to ensure the integrity of Apprenticeship delivery and of the achievement of the associated Apprenticeship and any component qualifications.

Skills Beyond School has developed this Apprenticeship End-Point Assessment Consistency QA Policy, with respect to any Apprenticeship provision delivered via provider arrangements.

Where such delivery arrangements exist they will be compliant with the current requirements of the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), and Institute for Apprenticeships (IfA), and OfQual where appropriate.

## PURPOSE

This policy should be read in conjunction with Skills Beyond School's policies and EPA handbook, linked to its provision of End Point Assessments. This Policy is intended to provide the basis for and to ensure consistency in, the EPA processes applied by Skills Beyond School.

All apprentices must undertake an independent End-Point Assessment (EPA), which is a synoptic assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that have been learnt throughout the apprenticeship. The purpose of the assessment is to make sure the apprentice meets the standard set by employers and are occupationally competent.

It is taken by apprentices at the very end of the on-programme phase of training when their employer and their training provider are satisfied that they have met the "Gateway" criteria to undertake the assessment. EPAs are graded and an apprenticeship certificate is only awarded after an EPA is successfully completed.

## APPRENTICESHIP EPA MODELS

To ensure consistency in Skills Beyond School's approach to undertaking EPAs, it is necessary for staff involved to understand the different models of EPA and roles of the EPAO. The EPA is carried out by a designated End Point Assessor Organisation (EPAO).

Any organisation undertaking the EPAO role must be an approved organisation on the Education & Skills Funding Agency Register for Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations (RAAO).

All apprenticeship standards involve an EPA. This determines whether the apprentice has met the requirements of the Apprenticeship Standard. Every Apprenticeship Standard has an accompanying Assessment Plan, which sets out how the EPA should be conducted. In order to be eligible for entering the Gateway, the apprentice needs to have met all requirements set out in the Assessment Plan and to have the employer's permission to proceed to an EPA.

## IMPORTANCE OF GATEWAY PREPARATION TO APPRENTICESHIP CONSISTENCY

Before an EPA all Apprentices must be ready for the Gateway. The Gateway process can be a way to identify and resolve issues before they become problems. Clarity for staff around expectations in terms of apprentice preparedness, will make it easier for the providers and/or employer, to decide on whether the Apprentice should pass through and onto an EPA. There are practical considerations to factor in, including the right prior achievements and evidence of completions, as well as those related to the apprentice performing at the right competency level.

In the role of EPAO it is important for Skills Beyond School to nominate effective and competent End-Point Assessors (EPAs). Employers expect EPAs to be of a high caliber and appropriate when acting as assessors of their Apprentices. This is because employers invest a significant amount of time on the occupational relevance of the on-programme part of the Apprenticeship and in the employer support role.

## STAFF CONSISTENCY & PROFILES

### Monitoring of End Point Assessors

Where Skills Beyond School carries out an EPA, the outcomes will be reviewed and signed off by the relevant EQA. Where applicable, it will look at the outcomes across different EPAs. Where there might be differences between assessors, further moderation work would need to be undertaken.

## SUMMARY EPA CONSISTENCY QUALITY ASSURANCE EXPECTATIONS

Skills Beyond School will ensure consistency in EPA through the following summary QA activities. These should be considered in conjunction with Skills Beyond School's wider Apprenticeship and EPA Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement processes and procedures.

### EPA Quality Assurance Arrangements

Skills Beyond School will work to:

- Provide EPA guidance to apprentices, employers and training providers in relation to the requirements of the practical activities, technical work, interview, references and marking of EPA activities;
- Ensure the EPA makes consistent and reliable assessment judgements through observation of end point activity and audit of recorded interviews and assessment decisions on a sampling basis;
- Consult with representative technical experts when developing any relevant project assessment, to ensure there is consistency and comparability in the terms of breadth and depth of the assessment, to ensure the assessments are reliable, robust and valid and ensure competency accord across the Apprenticeship Standard's industry;
- Develop compensatory assessment for learners with special requirements to allow reasonable adjustments to be made while ensuring that judgements are not compromised; (see Skills Beyond School Fair Access/Reasonable Adjustment Policy);
- Ensure that End-Point Assessors receive training/guidance for conducting the interview and project and marking and grading;
- Ensure that documentation is in place and reviewed annually for End-Point Assessor feedback, judgements, making reasonable adjustments and conflict of interest;
- Hold yearly standardisation meetings to ensure consistency of application of the guidance,

- provide updates and share good practice;
- Carry out moderation of assessments;
- Gather feedback from employers and training providers following EPA.

#### COMPARABILITY & CONSISTENCY OF PRACTICE

As detailed in the summary EPA QA Expectations section of this policy, comparability and consistency will be ensured through:

- Recruitment of suitable End-Point Assessors who will be briefed and trained;
- A team approach to carrying out end point assessment;
- The development of protocols covering how the assessment will be administered;
- Moderation and standardisation of a sample of outcomes;
- Recording presentations, interviews and discussions for moderation and quality control purposes;
- Monitoring of outcomes

#### COMPLAINTS & APPEALS

Where complaints relating to issues of EPA consistency cannot be satisfactorily resolved, apprentices must be made aware of their right to appeal to Skills Beyond School via the applicable current arrangements outlined in Skills Beyond School's EPA Complaints Procedure Policy.