



End-Point Assessment Handbook and Specification for Early Years Educator ST0135/AP04 Level 3



Photo by Yan Krukov



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Section 1

Overview

The end-point assessment in this specification relates to the Early Years Educator Apprenticeship ST0135 version AP04. The apprenticeship is at Level 3 and is for apprentices who play a key role in ensuring that young children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

The apprentice may be working in different types of organisations and employers such as full day care, children's centres, pre-schools, reception classes or as childminders. They may either be working on their own or supervising others to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements set by Government for the learning, development, and care of children from birth to 5 years old.

An early years educator will:

- Plan and supervise child initiated and adult led activities which are based around the needs and interests of each individual child.
- Support children to develop numeracy and language skills through games and play.
- Have key person responsibility to help ensure each child feels safe and secure.
- Observe each child and shape their learning experience to reflect their observations.
- Meet the care needs of the individual child such as feeding, changing nappies and administration of medicine.
- Work in partnership with other colleagues, parents and/or carers or other professionals to meet the individual needs of each child.

With additional experience, an Early Years Educator can become the manager of an early years setting.

Individuals will undergo all the checks as per the EYFS requirements to ensure suitability to work with children.

The typical duration for this apprenticeship is 18 months but this will depend on apprentices' previous experience and their access to opportunities to gain the full range of competences. The minimum duration of training for any apprenticeship is 366 days, before entering end-point assessment.

To achieve the apprenticeship certificate, apprentices are required to successfully complete their on-programme period of learning and development and the end-point assessment. The purpose of the end-point assessment is to confirm that apprentices have met the required level of knowledge, skills and behavioural standards set by employers.

The overall apprenticeship is graded as fail, pass or distinction.

To achieve the apprenticeship certificate, apprentices are required to successfully complete the:

- On-programme period of training and development, including achieving the required Level 2 English and maths qualifications.
- End-point assessment (EPA) - all components, within the assessment window.

The certificate for the apprenticeship is awarded by the Institute for Apprentices and Technical Education (IfATE), through a process administered by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

As the end-point assessment organisation, Professional Assessment Ltd (PAL) will claim for the certificate on behalf of the apprentice. Certificates are sent to the nominated employer, and it is the employer's responsibility to ensure the apprentice receives the certificate.

The standards and accompanying assessment plan can be accessed via the [Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education](#).

| | |
|---|--|
| Standard Title | Early Years Educator |
| Level | 3 |
| Standard and Version (AP) Number | ST0135/AP04 |
| LARS Number | 430 |
| Named EQA Organisation | Ofqual |
| Duration of End-Point Assessment | 3 months |
| Date the Assessment Plan is scheduled for review | This standard should be reviewed within 3 years of its approval date |
| Mandatory Qualifications within the Standard | To meet the apprenticeship standards, apprentices must achieve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Early years educator qualification (Level 3) ➤ A first aid qualification in line with the requirements of the EYFS Framework (Annex A): Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework. ➤ English and maths qualifications at Level 2 |
| End-Point Assessment Methods | The end-point assessment is designed to test the apprentice throughout the entire standard. The assessment methods used to achieve this are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knowledge test ➤ Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence |

Introduction

This handbook contains the relevant information and guidance required of apprentices to achieve the end-point assessment for the Early Years Educator Apprenticeship ST0135/AP04 and should be used in conjunction with the Early Years Educator ST0135/AP04 Padlet¹ – End-Point Assessment Information for Apprentices, Training Providers and Employers.

The overarching aim of the end-point assessment is to ensure that the apprentice meets the standard set out by employers of the relevant sector and that they are fully competent within their job roles. An apprentice must successfully complete all the end-point assessment components to receive the apprenticeship certificate.

¹ A Padlet is an on-line wiki-based resource, made available to all PAL clients. Resources are updated centrally, so the latest information can be accessed via the Padlet

References to third-party material made in this specification are made in good faith. PAL does not endorse, approve, or accept responsibility for the content of materials, which may be subject to change, or any opinions expressed therein. (Material may include textbooks, journals, magazines and other publications and websites.)

All information in this specification is correct at time of publication.

PAL has worked in close collaboration with employers, other assessment organisations and experts from professional bodies and training providers in developing the assessment tools for this end-point assessment. We are grateful to all who have generously shared their time and expertise to help us in the development process.

The end-point assessment (EPA) is an assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the apprenticeship standard, which have been learned throughout the apprenticeship programme. The purpose of the end-point assessment is to make sure that the apprentice meets the standard in its entirety.

All apprentices must undertake the independent end-point assessment at the end of the on-programme phase of training when their employer, and in some cases their training provider, is satisfied that they have met the 'gateway' criteria to undertake the assessment. Apprentices will not be awarded the apprenticeship certificate until they have successfully completed the end-point assessment.

The end-point assessment can be delivered only by a registered assessment organisation, which must be independent of the employer, or any party involved in the delivery of the on-programme phase of the apprenticeship. In this context, independence, means without influence or bias and the independent assessor assigned is not affiliated to the employer or any training partner involved, and notably the independent assessor has played no part in the training of the apprentice.

All assessment decisions for this standard's end-point assessment must be made by the independent assessment organisation.

PAL has been working closely with occupational experts, employers, and training providers in the development of end-point assessment tools to ensure that they are:

- Valid and appropriate to assess occupational competence in the relevant industry and will deliver reliable outcomes.
- Fair to all apprentices and help them to make progress in their lives.
- Manageable for apprentices and the industry and can be delivered effectively and efficiently in the vocational setting.

Apprenticeship standard objective

The overall goal of the end-point assessment is to ensure that the apprentice has met the required level of knowledge, skills and behavioural standards set by employers and approved by the IfATE and that they are confident and competent in their role to take on responsibilities to deliver clearly defined business outcomes.

Progression

On completion of the apprenticeship, the apprentice could progress into a deputy manager role, or a specialist role such as Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), Safeguarding, Special Education Needs and Disability Lead (SEND) or Physical Activity and Nutrition Co-ordinator (PANCO).

Who is Professional Assessment Ltd (PAL)?

PAL provides services for training providers to include colleges and employers involved in the delivery of apprenticeships and adult learning. Our offer includes:

- End-point assessment for a wide range of apprenticeship standards. Our dedicated team offers national coverage and has built up extensive experience in administering the latest end-point assessments.
- Compliance and audit services. Our funding compliance team tailor their support to meet your specific needs; from ad-hoc advice and support to full ESFA-style audits.

The link to our website can be located by clicking [here](#).

What is needed prior to end-point assessment?

The employer and training provider must confirm that the apprentice has met the on-programme requirements and the apprentice is ready to undertake the end-point assessment.

The employer and training provider must hold a 'Gateway' review to agree that the apprentice has gained the required level of knowledge, skills, and behaviours, along with an English and maths qualification at Level 2 as set by the apprenticeship standard.

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 and British Sign Language qualifications are an alternative to English qualifications for those whom this is their primary language.

Please check with the EPA team via info@professionalassessment.co.uk if you do not know which English or maths qualifications are accepted. Evidence of qualifications must be in the form of a certificate.

The apprentice must have completed the following approved qualifications mandated in the standard prior to end-point assessment:

- Early years educator qualification (Level 3).
- A first aid qualification in line with the requirements of the EYFS Framework (Annex A): [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#).

The apprentice must also have a completed portfolio that will underpin the professional discussion to be submitted to PAL as part of the Gateway evidence.

To confirm the Gateway review has taken place, the employer, training provider and apprentice are required to complete a Gateway Declaration Record, an example of which is included in the Appendix of this specification. Alternatively, training providers and employers can use their documentation, with the caveat that the document must record the information as stipulated on the PAL Gateway Declaration Record.

PAL will not confirm an end-point assessment booking until the required evidence is submitted. For auditing purposes, the Gateway Declaration Record should either be signed and dated by all parties, or email/DVR confirmation provided that all parties have agreed on readiness.

The recommended approach during the on-programme assessment phase (month 1-18) to ensure that the apprentice is on track is based on the employer's performance management process with the following key elements:

- Line manager uses the formal performance management process and regular 1:1s to discuss progress in the apprenticeship, provide feedback and guide development.
- The training provider can support this (if required) by ensuring that the requirements of the apprenticeship are reflected in the performance management process and filling any gaps through their work with the apprentice.
- The training provider can also support the apprentice on understanding the learning journey, providing advice and guidance on learning strategies and tools that will support the apprentice's preferred learning style and improve their learning agility.
- Regular check points between the line manager and training provider (aligned with the performance management process) to ensure that the apprentice is on track and agree how any issues will be addressed.
- Apprentices should be strongly encouraged to create a learning record that contains examples of their learning and areas for development/action points as they go through the apprenticeship.
- The training provider can carry out mock end-point assessments with the apprentice.

The Gateway decision regarding readiness will be taken by the line manager (or appropriate employer) representative and apprentice with input from the training provider.

Language of assessment

All components of the end-point assessment will be conducted in English.

Apprentices may be assessed in British Sign Language where it is permitted for the purpose of reasonable adjustment.

Further information on special considerations and reasonable adjustments can be found in our Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments policy.

Section 2

How is end-point assessment delivered?

The apprentice will be assessed to the apprenticeship standard using two discrete assessment methods. Each assessment method should directly assess the required knowledge, skills, and behaviours of the standard.

The assessment activities will be completed by the independent assessor as follows:

- Knowledge test.
- Professional discussion, underpinned by portfolio.

There is no mandated assessment sequence. The result of one assessment does not need to be known before starting the next.






The content and structure of the assessment methods is provided by PAL to ensure consistency across all apprentices. The employer, with the support of the training provider where appropriate, will work with the apprentice to agree how the apprentice goes about completing the components of the end-point assessment and will provide guidance along the way as required. The training provider will ensure that the evidence presented for end-point assessment meets the assessment plan requirements but does not have a role in the formal end-point assessment or grade decision.

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be awarded an overall EPA grade of 'fail'. To gain an overall EPA 'pass' grade, apprentices must achieve a pass in both of the assessment methods. To achieve a distinction, 10 of the distinction criteria must be achieved, in addition to the pass criteria for the professional discussion.

The following chart sets out the sequence of the Gateway review and end-point assessment.

Note – the assessments can be taken in any order.

| Apprentice/Employer/Training Provider | | PAL |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Apprentice registered with PAL prior to the Gateway review. | ➔ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ESFA advised of EPAO. ▪ EPAPro log-in credentials provided. ▪ Access to a range of assessment guidance materials available. |
| <p>Gateway review held between the training provider, employer, and apprentice to confirm assessment readiness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of Level 2 English and maths requirements having been achieved. ▪ Evidence of completion of the Level 3 Early Years Educator qualification. ▪ A first aid qualification in line with the requirements of the EYFS Framework (Annex A): Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework. ▪ Completed portfolio of evidence submitted with mapping document and employer validation. | ➔ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Declaration received that the apprentice is ready for assessment. ▪ Gateway evidence received. ▪ PAL approves or rejects the Gateway evidence. If rejected, the training provider to resubmit as required. |
| <p>PAL contacts employer and apprentice. PAL undertakes assessment planning meeting with apprentice and employer and assessment schedule agreed.</p> | ➔ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assessment plan completed. Dates will be agreed for all methods of assessment to meet with the Early Years Educator |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | Assessment Plan and to allow for reasonable resit or retake activities within the required window, wherever possible. |
| |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Independent assessor reviews of the portfolio and prepares agenda questions for the professional discussion. |
| Apprentice undertakes the knowledge test assessment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Test duration is a maximum of 60 minutes. |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Test result graded. |
| Apprentice undertakes the professional discussion assessment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Apprentice to have a copy of their portfolio to refer to during the assessment. Please note the agenda will not be shared in advance. ▪ Professional discussion assessment must last for 90 minutes (10% can be added at the independent assessor's discretion to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer). |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Independent assessor will have a copy of the apprentice's portfolio to refer to during the assessment. ▪ Professional discussion completed, responses to questions assessed. ▪ Assessment graded. |
| |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall grading undertaken – independent assessor confirms to PAL grades for all assessment elements and overall grade using grade descriptors as detailed in the assessment plan. ▪ IQA undertaken. ▪ Assessment outcome provided within the assessment window timeframe. |
| Employer informed of the outcome of end-point assessment via email from epasupportservices@professionalassessment.co.uk Apprentice and training provider are copied into the communication. |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assessment reports will record decisions and grades. If a resit or retake is required, it is important that the relevant parties refer to the EPA summary record. ▪ Assessment decision data collated and used to inform standardisations processes and quality assurance. ▪ Assessment outcome provided to the training provider and apprenticeship service. ▪ Certificate requested where a pass or higher grade for all aspects of end-point assessment are achieved. ▪ Data provided to the regulator as necessary. |

Who can carry out end-point assessment?

Independent assessors/the end-point assessment organisation for this standard are/is required to:

- Have current knowledge of the regulatory framework and other regulatory and legislative requirements such as safeguarding, duty of care, equality, diversity and inclusion and health and safety.
- Have recent relevant experience of the occupation/sector at least the same level as the apprentice gained in the last three years or significant experience of the occupation/sector.
- Be able to demonstrate an appropriate level of knowledge of the specialism/sector in which the apprentice is working.
- Have a sound understanding of the Early Years Educator Apprenticeship standard and have no relationship with the apprentice or the employer.
- Have held a role in childcare provision for at least 3 years (and within the last 3 years).
- Have evidence of Continued Professional Development (CPD) to retain occupational competence. This must be evidenced through CVs, CPD logs and any other relevant methods.
- Attend a minimum of one standardisation event annually.
- Have sufficient resources to carry out the role of independent assessor i.e., time and budget.

All independent assessors that meet the above criteria are trained and approved by PAL to ensure that they are capable carrying out end-point assessments in a fair and consistent manner to make reliable judgments.

PAL requires all end-point assessment staff to hold a recognised assessment qualification.

PAL will be responsible for all aspects of the end-point assessment for this standard and will review the evidence against the standard to ensure that the grading criteria have been met for each method of assessment.

Internal quality assurance requirements

PAL requires all quality assurance staff to hold a recognised internal quality assurance qualification. IQA staff are subject to the requirements of an independent assessor as outlined above and must show competence in subject specialist areas to be approved in internal quality assurance. Quality assurers are monitored to undertake continuous professional development, to ensure the currency of their industry specific knowledge and practice.

PAL implements validation and quality assurance policies and processes to ensure that all assessments are robust, fully align with the independent end-point assessment requirements, and are assessed consistently, reliably, and fairly by all independent assessors. Policies can be shared upon request, please contact info@professionalassessment.co.uk. Essential policies are also available via our website.

In accordance with these policies PAL will:

- Develop and maintain a set of assessment tools, to be used by all independent assessors when carrying out assessments.
- Ensure independent assessors for the standard meet with the assessment plan competency requirements.
- Train and develop all independent assessors to ensure reliable and consistent assessment of the standard.
- Apply robust quality assurance and verification processes to assessments, e.g., the use of standard formats, moderation, and standardisation of marking and assessment decisions.
- Apply and follow the appeals and disputes policy and procedure in response to any legitimate appeal or dispute.
- Hold standardisation and moderation activities of assessment process.
- Communicate with third parties any concerns or issues that may impact on assessment activities or outcomes.

External quality assurance requirements

External quality assurance for the Early Years Educator Apprenticeship is undertaken by Ofqual.

Standardisation and moderation

All independent assessors are required to attend standardisation and moderation activities, to ensure the consistency of the assessment approach and to ensure assessment grading is aligned to the relevant assessment plan requirements. Standardisation activities are carried out on an on-going basis such meetings can be in the format of traditional meetings or via hangouts.

IQAs may accompany or 'remote in' with independent assessors carrying out EPA to ensure that it is being administered safely, securely and in line with PAL guidance.

For further information on quality assurance, standardisation and moderation please see our policies, or contact our quality team via info@professionalassessment.co.uk.

Section 3

Grading

All end-point assessment methods must be passed for the end-point assessment to be passed overall.

To achieve a pass, both methods must be passed.

To achieve a distinction, 10 of the distinction criteria in the professional discussion must be achieved, in addition to the pass criteria.

Grades from each method of assessment will be combined as follows:

| Assessment Method 1 Knowledge Test | Assessment Method 2 Professional Discussion underpinned by Portfolio | Overall Grading |
|---|---|------------------------|
| Fail | Fail | Fail |
| Fail | Pass | Fail |
| Pass | Fail | Fail |
| Pass | Pass | Pass |
| Fail | Distinction | Fail |
| Pass | Distinction | Distinction |

Preparing apprentices for end-point assessment

To ensure that apprentices develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that underpin occupational competence, it is recommended that they follow a structured programme of training and development. The period of training and development must include the ESFA minimum requirements for off-the-job training, away from the day-to-day job. Please refer to ESFA guidance and funding rules regarding the definition of what training interventions are permissible under the ruling and responsibilities for recording and evidencing off-job training activities.

To prepare apprentices effectively, it is recommended that employers and/or training providers should:

- Have a good understanding of the apprenticeship standard and the structure and format of the end-point assessment.
- Plan and implement a learning and development programme based on the apprenticeship standard, with regular reviews of progress and readiness, to ensure apprentices develop the required knowledge, skills, and behaviours.
- Use formative assessments and mock assessments to help prepare apprentices for the end-point assessment.

It is recommended, that the on-programme assessment includes:

- Regular performance reviews between the apprentice and a senior manager.
- Opportunities given and evidence generated to cover all assessment criteria.
- Feedback from line manager/employer.

End-point assessment planning and scheduling

Employers and/or training providers must have an agreement in place to conduct end-point assessments with PAL, we regularly check the ESFA portal to review pipeline business and ensure that training providers who wish to work with us, are attached to us, as EPAO for the relevant standard(s).

Apprentices must be registered and booked on to their end-point assessment in sufficient time to allow adequate planning and scheduling of the assessments. PAL encourages communication with all parties, in respect of apprenticeship progress and status and our accounts team will periodically communicate directly with other stakeholders, to seek clarification and updates regarding apprentices' assessment readiness. Once the employer or training provider has confirmed a gateway date, PAL will arrange a planning meeting on receipt and validation of the gateway evidence.

The planning meeting is attended by the employer, apprentice, and PAL. The purpose of the planning meeting is to share information with PAL, to support the assessment process and to agree a plan for the upcoming assessment activities for the apprentices. The independent assessor/PAL representative will agree a plan and schedule for each assessment activity to ensure that all assessment components can be completed within the end-point assessment time. The meeting can be conducted remotely using appropriate technology.

The end-point assessment will be conducted over a period of **3 months** at the end of the apprenticeship. Assessments cannot take place if the apprentice has not served the minimum time in training and we require employers and training providers to check this requirement has been met, before submitting gateway evidence.

Reassessment

PAL's Resit and Retake policy will apply in the event of reassessments, and we will discuss arrangements for such activities with all concerned parties.

Reassessments do incur a charge. All fees are detailed in PAL's pricing policy and outlined in the contracting process.

Reassessments wherever possible will be carried out by the original independent assessor, but if this is not possible PAL reserves the right to assign a different independent assessor.

Resits and retakes

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment methods will be offered the opportunity to take a resit or a retake. A resit does not require further learning, whereas a retake does. Apprentices should have a supportive action plan to prepare for a resit or a retake. The apprentice's employer will need to agree with PAL that either a resit or retake is an appropriate course of action.

An apprentice who fails an assessment method, and therefore the end-point assessment in the first instance, will be required to resit any failed assessment methods only.

Any assessment method resit or retake must be taken during the maximum end-point assessment period, otherwise the entire end-point assessment must be taken again, unless in the opinion of PAL exceptional circumstances apply outside the control of the apprentice or their employer.

Resits and retakes are not offered to apprentices wishing to move from pass to a distinction.

Reassessment requirements for each component

If the apprentice fails the **knowledge test**, they will be required to take another test with a different set of test questions.

If the apprentice fails the **professional discussion**, underpinned by portfolio a further, different professional discussion will be carried out. The apprentice cannot add to their portfolio during this period.

Capping

Where any assessment method has to be resat or retaken, the apprentice will be awarded a maximum end-point assessment grade of pass, unless PAL determines there are exceptional circumstances requiring a resit or retake.

Booking reassessments

The timescale for any reassessment will be agreed on a case-by-case basis, with PAL. As part of that agreement, any reassessments must not provide an apprentice with an unfair advantage over others.

Section 4

Portfolio

A completed portfolio is required to be submitted to PAL as part of the Gateway review.

The portfolio **is not directly assessed** as part of end-point assessment, it provides a structure for the professional discussion.

The independent assessor will review the portfolio evidence and use it to identify areas for the professional discussion, and it is the **professional discussion** that will assess the apprentice's understanding and learning.

The professional discussion points will be constructed to include all pass criteria, while allowing the opportunity for the apprentice to evidence the distinction criteria, either naturally in their responses or using further questions.

The portfolio should be produced during the on-programme period of the apprenticeship, showcasing competence by the apprentice having first learned and applied the knowledge, skills and behaviours set out in the standard.

It is of paramount importance that all the work submitted in the portfolio has been generated by the apprentice or relates directly to the named apprentice. The independent assessor will undertake authenticity checks regarding portfolio evidence as part of the professional discussion assessment.

The apprentice must refer to their portfolio evidence during the professional discussion assessment. To ensure that all evidence is accessible during the assessment PAL would recommend that audio and/or video recordings are supported by a written summary/list of bullet points which the apprentice can easily refer to.

What is the format of the underpinning portfolio?

The portfolio **must contain 10-12** pieces of evidence in total, a qualitative as opposed to quantitative approach is suggested.

The portfolio must evidence all the knowledge, skills and behaviours mapped to the professional discussion method of assessment (see Table 1). **At least one piece of evidence must relate to each of the criteria;** each piece of evidence can be referenced against more than one knowledge, skills, or behavioural requirement for a more holistic approach.

PAL has provided a mapping and employer validation statement record which can be accessed from the Early Years Educator AP04 Padlet. Alternatively, training providers can use their own version, however **it is a mandatory requirement that a mapping document and employer validation statement is submitted with the completed portfolio.**

How can an Early Years Educator prepare for and complete the portfolio?

The employer and training provider will assist the apprentice in producing their portfolio to ensure that it covers all standards outlined in the assessment plan for professional discussion method of assessment.

Please refer to Table 1 for the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be assessed by the professional discussion and evidenced in the portfolio.

The portfolio **must contain**:

- A mapping document which clearly shows how the evidence is mapped against the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours that will be assessed by the interview.
- A statement to confirm that the evidence provided is valid and attributable to the apprentice from the employer.
- At least **two observations** of practice, **maximum 20-minutes in total duration**, which should be video recorded where possible **except where there are safeguarding concerns**, in which case a written account is acceptable.
- Work products produced by the apprentice, for example: observation, assessment and planning documents, risk assessments, communication documents and meeting records.
- Employer feedback/review (maximum of one).
- CPD training records/certificates.

Please note - PAL will not accept a portfolio submitted without a completed mapping document and an employer statement of validity.

Recording of Observations

PAL is aware that use of video recording in the Early Years setting may not be appropriate. Written observation reports by the training provider/employer are an acceptable alternative as noted in the Assessment Plan requirements. Written reports should be accompanied by mapping of the knowledge, skills and behaviours observed.

PAL has provided an observation template on the Early Years Educator AP04 Padlet which can be used if required.

What is best practice in producing the portfolio?

Ensure that the evidence within the portfolio provides coverage against all the standards as outlined in the assessment plan for the professional discussion assessment method (see Table 1). Employers, training providers and apprentices can utilise this guidance to support in documenting and referencing the evidence against all standards required.

A range of evidence, methods and consistency over time is encouraged to show competence. All evidence provided within the portfolio should comply with usual assessment practices, such as:

- Valid Authentic Current Sufficient Reliable (VACSR) confirmed including signatures and dates as appropriate.
- Have detailed annotation to describe the evidence, audio files should be referred to clearly within evidence to show where supporting recordings are located and within recordings the evidence number being discussed should be clearly confirmed.
- Be referenced to the specific criteria being claimed.
- All evidence recordings and files to be clearly named as appropriate to evidence type/number.

Evidence should comply with data protection and GDPR. Ideally, the portfolio evidence should be presented electronically.

Portfolio additional guidance

PAL has provided additional guidance around potential sources of evidence and assessment methods that may be utilised across the portfolio. **This information is for guidance only.** We advise that the portfolio is produced whilst reviewing the professional discussion pass and distinction criteria in **Table 3**.

The mandatory portfolio requirements noted on page 17 **must** be adhered to.

PAL would expect that the two mandatory observations of practice should provide evidence for a substantial amount of the skills and behaviours (**see Table 1**).

It is not required that the apprentice has evidence in all the described formats below, but the portfolio **may** also contain the following items as evidence:

- Written statements by the apprentice (not reflective, but based on actual events which have taken place, or work products).
- Performance reviews between the apprentice and their line manager.
- Professional discussions between the apprentice and their training provider that relate to work undertaken by the apprentice throughout their programme (maximum duration of 20 minutes per discussion).

Possible sources of workplace evidence may include:

- Appraisals
- Training records
- Activity plans written by the apprentice
- Accident/incident reports
- ABC charts and plans
- SEN plans and ILPs
- Risk assessments to include kitchens, sleep room, outside areas
- Professional discussions
- Assignments
- Workplace policies and procedures

Table 1: Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours to be Evidenced in the Portfolio (to underpin the Professional Discussion)

| KSB | |
|-----|--|
| K2 | The significance of attachment and how to promote it effectively. |
| K4 | How children's learning and development can be affected by their stage of development and individual circumstances such as moving school, birth of a sibling, family breakdown and adoption and care. |
| K5 | The important of promoting diversity, equality, and inclusion, fully reflecting cultural differences and family circumstances. |
| K8 | The potential effects of, and how to prepare and support children through, transitions and significant events in their lives. |
| K10 | When a child is in need of additional support search as where a child's progress is less than expected. How to assess within the current early years' education curriculum framework using a range of assessment techniques such as practitioners observing children through their day-to-day interactions and observations shared by parents and/or carers. |
| K12 | The legal requirements and guidance on health and safety, security, confidentiality of information, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. |

| KSB | |
|------------|--|
| K15 | safeguarding policies and procedures, including child protection, recognise when a child is in danger or at risk of abuse, and know how to act to protect them. Types of abuse include domestic, neglect, physical, emotional, and sexual. |
| K16 | How to prevent and control infection throughways such as hand washing, food hygiene practices and dealing with spillages safely. |
| S1 | Analyse and explain how children's learning and development can be affected by their stage of development and individual circumstances such as the needs of children learning English as an additional language from a variety of cultures. |
| S2 | Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. |
| S3 | Plan and lead activities, purposeful play opportunities and educational programmes which include the learning and development areas of current early education curriculum requirements. |
| S4 | Ensure plans fully reflect the stage of development, individual needs and circumstances of children and providing consistent care and responding quickly to the needs of the child. |
| S5 | Provide learning experiences, environments, and opportunities appropriate to the age, stage and needs of individual and groups of children. |
| S6 | Encourage children's participation, ensuring a balance between adult-lead and child-initiated activities. |
| S7 | Engage in effective strategies to develop and extend children's learning and thinking, including sustained shared thinking. |
| S8 | Support and promote children's speech, language, and communication development. |
| S9 | Support children's group learning and socialisation. |
| S10 | Model and promote positive behaviours expected of children such as turn taking and keeping reactions and emotions proportionate. |
| S11 | Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others. |
| S12 | Plan and provide activities to meet additional needs, working in partnership with parents and/or carers and other professionals where appropriate. |
| S13 | Carry out and record observational assessment accurately. |
| S14 | Identify the needs, interests, and stages of development of individual children. |
| S15 | Make use of formative and summative assessment, tracking children's progress to plan next steps and shape learning opportunities. |
| S16 | Discuss children's progress and plan next stages in their learning with the key person, colleagues, parents and/or carers. |
| S17 | Communicate effectively in English in writing and verbally. For example, in the recording of administration of medicine, completing children's observational assessments and communicating with parents and other professionals. |
| S18 | Engage in continuing professional development and reflective practice to improve own skills, practice, and subject knowledge (for example in English, mathematics, music, history, or modern foreign languages). |
| S19 | Plan and carry out physical care routines suitable to the age, stage and needs of the child. |
| S20 | Promote healthy lifestyles for example by encouraging babies and young children to consume healthy and balanced meals, snacks, and drinks appropriate for their age and be physically active through planned and spontaneous activity through the day. |
| S21 | Undertake tasks to ensure the prevention and control of infection for example hand washing, food preparation and hygiene, dealing with spillages safely, safe disposal of waste and using correct personal protective equipment. |
| S22 | Carry out risk assessment and risk management in line with policies and procedures. |

| KSB | |
|------------|--|
| S23 | Maintain accurate and coherent records and reports and share information, only when appropriate, to ensure the needs of all children are met, such as emotional, physical, psychological, and cultural. |
| S24 | Identify and act upon own responsibilities in relation to health and safety, security, confidentiality of information, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. |
| S25 | Work co-operatively with colleagues and other professionals to meet the needs of babies and children and enable them to progress. |
| S26 | Work in partnership with parents and/or carers to help them recognise and value the significant contributions they make to the child's health, wellbeing, learning and development. |
| S27 | Encourage parents and/or carers to take an active role in the child's play, learning and development. |
| B1 | Care and compassion - provide the very best childcare to every child every day combined with the ability to professionally challenge poor practice. |
| B2 | Being team focused - work effectively with colleagues and other professionals and support the learning and development of others through mentoring and sharing of professional expertise and experience. |
| B3 | Honesty, trust, and integrity - develop trust by working in a confidential, ethical and empathetic manner with a common sense and professional attitude. |
| B4 | Commitment to improving the outcomes for children through inspiration and child-centred care and education. |
| B5 | Work in a non-discriminatory way, by being aware of differences and ensuring all children have equal access two opportunities to learn, develop and reach their potential. |
| B6 | working practise take into account fundamental British values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. |

Section 5

Assessment methods

All end-point assessments should take place within the apprentice's usual working hours and will be planned by the PAL representative with the apprentice and line manager at the planning meeting to comply with the assessment plan and business requirements.

Assessment decisions will not be communicated by the independent assessor straight away, they will document and record their assessment decisions. These decisions are then shared for internal quality assurance checks prior to being communicated to the apprentice, employer, and training provider. Employers can access a record of assessment by accessing EPAPro. User guides are available for training providers and employers that detail how reports can be viewed.

Sample Assessment Materials

For this standard, PAL provides:

- A sample professional discussion record with sample questions.
- A sample knowledge test available in a Microsoft Forms format with automatic marking, or a paper-based question paper with mark scheme.

All sample materials can be accessed from the Early Years Educator ST0135/AP04 Padlet.

Assessment method 1 – Knowledge Test

Key facts about the test

The test will comprise of multiple-choice questions (MCQ) which test the knowledge areas of the standard.

The assessment will be comprised of 35 MCQ and the apprentice must choose one correct answer from four responses per question – each question is worth one mark.

The apprentice has 60 minutes to complete the test.

The test is externally marked, and results are communicated to the independent assessor. Typically, apprentices will be formally notified of fail grades only.

The assessment is available in both paper-based and online formats.

Knowledge test grade boundaries

| Grade | Minimum Mark | Maximum Mark |
|-------|--------------|--------------|
| Fail | 0 | 22 |
| Pass | 23 | 35 |

There is no distinction grade for the test.

The apprentice must correctly answer a minimum of 23 questions out of 35 to achieve a pass. Of the 23 questions answered correctly, **these must include all 5 questions relating to K15.**

K15 Safeguarding policies and procedures, including child protection, recognise when a child is in danger or at risk of abuse, and know how to act to protect them. Types of abuse include domestic, neglect, physical, emotional, and sexual.

Knowledge test specifics

The test will contain questions in the following areas of the apprenticeship standard.

Table 2: Knowledge Test Criteria

| Knowledge | |
|------------|--|
| K1 | The expected patterns of children’s development from birth to 5 years and have an understanding of further development from age 5 to 7. |
| K2 | The significance of attachment and how to promote it effectively. |
| K3 | A range of underpinning theories and philosophical approaches to how children learn and develop, and their influence on practice. |
| K4 | How children’s learning and development can be affected by their stage of development and individual circumstances such as moving school, birth of a sibling, family breakdown and adoption and care. |
| K5 | The importance of promoting diversity, equality, and inclusion, fully reflecting cultural differences and family circumstances. |
| K6 | The importance to children’s holistic development of: - speech, language, and communication - personal, social and emotional development and physical development. |
| K7 | Systematic synthetic phonics in the teaching of reading, and a range of strategies for developing early literacy and mathematics. |
| K8 | The potential effects of, and how to prepare and support children through, transitions and significant events in their lives. |
| K9 | The current early education curriculum requirements such as the Early Years Foundation Stage. |
| K11 | The importance of undertaking continued professional development to improve own skills and early years practice. |
| K12 | The legal requirements and guidance on health and safety, security, confidentiality of information, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. |
| K13 | Why health and well-being is important for babies and children. |
| K14 | How to respond to accidents, injuries, and emergency situations. |
| K15 | Safeguarding policies and procedures, including child protection, recognise when a child is in danger or at risk of abuse, and know how to act to protect them. Types of abuse include domestic, neglect, physical, emotional, and sexual. |

How can an Early Years Educator apprentice prepare for the knowledge test?

The training provider should be able to provide opportunities for the apprentice to undertake practice questions and one mock test. PAL strongly recommends that practice questions, and the results of a mock test are used to determine readiness at the gateway review.

The apprentice should:

- Revise/prepare for the test, referring to the knowledge requirements of the standard and undertaking research.
- Complete practice questions.
- Complete and pass a mock test within the allocated test time and under controlled conditions.

Examination conditions

The assessment is a closed book test, and this means the apprentice is not permitted to access any external references or use any resources, materials or take in notes into the test environment. The test must be independently invigilated. The invigilator must be an independent person employed by PAL.

The assessment can be conducted either on or off the employer's premises but must be undertaken under the correct examination conditions to comply with Professional Assessments Ltd Invigilation policy. PAL must verify the suitability of the test venue and the identity of the person taking the test. PAL must ensure appropriate methods to prevent misrepresentation, for example, screen share and 360-degree camera function with an administrator/invigilator where the test is taken remotely.

Some of the key conditions for the assessment are:

- A controlled environment away from day-to-day work pressures, distractions, and influence.
- The environment must have suitable lighting, ventilation, and privacy.
- The apprentice must be undisturbed.
- An exam in progress sign is displayed.
- The apprentice has access to a clock.
- Where group testing is completed, apprentices must have sufficient space and will face in the same direction, the examination must begin at the same time for all apprentices, apprentices who complete their assessment sooner and others must not distract others from their assessments.

The independent assessor will ensure that an appropriate and reliable invigilator is organised to support a controlled and fair assessment. Where there is a conflict of interest, for example a relative working within the establishment, the Conflict of Interest policy will be implemented. The independent assessor will document the conflict and confirm that the invigilator used does not contradict the Invigilation policy.

Where special considerations or reasonable adjustments have been deployed, an audit trail of request and response to that request and justification for any amendments must be cited in the assessment decisions, showing compliance with the Reasonable Adjustments policy.

If there is a breach in the assessment conditions, the invigilator will stop the testing process and the assessment will be voided. Breaches of assessment protocols include:

- The assessment environment becoming unfit for testing, for example: interruptions, if the apprentice is asked to complete a work task or asked questions by a colleague, fire alarm disruption.
- If the apprentice fails to comply with the testing requirements for example: disregards rules for no mobile phones or unauthorised materials, disrupts other apprentices within a group testing environment.
- Equipment malfunction for example: loss of internet to run testing, offline testing malfunction, computer malfunction.

Assessment Method 2 – Professional Discussion underpinned by Portfolio

Key facts about the professional discussion

The professional discussion is a meaningful, in-depth, and two-way dialogue designed to draw out the best of the apprentice's competence for the grading descriptors assigned to this method of assessment (see **Table 3**). The agenda points will act as a base for the apprentice to make detailed and proactive contributions to confirm their competence. It will allow the apprentice to evidence both the knowledge gained and its application through skills and behaviours. The discussion will allow the independent assessor to thoroughly test understanding through open and follow up (clarification) questions.

This method also complements the qualification and the knowledge test, giving apprentices the best possible opportunity to evidence their competence, including beyond the level outlined in the standard (distinction). The underpinning portfolio also includes naturally-occurring evidence, which can be probed in detail to ensure understanding of the KSBs

The independent assessor will review the portfolio evidence in advance of the professional discussion assessment.

Please refer to section 4 of this specification for detailed guidance about the portfolio. The portfolio evidence is NOT directly assessed but is used by the independent assessor as a basis for the agenda questions.

The professional discussion assessment duration is **90 minutes** (+10% at the independent assessor's discretion, to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer).

What is the format of the professional discussion?

The independent assessor will select a range of typically 20 to 25 open ended, competency-based questions from the PAL professional discussion question bank, which draw out the best of the apprentice's competence and excellence. Further questions may be asked for clarification purposes and to allow the apprentice the opportunity to cover the grading descriptors mapped to this method of assessment.

The apprentice and independent assessor will both have access to their own copies of the apprentice's portfolio of evidence throughout the discussion and both can refer to it as needed.

The agenda is not shared with the apprentice, employer, or training provider in advance of the assessment.

How can the professional discussion be undertaken?

The professional discussion can be conducted using a range of media, as appropriate for the apprentice, either via online video conferencing or face to face. Remote assessment is the preferred option.

It is the responsibility of the apprentice, employer, training provider and PAL to ensure accessibility where required.

The professional discussion must be undertaken in a controlled environment (a quiet area, free from distractions and influence) and the apprentice will be assessed on a one-to-one basis to the independent assessor.

Where the assessment is conducted using technology, fair assessment conditions must be maintained. Acceptable means of remote assessment include video conferencing/video calling and must include a two-way visual and audio link. The video call will be recorded and submitted by the independent assessor for internal quality assurance. Where the assessment is completed face to face, the independent assessor should complete a digital recording² of the presentation.

How can an Early Years Educator apprentice prepare for the professional discussion?

- Practice undertaking professional discussions with their training provider, employer, and line manager.
- Practice discussions which cover a range of topics and areas of the standard, ensuring that they can provide full answers and specific examples of tasks/situations they have been involved in.
- Practice reflecting and analysing performance to determine successes and areas for development.
- Review terminology in the assessment plan and consider how this links to their role.
- Practice professional discussions mock agendas with their training provider building up to 60 minutes to support completing them within the given timescale.

How will the professional discussion be graded?

To achieve a pass, the apprentice must achieve ALL of the pass criteria for this method of assessment through their professional discussion responses.

To achieve a distinction, the apprentice must achieve a minimum of 10 of the distinction criteria for this method of assessment through their professional discussion responses, along with all of the pass criteria.

Please see Table 3 below for the pass and distinction criteria for this method of assessment.

Table 3: Professional Discussion Pass and Distinction Grading Criteria

| KSBs | Pass (P) – the apprentice must meet all of the pass criteria below: | Distinction (D) – the apprentice must meet all of the pass criteria plus a minimum of 10 of the distinction criteria below. |
|----------|---|---|
| S10, S11 | P1. Provides evidence of how they have modelled and promoted positive behaviours (for example, turn-taking) in their day-to-day practice and shows evidence of the positive effect on children’s behaviour as a result. | D1. Provides evidence of having used more than two behaviour management strategies to promote positive behaviours, detailing why different strategies were chosen and explaining how these were successful in |

² Note in exceptional cases, PAL may allow an apprentice to be exempt from a digitally recorded professional discussion; a written record would still be required. Any exemption would need to be agreed at the assessment planning meeting and be subject to PAL’s special considerations and reasonable adjustment policy

| KSBs | Pass (P) – the apprentice must meet all of the pass criteria below: | Distinction (D) – the apprentice must meet all of the pass criteria plus a minimum of 10 of the distinction criteria below. |
|---|---|--|
| | | supporting children to manage their own behaviour. |
| S26, S27, K2, K4, K8, S16, B1, B2, B3, B4 | P2. Communicates with and provides information to parents and/or carers to understand how their child is doing; works in partnership with parents and carers to identify where they can help the child's progress and encourages them in the valuable contribution they make to the child's health, well-being, learning and development. Plans the next stages of development with the key person. | D2. Establishes and maintains effective partnership working which leads to improvements within the provision and the outcomes for children and their families. For example: improvement in a child's behaviour over time thanks to effective parental involvement that has improved and contributed to a child's health, wellbeing learning and development. |
| S3, B4 | P3. Able to explain how the planning and leading of activities and purposeful play opportunities have been approached to reflect the learning and development areas of the current early education curriculum requirements, in order to move the children's learning to the next stage of development. | D3. Can evidence how curriculum-based planning and leading of activities has led to accelerated progression in the child's learning, e.g., using observations, planning and documents. |
| S4, K2, K4, K8, S14, B1, B4 | P4. Able to explain the child's stage and how they use this knowledge to approach planning of activities in order to support children's wellbeing and independence, in line with their individual needs and circumstances, providing consistent care and responding to the needs of the child in order to prepare them for the next stage of their learning. | D4. Demonstrates which activities have accelerated children's learning and which types of activities are appropriate for individual children and is able to evidence where it has accelerated children's learning (e.g., using observations and planning documents). |
| S5, S14, K4, B1, B4 | P5. Evidences using age-related expectations, knowledge of stage of development and the individual needs of the child to provide a range of appropriate learning experiences, environments, and opportunities. | D5. Demonstrates having provided varied learning experiences, incorporating new ways of learning and experiences, informed by their knowledge of areas of learning, and evidence how these have successfully engaged, enthused, and motivated children to learn. |
| S6, B1, B4 | P6. Encourages children's participation through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. Plans the type of activity children will engage in, providing opportunities for child participation through a range of experiences. | |
| S9, K2, B1, B4, B6 | P7. Uses their knowledge of the children in their care to plan and support group learning, being sensitive to the needs of each child in order to support socialisation, improving the child's confidence in social situations. | |

| KSBs | Pass (P) – the apprentice must meet all of the pass criteria below: | Distinction (D) – the apprentice must meet all of the pass criteria plus a minimum of 10 of the distinction criteria below. |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| S7, B1, B4 | P8. Uses effective strategies that deepens a child’s understanding. Can explain the benefit of sustained shared thinking and evidence the planning of activities that demonstrate how the strategies are implemented. | D8. Able to evidence more than two strategies used to promote sustained shared thinking for children with different needs/backgrounds e.g., EAL, SEND, disadvantaged, or ethnic minority children. |
| S15, S13, S23, K10, B4 | P9. Completes formative and summative assessments in the required format. Uses assessment data to inform next steps and planning. | D9. Evidences that children have made progress as a result of accurate assessments being completed. |
| S1, K4, K8, K10, B1, B3, B4, B5, B6, | P10. Uses strategies to support children in relation to individual circumstances such as the needs of children with English as an additional language, family breakdown, birth of a sibling. | |
| S23 | P11. Maintains accurate and coherent records and reports. | |
| S13 | P12. Carries out and records appropriate observational assessment accurately across a range of contexts. | D12. Demonstrates an awareness of the different types of observational assessment methods, chooses the most relevant method dependant on the needs of the individual child and understands how it is underpinned by appropriate theory or strategy. |
| S23, K15, B3 | P13. Complies with appropriate safeguarding and data protection policies. Can provide an example of when it would be appropriate to share information. | D13. Has suggestions to improve record keeping in relation to confidentiality of information and/or safeguarding of children and the systems in place to support children and their parents/carers. |
| S25, B1, B2 | P14. Works and contributes effectively within the immediate and wider team to ensure the needs of both babies and children are met over time, evidencing the ability to professionally challenge poor practice. | |
| S12, K8, K10, B5 | P15. Supports children that have additional needs and provides activities that will improve the outcomes for children, working well together with parents/carers and professionals. | D15. Identifies children with additional needs and implements strategies for early intervention that include working effectively with parents/carers and professionals. |
| S24, K15, B1, B2, B3 | P16. Complies with all requirements and expectations for confidentiality of information. Understands the importance of safeguarding the children and the systems in place to support children. Is able to work in partnership with parents/carers on an individual basis. | D16. Has suggestions to improve practice in relation to confidentiality of information and/or safeguarding of children and the systems in place to support children and their parents/carers. |

| KSBs | Pass (P) – the apprentice must meet all of the pass criteria below: | Distinction (D) – the apprentice must meet all of the pass criteria plus a minimum of 10 of the distinction criteria below. |
|----------------|--|---|
| S24, K12, B4 | P17. Actively demonstrates the importance of Health and Safety systems in the workplace. | D17. Has suggestions to improve practice in relation to Health and Safety. |
| S2, K5, B5, B6 | P18. Actively promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice through meeting parents and children’s individual needs and celebrating diversity. | |
| S8, B4 | P19. Effectively supports children to develop their communication and language skills. For example, supports children to express vocabulary, and develop own narratives and explanations. | |
| S19, K16, B1 | P20. Plans and carries out physical care routines to meet a child’s individual needs, including appropriate infection control measures. | |
| S20, K16 | P21. Promotes healthy lifestyles through their activities – e.g., by encouraging babies and young children to consume healthy and balanced meals, snacks, and drinks appropriate for their age, and/or by encouraging them to be physically active through planned and spontaneous activity through the day. | D21. Has an excellent understanding of the menus in the setting, is able to explain why children are offered different types of meals. Plans and carries out activities that promote Healthy Lifestyles and uses strategies to support practitioners in terms of promoting a healthy lifestyle, including barriers to healthy eating. |
| K16, S21 | P22. Completes personal protective equipment tasks to minimise the spread of infection. Understands the importance of following procedures and applying the appropriate measures, for example re handwashing, food hygiene practices and dealing with spillages safely. | D22. Has evidence of providing recommendations of change to support effective infection preventative and hygiene-related activities. |
| S18 | P23. Undertakes ongoing continuous professional development and reflective practice. Actively seeks new opportunities to develop that have a positive impact on the learning outcomes for the children. | |
| S17 | P24. Communicates effectively through written and oral means throughout day-to-day practice. Is able to demonstrate how the communication strategy is altered depending on the target audience, for example parents, carers, professionals, children, and children with additional needs. | |
| S22 | P25. Undertakes risk assessments within the setting. | |

Section 6

Fails/resits and retakes

PAL's Resit and Retake policy and pricing policy are available on request. The request can be made by contacting the account management team via email on info@professionalassessment.co.uk.

The apprentice, employer and training provider will be advised of the outcomes, and our policy works on the specific standard assessment plan's requirements regarding resits and retakes.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating which applies to assignments or other types of written or recorded work completed by apprentices, where the work is meant to have been produced independently and be of their design. Plagiarism is the substantial, unacknowledged incorporation into an apprentice's work of materials derived from published or unpublished work by another person.

PAL takes all incidents of plagiarism seriously, especially those incidents which are a determined and deliberate attempt by the apprentice to gain marks for an assignment/project/report without having done a substantial portion of the work themselves. Copying of work can include work from external published sources, as well as that of other apprentices and work colleagues.

PAL's plagiarism and cheating policy can be accessed on the PAL website or by request to info@professionalassessment.co.uk

Appeals, complaints, maladministration, and malpractice policies - centre/candidate

Where apprentices are unhappy with the results of their end-point assessment, the customer (either the employer or training provider) can enquire about the results. An enquiry means that PAL will invoke its Appeals and Disputes policy and procedure. Please refer to our latest emails.

To make an appeal, please contact: epaappeals@professionalassessment.co.uk

To declare a conflict of interest, please contact: declaration@professionalassessment.co.uk

To report a case of malpractice or maladministration please use one of the following addresses:

- If it relates to the EPAO, please contact: epamalpractice@professionalassessment.co.uk
- If it relates to the apprentice, please contact: apprenticemalpractice@professionalassessment.co.uk
- If it relates to the employer or training provider, please contact: eitpmalpractice@professionalassessment.co.uk

Note - access to these emails received under these addresses is restricted to personnel involved in compliance checks.

In the event of an appeal against the grade awarded PAL will carry out a further review of the evidence to confirm or modify the grade in line with their standard procedures.

Maladministration generally refers to a system or administrative mistake or failure, which has the potential or does not affect the assessment process and as such is reportable.

Malpractice is a grave offence and where proven will result in immediate sanctions, disciplinary action and possible dismissal and notification to the regulator, notifying them of the malpractice and action taken. Malpractice is the

term applied to any intentional and planned act to alter an assessment or quality assurance decision by changing/removing/not recording accurately or augmenting information.

PAL's Maladministration and Malpractice policy can be accessed on the PAL website or by request to info@professionalassessment.co.uk

Reasonable adjustments/considerations/adaptations

Where reasonable adjustments have been requested, the assessor at the assessment planning meeting will finalise any such arrangements. Discussions regarding a reasonable adjustment request should be made at registration and discussed with the EPA team.

It is the responsibility of the training provider or employer, acting on behalf of the apprentice, to make such requests.

Special considerations in respect of the assessment process will be applied, where it does not provide any fair or unfair advantage to the individual apprentice and subsequent assessment outcome and in line with PAL's policy.

PAL's Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustment policy is in place to ensure fair access to assessment and can be accessed on the PAL website or by request to info@professionalassessment.co.uk

Certification

PAL will request the apprenticeship certificate for successful end-point assessments using the Apprenticeship service portal. PAL does not certificate the apprenticeship standard; its role is to request the certificate.

PAL will provide information and reports to the relevant regulator and funding body, in line with their conditions, and as and when requested. Notification to these bodies includes successful achievements and completion. Incomplete assessments are recorded.

Certification requests are made by the EPAO, and the current process is the certificate is sent to the named employer. Employers must advise the EPAO of any specific location or person the certificate should be sent to if this information differs from the apprentice's workplace location and employer contact details provided on the EPAO's booking system.

Cancelling or rescinding results - PAL reserves the right to cancel results if malpractice is identified.

Validity, Authenticity, Relevancy, Currency, and Sufficiency

The evidence presented must meet VARCS requirements.

- **Valid** - is the evidence appropriate to demonstrate the particular knowledge, skills and/or behaviours that it is intended to cover?
- **Authentic** - is the evidence proven to be the apprentice's own work; have any work products or witness testimonies been appropriately authenticated?
- **Relevant** - Is the evidence relevant to the particular knowledge, skills and/or behaviours that it is intended to cover and has a clear judgement?
- **Current** - does the evidence relate to the on-programme element of the apprenticeship and does it demonstrate current competency?
- **Sufficient** - does the evidence match the level of the apprenticeship standard and is the relevant standard covered in full?

PAL will require all apprentices to sign statements of authenticity etc.

Glossary of Terms

EPA – end-point assessment.

IA - independent assessor.

Employer – A representative from the employer, this is usually a direct line manager, head chef or appropriate nominate representative who has supported the apprentice during their apprenticeship.

Gateway review – A meeting involving the apprentice, employer and on programme trainer where the readiness for end-point assessment is determined.

Planning meeting – A meeting involving the apprentice, employer and end-point assessor where the end-point assessments are clarified and planned.

PAL – Professional Assessment Limited.

IQA - Internal quality assurance/assurer, the department and/or personnel who are responsible for the quality of end-point assessment internally to Professional Assessment.

EQA – External quality assurance/assurer, the independent external body who are responsible to regulate the quality of end-point assessment plans, standards and administration of assessment.

Standardisation/moderation – Activity completed by end-point assessors to support validity and fairness in end-point assessment decisions.

Special considerations – Any permanent or temporary disability, specific learning needs or medical condition which may require support during end-point assessment.

Reasonable adjustments – Adjustments made to the assessment process in relation to special considerations, which do not provide an unfair advantage to the apprentice but are designed to reduce any disadvantages within assessment.

Assessment plan – The document produced by the employer group, approved by the EQA which documents the requirements of the standard and assessment methods.

Appendix One – Example Early Years Educator Gateway Declaration Record

Guidance Notes

Determining the readiness of an apprentice for the independent end-point assessment phase of their programme is a very important milestone. A formal review must be held and must include all the relevant people that have responsibility and accountability for the completion of the apprenticeship: the line manager (or a senior manager, as appropriate to the business), the training provider and the apprentice.

The Gateway Declaration Record must be completed once the line manager and training provider have discussed their views on the progress the apprentice has made. The record has been designed to ensure all essential information is captured in a standardised format. If there is additional information which the line manager and/or training provider wish to add supplementary space has been provided.

Completion of this Gateway Declaration Record confirms that the employer and training provider is satisfied the apprentice has fulfilled all requirements to apply for end-point assessment.³

All evidence requested must be provided. If the Gateway requirements below are not met, the Gateway request will be rejected.

All information received will be processed as per GDPR requirements and as detailed in Professional Assessment Ltd.'s Data Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy.

Please ensure the apprentice's name is spelled accurately as this is how it will appear on the results statement/certificate.

| | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Apprentice Name | Click or tap here to enter text. | Apprentice Contact Number | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Apprentice ULIN | Click or tap here to enter text. | Apprentice Email Address | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Line Manager Name | Click or tap here to enter text. | Line Manager Contact Number | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Employer Organisation | Click or tap here to enter text. | Line Manager Email Address | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Training Provider Name | Click or tap here to enter text. | Gateway Review Date | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Start Date of Apprenticeship | Click or tap to enter a date. | End Date of Apprenticeship | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Has the minimum apprenticeship duration of 12 months been met, as defined in the ESFA funding rules? | | | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |

³ Please refer to the latest ESFA funding rules guidance.

Section 1: Confirmation of Evidence

All requirements listed below must be uploaded to EPAPro at point of submitting apprentices to gateway. Apprentices will not be permitted to proceed to their end-point assessment until all evidence is uploaded and approved by PAL.

| Requirement | Achieved by the apprentice | Evidence provided (e.g., PLR, certificate, statement of results) |
|---|--|--|
| Maths Level 2 | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| English Level 2 | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Early Years Educator (Level 3) Qualification | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| First Aid Qualification in line with the requirements of the EYFS Framework | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| *Portfolio of Evidence | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Click or tap here to enter text. |

*Please note – the portfolio of evidence must be submitted with a fully completed mapping document and an employer signed statement to confirm that the portfolio evidence is valid and attributable to the apprentice.

Gateway Review Outcome

If the apprentice is ready for end-point assessment, the following declaration must be signed by all parties and the Gateway Declaration Record submitted to PAL via EPAPro.

Should the apprentice not be ready for end-point assessment a period of additional training and preparation must take place.

Section 2 – Declaration

The end-point assessment period should only start once the employer is satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard, that is to say they are deemed to have achieved occupational competence. In making this decision, the employer may take advice from the apprentice's training provider, but the decision must ultimately be made solely by the employer.

Employer and Training Provider Declaration

I confirm the evidence has been reviewed and a Gateway review has taken place with the apprentice, employer, and training provider to confirm the apprentice's competence and readiness for end point assessment.

I confirm that the apprentice has developed, demonstrated, and achieved the required level of occupational knowledge, skills, and behaviours to satisfy the Gateway requirements in their workplace.

I confirm that the apprentice is eligible for end-point assessment by undertaking the required training in line with the specific Apprenticeship Standard’s requirements, including on and off the job training and experience to meet the full breadth and depth of the Apprenticeship Standard.

| Employer | | Training Provider | |
|-------------------|--|-------------------|--|
| Name | | Name | |
| *Signature | | *Signature | |
| Date | | Date | |

*Supporting evidence to be submitted for electronic signatures, e.g., email confirmation, voice recording.

Apprentice Declaration

I confirm my readiness for the end-point assessment has been discussed with my employer and training provider.

I confirm I am aware of the requirements of the end-point assessment.

I give PAL, as the end-point assessment organisation, my consent to claim the apprenticeship certificate on my behalf on successful completion of the end-point assessment.

| | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|
| Name | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Signature | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Date | Click or tap to enter a date. |

| Any reasonable adjustments required? Please detail below and include any supporting evidence State N/A if not applicable |
|--|
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

| Please note any other pertinent information, as a result of the Gateway review, which has not been recorded elsewhere, but has a bearing on end-point assessment readiness or end-point assessment scheduling |
|--|
| Click or tap here to enter text. |