

End-Point Assessment Guidance and Specification for Operations or Departmental Manager ST0385/AP04 Level 5



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Overview

The end-point assessment in this specification relates to the Operations or Departmental Manager Apprenticeship ST0385 version AP04. The apprenticeship is at Level 5 and is for apprentices who manages teams and/or projects, and achieve operational and departmental goals and objectives, as part of the delivery of their organisation's strategy. They are accountable to a more senior manager or business owner.

The apprentice may be working in the private, public or third sector and in all sizes of organisation. Key responsibilities may include:

- Creating and delivering operational plans.
- Managing projects.
- Leading and managing teams.
- Managing change.
- Financial and resource management.
- Talent management.
- Coaching and mentoring.

Roles may include operations manager, regional manager, divisional manager, department manager and specialist manager.

The typical duration for this apprenticeship is 30 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 mathematics and English 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	Operations or Departmental Manager
Level	5
Standard and Version (AP) Number	ST0385/AP04
LARS Number	104
Named EQA Organisation	External quality assurance for the apprenticeship will be undertaken by Ofqual
Duration of End-Point Assessment	5 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 a minimum of Level 2 Maths and Level 2 English
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"> ➤ Professional Discussion (underpinned by a portfolio of evidence) ➤ Project Proposal, Presentation and Questioning

Introduction

This handbook contains the relevant information and guidance required of apprentices to achieve the end-point assessment for the Operations or Departmental Manager Apprenticeship AP04 and should be used in conjunction with the Operations or Departmental Manager 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.

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.

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

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 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 more operational senior role within organisations requiring operational management.

On completion, apprentices can register as full members with the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and/or the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM), and those with 3 years of management experience can apply for chartered manager status through the CMI.

Who is Professional Assessment (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 a 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 qualifications are accepted. Evidence of qualifications must be in the form of a certificate.

The apprentice must also have a completed portfolio of evidence, and their project proposal title and scope 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 Review Record, an example of which is included in the Appendix of this handbook², 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 record.

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

Ideally, we also ask for the PAL apprenticeship certificate consent form, apprentice ID form and authentication of evidence form (where applicable) to be completed at the Gateway review and submitted. If the documents are not made available at the Gateway review, the independent assessor will collect these documents, as part of the assessment planning process.

The recommended approach during the on-programme assessment (month 1-30) 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.

² The gateway form may change in design and content based, on revisions to standards- for the latest document please refer to the relevant Padlet, that PAL will have provided Training Providers or can provide directly to employers and apprentices

- 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.

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:

- Professional Discussion, underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
- Project Proposal, Presentation and Questioning.







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.

To achieve a pass overall, the apprentice must achieve all the pass criteria in all assessment methods. To achieve a distinction overall, the apprentice must achieve all the pass criteria and all the distinction criteria in all assessment methods. All assessment methods must be passed for the end-point assessment to be passed overall.

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

Note – the assessments can be taken in any order.

Apprentice/Employer/Training Provider		PAL
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.
Gateway review held between the training provider, employer and apprentice to confirm assessment readiness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence provided that English and maths requirements have been achieved. ▪ Completed Portfolio submitted with mapping document. ▪ Project Proposal title and scope submitted. (A maximum of 500 words). 		<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.
PAL contacts employer and apprentice. PAL undertakes assessment planning meeting with apprentice and employer and assessment schedule agreed.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ID and certificate request confirmation confirmed. ▪ Assessment plan completed. Dates will be agreed for all methods of assessment to meet with the Operations or Departmental Manager assessment plan and to allow for reasonable resit or retake activities within the assessment window, wherever possible.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of the portfolio and preparation of agenda questions for the Professional Discussion.
Apprentice undertakes the Professional Discussion assessment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Apprentice must be given 2 weeks' notice, (please note the agenda will not be shared in advance). ▪ Apprentice to have a copy of the portfolio to refer to during the assessment. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional Discussion assessment which must last 60 minutes (10% can be added at the independent assessor's discretion to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer). ▪ 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.
Apprentice submits the Project Proposal, Presentation and supporting materials to PAL: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4000 words (+/- 10%) plus supporting appendices. ▪ Project proposal based on post gateway work to be submitted within 12 weeks from the title and scope acceptance. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assessment of the Project Proposal. ▪ Preparation of questions for the Presentation assessment.

<p>Apprentice undertakes the Project Proposal Presentation and Questioning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprentice must be given 2 weeks' notice of the assessment date. 		<p>Assessment of the presentation and questioning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 minutes – typically 20 minutes for the presentation and 40 minutes for the questioning. An overall discretionary 10% extra time can be added by the independent assessor. Assessment graded across all assessment method components.
		<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.
<p>Employer informed of the outcome of end-point assessment via email from epasupportservices@professionalassessment.co.uk Apprentice and training provider are copied in to the communication.</p>		<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 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 required to:

- Have knowledge and recent relevant experience of the occupation/sector at Level 5 or above gained within the last five years or significant experience of the occupation/sector, which must be maintained through ongoing CPD.
- Have the competence to assess the apprentice at this level and hold any required qualifications and experience in line with the above.
- Must 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.
- Produce exemplar materials, which can be used to add further clarity and establish guidelines for assessment against the stated criteria of the standard.
- 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 Operations or Departmental Manager 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.

Grading

This apprenticeship includes pass and distinction grades with the final grade based on the apprentice's combined performance in each assessment activity.

To achieve a pass overall, the apprentice must achieve all the pass criteria in all assessment methods. To achieve a distinction overall, the apprentice must achieve all the pass criteria and all of the distinction criteria in both assessment methods.

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

Assessment Method 1 Professional Discussion (underpinned by a portfolio of evidence)	Assessment Method 2 Project Proposal, presentation, and questioning	Overall Grading
Fail	Fail	Fail
Fail	Pass	Fail
Pass	Fail	Fail
Fail	Distinction	Fail
Distinction	Fail	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Pass
Distinction	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 a minimum of 20 per cent 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:

- Registration with a relevant professional body to provide access to management resources, wider networks, and CPD activities.
- Regular performance reviews between the apprentice and a senior manager.
- Opportunities given and evidence generated to cover all assessment criteria.
- Feedback from line manager, peers, and direct reports (including 180/360-degree feedback or equivalent).

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, in order 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 5 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 end-point assessment in the first instance, will be required to resit or retake any failed assessment method only.

The timescales for a resit/retake are agreed between the employer and PAL. A resit is typically taken within 3 months of the EPA outcome notification. The timescale for a retake is dependent on how much retraining is required and is typically taken within 6 months of the EPA outcome notification.

All assessment methods must be taken within a 6 month period, otherwise the entire EPA will need to be resat/retaken.

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

Reassessment requirements for each component

For assessment method 1 – Professional Discussion, underpinned by a portfolio of evidence: if the apprentice's evidence does not meet the requirements to achieve the pass descriptors for the professional discussion in their first assessment attempt, a further, different professional discussion will be carried out. The apprentice cannot add to their portfolio during this period.

For assessment method 2 – Project Proposal, Presentation and Questioning: If the apprentice fails the project proposal assessment method, they will be required to amend the project proposal and presentation in line with the independent assessor's feedback. The apprentice will be given 3 weeks to rework and submit the amended project proposal and presentation. The independent assessor will have 2 weeks to review the project proposal and presentation and the apprentice will have 5 days' notice of the presentation date.

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.

Portfolio of evidence

A completed portfolio of evidence 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 portfolio should be produced over a period from the commencement 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.

What is the format of the underpinning portfolio?

The portfolio of evidence will typically comprise of 20 discrete pieces of evidence, a qualitative as opposed to quantitative approach is suggested.

The portfolio of evidence must evidence all the knowledge, skills and behaviours mapped to this assessment method (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 Operations or Departmental Manager 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 operations or departmental manager 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.

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

The portfolio **cannot contain**:

- Any reflective accounts or any methods of self-assessment/self-evaluation by the apprentice, except for evidence for S8.1.

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

- Workplace documentation/records with clear annotation.
- Written statements by the apprentice (not reflective, but based on actual events which have taken place, or work products).
- Reports created by the apprentice or evidence of reports the apprentice uses to support their operations or departmental manager function such as project plans, reports, minutes of meetings.
- Presentations delivered by the apprentice in briefings, training sessions, client meetings or in-house meetings.
- Performance reviews between the apprentice and their line manager.
- Observations of performance documented by the training provider or employer.
- Video/Audio evidence (maximum duration of 20 minutes).
- Professional discussions between the apprentice and their training provider that relate to work, projects and assignments undertaken by the apprentice throughout their programme, maximum 20 minute duration (Please note that professional discussion evidence can impact on the ease of reference to the portfolio during the professional discussion assessment activity).
- Annotated photographs.
- Witness Testimony, focussing on direct observation, avoiding opinion.
- Projects and reports, led by the apprentice, where the apprentice has been highly involved in the innovation of service/products or supported continuous improvement or the introduction of new processes, procedures, and policies.
- Feedback from the line manager, direct reports and peers, appraisals, performance reviews.
- CPD log or personal development plan.

Note: to achieve a distinction the apprentice needs to demonstrate analysis, justification and evaluation during the professional discussion. A poorly constructed portfolio of evidence may impact the prospect of a distinction as the agenda points will be based on the evidence content.

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 through the use of further questions.

The apprentice and independent assessor must be able to refer to the portfolio during the professional discussion assessment and therefore evidence should be user-friendly and quick to reference.

What is best practice in producing the portfolio of evidence?

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.

The evidence provided within the portfolio **must** be validated by the employer to confirm the authenticity and validity.

A range of evidence, methods and consistency over time is encouraged to show competence at a high level. 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. Audio/video files should be limited to a 20-minute duration.
- Be referenced to the specific criteria being claimed.
- All evidence recordings and files to be clearly named as appropriate to evidence type/number.

Where evidence has been developed over time, this should be explained in the assessment annotation and description.

It may be appropriate to reference projects as a complete piece of work; where this is done it should be made clear which evidences specifically within a project are showing the specific skills, knowledge and behaviours referenced.

Observations of performance may be completed and documented to provide evidence of the apprentice's competence in action; these should be detailed and document the specific skills, knowledge and behaviours displayed by the apprentice.

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

Table 1: Mapping of Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours for Assessment Method 1 – Professional Discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

Area of Standard	Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
Operational Management	K1.3 Understand operational business planning techniques, including how to manage resources, development of sales and marketing plans, setting targets and monitoring performance
	K1.6 Understand data security and management, and the effective use of technology in an organisation.
	S1.4 Creation and delivery of operational plans, including setting KPIs, monitoring performance against plans
	B1.1 Drive to achieve in all aspects of work
	B1.2 Demonstrates resilience and accountability
	B1.4 Seeks new opportunities.
Leading People	K4.1 Understand different leadership styles, how to lead multiple and remote teams and manage team leaders
	K4.2 Know how to motivate and improve performance, supporting people using coaching and mentoring approaches
	K4.3 Understand organisational cultures and diversity and their impact on leading and managing change.
	K4.4 Know how to delegate effectively.
	S4.1 Able to communicate organisational vision and goals and how these to apply to teams
	S4.2 Support development through coaching and mentoring and enable and support high performance working
Managing People	K5.1 Know how to manage multiple teams and develop high performing teams.
	K5.2 Understand performance management techniques, talent management models and how to recruit and develop people.
	S5.1 Able to manage talent and performance.
	S5.2 Develop, build and motivate teams by identifying their strengths and enabling development within the workplace.
	S5.3 Able to delegate and enable delivery through others.
	B2.1 Open, approachable, authentic, and able to build trust with others
Building Relationships	K6.1 Understand approaches to partner, stakeholder and supplier relationship management including negotiation, influencing, and effective networking.
	K6.2 Knowledge of collaborative working techniques to enable delivery through others and how to share best practice
	K6.3 Know how to manage conflict at all levels.
	S6.1 Able to build trust and use effective negotiation and influencing skills and manage conflict.
	S6.2 Able to identify and share good practice and work collaboratively with others both inside and outside of the organisation.
	B1.3 Determination when managing difficult situations
	B2.2 Seeks the views of others and values diversity.
Communication	K7.1 Understand interpersonal skills and different forms of communication and techniques (verbal, written, non-verbal, digital) and how to apply them appropriately
	S7.2 Able to chair meetings and present using a range of media.
	S7.3 Use of active listening, and able to challenge and give constructive feedback.
	B3.3 Positive and adaptable, responding well to feedback and need for change.
Self-Awareness	K8.1 Understand own impact and emotional intelligence.
	K8.2 Understand different learning and behaviour styles.
	S8.1 Able to reflect on own performance, working style and its impact on others.
	S9.1 Able to create a personal development plan.
	B4.1 Sets an example, and is fair, consistent and impartial.
	B4.2 Open and honest.
	B4.3 Operates within organisational values

Additional guidance

PAL has provided further guidance around possible evidence sources and assessment methods that can be utilised across the portfolio – see Table 2 below. This information is for guidance only. We have not provided separate evidence sources for the behaviours to be achieved. PAL also advises that the portfolio is produced whilst reviewing the pass and distinction criteria in Table 3.

Table 2: Potential Portfolio Evidence Sources

Standard Criteria	Potential Evidence Sources
<p>Operational Management – Skills S1.4 Creation and delivery of operational plans, including setting KPIs and monitoring performance against plans.</p>	<p>For S1.4 the apprentice must demonstrate how they have created and delivered operational plans, the plans could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic change. • A new project. • A new operating strategy. • An operational plan for a department. • An annual plan for your team. <p>Evidence could be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Product evidence with annotation such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of meetings. • Training records. • Emails. • Quality and compliance audits. • Management and financial reports. • Examples of performance reviews (team/individual), linking to operational KPIs. • Evidence to demonstrate success such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual report for your team. ○ Your own annual appraisal. ➤ Observation record completed by the training provider of meetings, shift briefings, monitoring activities etc. ➤ Witness testimony, focusing on activities completed and skills demonstrated (avoiding opinion).
<p>Operational Management – Knowledge K1.3 Understand operational business planning techniques, including how to manage resources, development of sales and marketing plans, setting targets and monitoring performance. K1.6 Understand data security and management, and the effective use of technology in an organisation.</p>	<p>For K1.3 the apprentice must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of business planning techniques to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing resource. • Development of sales and marketing plans. • Setting targets. • Monitoring performance. <p>In order to achieve the distinction criteria the apprentice must be able to provide justification of the purpose of operational business planning and sales and marketing plans and the importance of managing resource by setting key targets and monitoring performance against them.</p> <p>For K1.6 the apprentice must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of data security and management, including the effective use of technology. In the professional discussion assessment, the apprentice is required to describe how they have used this knowledge and understanding to support creating, delivering, driving and achieving operational plans.</p> <p>Evidence could be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Detailed knowledge and understanding demonstrated through annotation of product evidence. ➤ Detailed knowledge and understanding demonstrated through written accounts. ➤ Questioning.

Standard Criteria	Potential Evidence Sources
<p>Leading People – Skills</p> <p>S4.1 Able to communicate organisational vision and goals and how these apply to teams.</p> <p>S4.2 Support development through coaching and mentoring and enable and support high performance working.</p>	<p>For S4.1 the apprentice must evidence how they have communicated the organisational vision and goals and how these apply to teams. To include operational plans, target setting, KPIs and priorities for the teams.</p> <p>Evidence could be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Product evidence with annotation such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes/records • Appraisals/performance reviews • Emails • Shift briefings • Newsletters etc. ➤ Observation record completed by the training provider on activities such as team meetings/briefings. ➤ Witness testimony, focusing on activities completed (avoiding opinion). <p>For S4.2 the apprentice must evidence how they have used coaching and mentoring to support development and how they have enabled and supported a high performing team. Application of a range of coaching and mentoring techniques should be evidenced.</p> <p>In order to meet the distinction criteria the apprentice must be able to analyse the effectiveness of different coaching and mentoring techniques they have used – to include both office based and remote team members and justify their use of techniques.</p> <p>Evidence could be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Product evidence with annotation such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A coaching/mentoring record- showing the needs agreed, support/development identified and achieved, time period and result. • Training records which demonstrate clear links between development and performance outcomes. ➤ Witness testimony from the coachee focussing on activities and skills demonstrated (avoiding opinion). ➤ Recording/observation of a coaching session.
<p>Leading People - Knowledge</p> <p>K4.1 Understand different leadership styles, how to lead multiple and remote teams and manage team leaders.</p> <p>K4.2 Know how to motivate and improve performance, supporting people using coaching and mentoring approaches.</p> <p>K4.3 Understand organisational cultures and diversity and their impact on leading and managing change.</p> <p>K4.4 Know how to delegate effectively.</p>	<p>For K4.1 the apprentice must demonstrated understanding of different leadership styles, how to lead multiple and remote teams and manage team leaders.</p> <p>Knowledge should be demonstrated to enable the apprentice within the professional discussion assessment to evaluate different leadership styles and consider the benefits and potential negatives of these to include adapting styles and when certain styles are more appropriate than others.</p> <p>The apprentice must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how these styles are used to lead multiple and remote teams and manage team leaders.</p> <p>For K4.2 the apprentice must demonstrate knowledge of motivation, coaching and mentoring approaches and techniques and how these can support people and improve performance. It is expected that a range of techniques will be evidenced. In order to achieve the distinction criteria, the apprentice must be able to analyse these techniques and consider how they can be best used across office based and remote teams.</p> <p>For K4.3 The apprentice must demonstrate understanding of organisational cultures and diversity and the impact these can have on leading and managing change, The apprentice must be able to discuss how they have used their knowledge of the impact of these to manage change and deliver on operational plans.</p>

Standard Criteria	Potential Evidence Sources
	<p>For K4.4 the apprentice must have a robust understanding of delegation, what it is and how to approach this, including key considerations. They must consider how this enables delivery through others and within the discussion are expected to explain how they have applied this in their work.</p> <p>Evidence could be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Detailed knowledge and understanding demonstrated through product of work annotation ➤ Detailed knowledge and understanding demonstrated through written accounts. ➤ Responses to knowledge questions. <p>The apprentice is encouraged to link knowledge and skills to demonstrate application in the workplace.</p> <p>It is expected that knowledge will be demonstrated of a range of leadership styles, motivational techniques, coaching and mentoring techniques and workplace cultures.</p>
<p>Managing People – Skills</p> <p>S5.1 Able to manage talent and performance.</p> <p>S5.2 Develop, build and motivate teams by identifying their strengths and enabling development within the workplace.</p> <p>S5.3 Able to delegate and enable delivery through others.</p>	<p>For S5.1 the apprentice must evidence how they have recruited, managed and developed team members, applying performance management techniques and talent management models.</p> <p>Evidence could be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Product evidence with annotation, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents that show the setting personal goals and SMART objectives with team members, providing feedback, monitoring, holding regular meetings, training, reviews, feedback, coaching etc. i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Appraisal documents. ○ Development plans. ○ Coaching records. ➤ Witness testimony, focusing on activities completed (avoiding opinion). ➤ Observation record completed by the training provider, activities such as team meetings, training sessions etc. <p>For S5.2 The apprentice must evidence how they have developed, built, and motivated teams by identifying their strengths and enabling development within the workplace. Links should be made to performance outcomes.</p> <p>Evidence could be the same evidence provided for S5.1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Product evidence with annotation, along with examples of different motivational techniques, e.g., recognition, reward, enrichment, consultation, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWOT analysis or other analysis the apprentice has completed on the team/department. • Records of team meetings where performance/ development/ reward is discussed. • Recording of a team meeting/training session with a team. ➤ Witness testimony of line manager or team members (focussed on activities and skills). ➤ The apprentice’s personal appraisals documents.

Standard Criteria	Potential Evidence Sources
	<p>For S5.3 the apprentice must evidence delegation of work and enabling delivery through others.</p> <p>Evidence of could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Annotated product evidence such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work records of communicating the task - emails, meeting records etc. ➤ Observation record completed by the training provider; detailing delegation activities completed. ➤ Witness testimony of line manager or the person the work was delegated to (focussing on activities and skills).
<p>Managing People – Knowledge</p> <p>K5.1 Know how to manage multiple teams and develop high performing teams.</p> <p>K5.2 Understand performance management techniques, talent management models and how to recruit and develop people.</p>	<p>For K5.1 the apprentice must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how to manage multiple teams and develop high performing teams.</p> <p>In order to achieve the distinction criteria, the apprentice must be able to analyse the problems associated with managing multiple teams and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of strategies to deal with the problems.</p> <p>For K5.2 the apprentice must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of performance management techniques, talent management models and how to recruit and develop people. It is expected that knowledge and understanding of a range of techniques and models will be demonstrated.</p> <p>Evidence could be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Detailed knowledge and understanding demonstrated through product of work annotation. ➤ Detailed knowledge and understanding demonstrated through written accounts. ➤ Responses to knowledge questions. <p>The apprentice is encouraged to link knowledge and skills to demonstrate application in the workplace.</p>
<p>Communication – Skills</p> <p>S7.2 Able to chair meetings and present using a range of media.</p> <p>S7.3 Use of active listening, and able to challenge and give constructive feedback.</p>	<p>For S7.2 the apprentice must evidence having chaired meetings and presented using a range of media. To include using a range of forms of communication.</p> <p>Evidence of chairing meetings could be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Product evidence with annotation, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agendas and invites. • Minutes. • Action points. ➤ Observation record completed by the training provider; detailing activities completed in chairing meetings. ➤ Witness testimony of line manager (focussing on activities and skills). ➤ Video evidence of chairing meetings. <p>Evidence of and presenting using a range of media could be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Product evidence with annotation, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports. • Presentations. • Emails. • Data analysis.

Standard Criteria	Potential Evidence Sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Observation record completed by the training provider, detailing presenting activities. ➤ Witness testimony of line manager detailing presentation activities (focussing on activities and skills). ➤ Video evidence of presentation. <p>For S7.3 the apprentice must evidence the use of active listening, challenging others and providing constructive feedback.</p> <p>Evidence could be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Product evidence with annotation, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching records. • One to one/review records. • Team meeting records. • Performance review records. ➤ Observation record completed by the training provider. ➤ Witness testimony of line manager or (focussing on activities and skills).
<p>Communication – Knowledge K7.1 Understand interpersonal skills and different forms of communication and techniques (verbal, written, non-verbal, digital) and how to apply them appropriately.</p>	<p>For K7.1 the apprentice must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of interpersonal skills and communication techniques and forms, to include appropriate and effective application.</p> <p>In order to achieve the distinction criteria, the apprentice must be able to analyse the barriers to communication and demonstrate knowledge of how to overcome these barriers.</p> <p>Evidence could be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Detailed knowledge and understanding demonstrated through product of work annotation ➤ Detailed knowledge and understanding demonstrated through written accounts. ➤ Responses to knowledge questions. <p>The apprentice is encouraged to link knowledge and skills to demonstrate application in the workplace.</p> <p>It is expected that knowledge and understanding of a range of skills and techniques will be demonstrated.</p>
<p>Self-Awareness - Skills S8.1 Able to reflect on own performance, working style and its impact on others. S9.1 Able to create a personal development plan.</p>	<p>For S8.1 the apprentice must evidence how they have reflected on their own performance, working style and emotional intelligence to include the impact on others.</p> <p>For S9.1 the apprentice must evidence their personal development plan which they must have created. They must be able to discuss how their awareness of own learning and behaviour styles has been used to inform their personal development plan.</p> <p>Evidence could be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Product evidence with annotation, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraisals or reviews where they have reflected on their performance over time and made conclusions on strengths, weaknesses and improvements required to their working style or performance in their role. • Feedback gathered from others and a SWOT analysis from this leading to a personal development plan or CPD log. • Personal development plan.

Standard Criteria	Potential Evidence Sources
<p>Self-Awareness – Knowledge</p> <p>K8.1 Understand own impact and emotional intelligence.</p> <p>K8.2 Understand different learning and behaviour styles.</p>	<p>For K8.1 the apprentice must demonstrate awareness and understanding of their own emotional intelligence and the impact they can have on others.</p> <p>For K8.2 the apprentice must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of different learning and behaviour styles and be able to demonstrate how their knowledge of these has been applied to create their own personal development plan.</p> <p>In order to achieve the distinction criteria, the apprentice must be able to evaluate a range of learning styles to cover a range of situations.</p> <p>Evidence could be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Detailed knowledge and understanding demonstrated through product of work annotation. ➤ Detailed knowledge and understanding demonstrated through written accounts. ➤ Responses to knowledge questions. <p>The apprentice is encouraged to link knowledge and skills to demonstrate application in the workplace.</p>

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.

Assessment method 1 - Professional Discussion (underpinned by a portfolio of evidence)

Key facts about the professional discussion

The apprentice will receive a minimum of two weeks’ notice of the professional discussion date, allowing the independent assessor a minimum of 5 days to review the submitted portfolio of evidence, and prepare the agenda for 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 explore their own practice and experiences to demonstrate occupational competence, please note the agenda will not be shared in advance.

The professional discussion is designed to assess the following areas of the Operations or Departmental Manager Standard:

- Operational Planning and Management.
- Managing Teams.
- Communication Skills.
- Personal and Professional Development.

The professional discussion assessment duration is **60 minutes** (+10% at the independent assessor's discretion, to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer).

The assessment carries a 50% weighting of the overall assessment.

What is the format of the professional discussion?

The independent assessor will select a minimum of 6 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 recording³ of the presentation.

How can an operations or departmental manager 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.

³ 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

- Understand the level of detail they are being asked to provide during discussions - ensure they are familiar with the assessment verbs and can differ detail between providing explanations, analysis and evaluation.
- 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 descriptors for this method of assessment through their professional discussion responses.

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

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

Table 3: Professional Discussion Pass and Distinction Grading Criteria

	Pass – the apprentice must meet all of the pass descriptors below:	Distinction – the apprentice must meet all of the distinction descriptors below:
Operational Planning and Management	<p>Describes how they used their knowledge and understanding of data security and business planning techniques, to support their organisation in creating and delivering operational plans, which include setting targets and monitoring performance against plans. (K1.3, K1.6, S1.4)</p> <p>Explains how they communicated their team's role in their organisation's vision and goals, and how they used their knowledge of the impact that organisational culture and diversity has on leading and managing change to drive, achieve and deliver operational plans. (K4.3, S4.1, B1.1)</p> <p>Describes when they have shown resilience and accountability when seeking new opportunities for their organisation. (B1.2, B1.4)</p>	<p>Justifies the purpose of operational business planning and sales and marketing plans, and why they manage resources by setting key targets and monitoring performance against them. (K1.3)</p>
Managing Teams	<p>Evaluates different leadership styles, methods to lead multiple and remote teams and manage team leaders and explains how they have adapted their preferred style to ensure they are open, approachable, and able to build trust. (K4.1, B2.1)</p> <p>Discusses how they have recruited, developed, or managed team members, and explains the performance management techniques and talent management models that underpin this. (K5.2, S5.1)</p> <p>Identifies strengths in their team and adopts coaching and mentoring techniques to develop, build, enable and motivate the team and support high performance working. Uses delegation to enable delivery through others and describes</p>	<p>Analyses the problems associated with managing multiple teams and can describe known strategies for dealing with them. (K5.1)</p> <p>Analyses the effectiveness of different coaching and mentoring techniques that they used for office-based and remote team members and justifies their use of the techniques. (K4.2, S4.2)</p>

	Pass – the apprentice must meet all of the pass descriptors below:	Distinction – the apprentice must meet all of the distinction descriptors below:
	strategies to manage multiple teams. (K4.2, K4.4, K5.1, S4.2, S5.2, S5.3)	
Communication Skills	<p>Describes how they used interpersonal skills including active listening, when challenging and giving constructive feedback and seeking the views of others ensuring they valued diversity. Describes when they effectively used different forms of communication when chairing meetings or presenting.</p> <p>(K7.1, S7.2, S7.3, B2.2) Describes when they have been able to build trust and effective relationships when identifying and sharing good practice while working collaboratively both within their organisation and externally. Explains how they used effective negotiation and influencing skills and demonstrated determination to manage conflict.</p> <p>(K6.1, K6.2, K6.3, S6.1, S6.2, B1.3) Justifies how they remained positive and adaptable when responding to feedback in the need for change. (B3.3)</p>	<p>Evaluates known influencing and negotiating theories and models and the effectiveness of these within their organisation when managing the supplier relationship. (K6.1)</p> <p>Analyses barriers to communication and how they are overcome. (K7.1)</p>
Personal and Professional Development	<p>Explains how they used their knowledge of their own learning and behavioural styles, to create their own personal development plan. (K8.2, S9.1)</p> <p>Reflects on their own performance, working style and emotional intelligence and the impact they have had on others. (K8.1, S8.1)</p> <p>Describes how they operate within their organisation's values and are a role model who sets an example to others by being open, honest, fair, consistent, and impartial. (B4.1, B4.2, B4.3)</p>	Evaluates a range of known learning styles in different situations. (K8.2)

Once the professional discussion has taken place the independent assessor will assign a grade for this method of assessment. This will be communicated at the end of the assessment process.

Assessment Method 2 – Project Proposal, Presentation and Questioning

Key facts about the project proposal

The project proposal is designed to demonstrate the application of knowledge, skills, and behaviours as they would occur in occupational practice. It is a significant and relevant piece of work that thoroughly tests both higher and lower order knowledge, skills and behaviours and it must have a real business benefit.

In order to meet the requirements, the project is likely to be based on an operational management problem that will require change to be made and a period of time to address. Attention is required to ensure that the project proposal submission is of a Level 5 standard in terms of depth and complexity.

The project proposal involves the apprentice completing a relevant and defined piece of work post gateway that has a real business benefit, therefore the project requires a clear start and planned end, with measurable outcomes and formal documentation, the project proposals should not be based on “business as usual” activities.

The employer will be required to confirm a real business benefit of the project proposal title and scope; the apprentice can support this through providing an outline of the current situation and the measures and milestones which will be used to demonstrate progress.

This assessment method has two components:

- 1) A written project proposal completed post gateway – other forms of media can be used to support the written project proposal, these can be submitted in the appendices and will not count towards the word-count.
- 2) A presentation with questioning.

The evidence from the project proposal, presentation and responses to questions will be assessed holistically,

What is the format of the project proposal?

The project proposal is a 4000 word (+/- 10%) written document that can be either paper-based or electronic and may be based on any of the following:

- The need to review and implement a change plan to improve efficiency within the workplace.
- The continuous improvement review of a current process, service, or product to ensure it is still fit for purpose and meets the current needs of the business.
- The need to implement a direct saving (e.g., percentage decrease in direct costs, reduction in headcount) across their team, department or organisation following a reforecast activity.

*This list is not exhaustive.

The word count includes tables and graphs and excludes references and appendices/annexes/supporting documentation.

The apprentice should agree the **title and scope** of the project proposal with their employer, and this must be submitted to PAL as part of the Gateway evidence. **The title and scope for the project proposal has a maximum of 500 words.** The employer is responsible for ensuring it has a real business benefit and PAL is responsible for confirming that it provides sufficient opportunity for coverage of the knowledge skills and behaviours mapped to this assessment method.

All other work on the project proposal, other than the title and scope, must be completed post gateway.

Following the independent assessor's approval of the title and scope the apprentice then has a maximum of 12 weeks to write and submit their project proposal and presentation materials.

If the title and scope is rejected at Gateway by the independent assessor, the apprentice will be given a maximum of 5 working days to review and resubmit.

Important Information:

The project proposal will be a detailed proposal that will **enable** the project to be fully implemented.

The implementation of the project proposal must begin during the end-point assessment period and ensure that the grading descriptors mapped to S1.2, S2.1, S2.2 and S3.1 can be assessed, and progress against these skills must be discussed during the presentation. Please refer to Table 4 for the grading descriptors.

The project proposal does not need to be fully implemented during the end-point assessment period, however the project proposal and presentation need to confirm what aspects of have been implemented up to the time of submission of evidence to the independent assessor.

The current status of the project proposal should also be included as an appendix/annex in the project proposal report.

Apprentices must include evidence of leadership support of the project in the appendix/annex.

The evidence provided must be valid and attributable to the apprentice; the project proposal must contain a statement from the employer confirming this.

In order to ensure the project proposal is robust and sufficiently covers the knowledge, skills and behaviours, it should include:

- An executive summary.
- An introduction.
- The scope of the proposed project (including key performance indicators).
- Objectives.
- A project plan (including Gantt charts, risk/issue/mitigation, responsibility assignment matrix (RACI matrix)).
- How the proposed project outcomes will be achieved.
- Comment on the validity of the methods of analysis, data interpretation and data presentation used.
- Financial budgeting and resources.
- Proposed implementation plan including communications and stakeholder plans.
- Advise whether an alternative approach might be considered.
- Advise upon whether it could be completed in a more cost or time efficient manner.
- Recommendations and conclusions.

The project proposal must include, in addition to the word count, an annex showing how the project proposal maps to all of the knowledge skills and behaviours that are being assessed by this method, PAL has provided a template and mapping document which can be used to support this which can be downloaded from the Padlet.

The completed and signed title and scope may be included as an appendix/annex to the project proposal report.

Additional materials/appendices can be presented in a range of suitable formats, to include audio/video evidence and use of platforms such as Padlets or other collaborative tools, providing PAL can access such evidence and the apprentice and employer are satisfied sharing such evidence in this fashion is secure.

The apprentice should complete their project proposal unaided. All evidence and research (for example quotes or statistics) used within the project must be correctly cited to acknowledge the source with clear referencing, to avoid plagiarism.

The independent assessor will review and assess the project proposal holistically together with the other components of this assessment method. The independent assessor will make all grading decisions.

The knowledge, skills and behaviours mapped to this method of assessment can be found in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Mapping of Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours for Assessment Method 2 – Project Proposal, Presentation and Questioning

Area of Standard	Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs)
Operational Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ K1.1 Understand operational management approaches and models, including creating plans to deliver objectives and setting KPIs. K1.2 Understand business development tools (e.g. SWOT), and approaches to continuous improvement. ➤ K1.4 Knowledge of management systems, processes and contingency planning. ➤ K1.5 Understand how to initiate and manage change by identifying barriers and know how to overcome them. ➤ S1.1 Able to input into strategic planning and create plans in line with organisational objectives. ➤ S1.2 Support, manage and communicate change by identifying barriers and overcoming them. ➤ S1.3 Demonstrate commercial awareness, and able to identify and shape new opportunities. ➤ S1.5 Producing reports, providing management information based on the collation, analysis and interpretation of data.
Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ K2.1 Know how to set up and manage a project using relevant tools and techniques and understand process management. ➤ K2.2 Understand approaches to risk management. ➤ S2.1 Plan, organise and manage resources to deliver required outcomes. ➤ S2.2 Monitor progress and identify risk and their mitigation. ➤ S2.3 Able to use relevant project management tools.
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ K3.1 Understand business finance: how to manage budgets, and financial forecasting. ➤ S3.1 Able to monitor budgets and provide reports and consider financial implications of decisions and adjust approach/recommendations accordingly.
Management of Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ K9.1 Understand time management techniques and tools, and how to prioritise activities and the use of different approaches to planning, including managing multiple tasks. ➤ S9.2 Use of time management and prioritisation techniques.
Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ K10.1 Understand problem solving and decision making techniques, including data analysis. ➤ K10.2 Understand organisational values and ethics and their impact on decision making. ➤ S10.1 Able to undertake critical analysis and evaluation to support decision making. ➤ S10.2 Use of effective problem solving techniques.
Building Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ S6.3 Use of specialist advice and support to deliver against plans.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ S7.1 Able to communicate effectively (verbal, non-verbal, written, digital) and be flexible in communication style.
Behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ B3.1 Flexible to the needs of the organisation. ➤ B3.2 Is creative, innovative and enterprising when seeking solutions to business needs. ➤ B3.4 Open to new ways of working.

Key facts about the presentation

Apprentices will prepare and deliver a presentation that, along with the proposal, appropriately covers the knowledge, skills and behaviours assigned to this method of assessment. It will be followed by questioning from the independent assessor.

The presentation materials must be submitted at the same time as the Project Proposal. The independent assessor should have two weeks to review the project proposal prior to the presentation and prepare questions.

The apprentice will receive a minimum of 2 weeks' notice of the presentation date.

The presentation will focus on the project proposal and will cover the following:

- **Operational management** such as business tools, management systems, identifying and overcoming barriers, identifying opportunities and interpretation of data.
- **Project management** such as using tools and techniques to plan and deliver outcomes, approaches to identifying and managing risks.
- **Finance** such as monitoring budgets and financial implications.
- **Leading people** and supporting management of change.
- **Building relationships.**
- **Communication skills.**
- **Managing self**, such as prioritising activities and time management.
- **Decision making** and using evaluation techniques to support the process.
- **Progress** of the implementation of the project proposal to date.

The apprentice must ensure that progress against S1.2, S2.1, S2.2 and S3.1 can be discussed during the presentation.

The presentation and questioning will have 60 minutes allocated overall, the presentation will typically last 20 minutes, and the questioning will typically last 40 minutes. The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the presentation and questioning by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer. The discretionary additional 10% time can be allocated in any proportion across the presentation and questioning.

The independent assessor will ask a minimum of 8 questions at the end of the presentation with 1 question from each of the bullet pointed themes listed above. PAL has noted that there are 9 bullet points, therefore a minimum of 9 questions will be asked.

The independent assessor will select question from the PAL question bank; they can also tailor their own questions to confirm their understanding of the presentation and how it demonstrates the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours. Further questions may be asked where clarification is required.

The independent assessor will use the grading descriptors as set out in the Operations or Departmental Manager assessment plan to inform their assessment decisions. These grading descriptors are detailed in the Table 5 on the next page.

Table 5: Project Proposal, Presentation and Questioning Pass and Distinction Grading Criteria

KSBs by Group	Fail	Pass - The apprentice must meet all of the pass descriptors below	Distinction - The apprentice must meet all of the distinction descriptors below
<p>Planning their project proposal</p> <p>K1.1 K1.2 K1.4 K10.2 S1.1 S1.3 S4.3 B3.1 B3.2</p>	<p>Does not meet the pass criteria</p>	<p>Describes business development tools, management systems and contingency planning that are available when they have supported the management of change or identified and developed new opportunities within their organisation whilst ensuring commercial awareness. (K1.2, K1.4, S1.3, S4.3)</p> <p>Uses operational management approaches and models in strategic planning that create plans that meet organisational objectives. (K1.1, S1.1)</p> <p>Shows how they are flexible, creative, innovative and enterprising when seeking proposed solutions to business needs. (B3.1, B3.2)</p> <p>Explains their organisational values and ethics, and the impact these have on their decision making. (K10.2)</p>	<p>Analyses a range of business development tools that assist with project planning, and the techniques and approaches for continuous improvement, and how these tools and approaches align with their organisational systems, processes and plans. (K1.2)</p>
<p>Delivery of their project proposal</p> <p>K1.5 K2.1 K2.2 K9.1 K10.1 S1.2 S2.1 S2.2 S2.3 S7.1 S9.2 S10.1 S10.2</p>	<p>Does not meet the pass criteria</p>	<p>Uses project management tools to plan, organise and manage resources in order to deliver the required outcomes to plan their project. Identifies and mitigates risks and includes suitable systems to monitor progress of the project proposal. (K2.1, K2.2, S2.1, S2.2, S2.3)</p> <p>Applies time management tools and techniques and different approaches to planning in order to prioritise activities. (K9.1, S9.2)</p> <p>Undertakes a critical data analysis to understand and inform their decision making and approach to problem solving. (K10.1, S10.1, S10.2)</p> <p>Uses various forms and styles of communication effectively which are suitable for the audience and situation. (S7.1)</p> <p>Evaluates how they support, manage and communicate change and how they have overcome the barriers they identified. (K1.5, S1.2)</p>	<p>Analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of the project management tools and problem-solving techniques used in the planning of the project proposal. (S2.3, S10.2)</p>

KSBs by Group	Fail	Pass - The apprentice must meet all of the pass descriptors below	Distinction - The apprentice must meet all of the distinction descriptors below
Project Proposal Output K3.1 S1.5 S3.1 S6.3 B3.4	Does not meet the pass criteria	Provides reports and management information that details the management of their project proposal's budget appropriately considering the financial implications of their decisions and adjusts their approach or recommendations accordingly. (K3.1, S1.5, S3.1) Uses specialist advice and shows a willingness to be open to new ways of working. (S6.3, B3.4)	Justifies the use of specialist advice and evaluates the impact of the advice on the project proposal. (S6.3) Justifies and evaluates the financial and budgetary recommendations identified within the project proposal. (S1.5, S3.1)

Additional guidance

PAL has provided presentation guidance documents which can viewed and downloaded from the Padlet.

PAL also advises that the project is developed and progressed whilst reviewing the pass and distinction criteria documented in Table 4, these can also be found on pages 19 – 20 of the assessment plan.

Note that to achieve a distinction the apprentice needs to demonstrate analysis, justification and evaluation during the presentation and questioning. A poorly constructed project proposal may impact the prospect of a distinction as the questions will be prepared based on the submission of the project proposal and presentation materials.

How can the presentation be undertaken?

The presentation can be presented to PAL either via online video conferencing or face to face. The independent assessor needs to ensure that the assessment takes place in a suitable environment. The presentation can be undertaken at a suitable location, typically the apprentice's workplace, or via a webinar. The independent assessor will record the presentation and question and answer session.

The apprentice can present using whichever medium they wish to use, for example, slides, handouts, or a poster.

To deliver the presentation the apprentice will have access to:

- PowerPoint (or other slide presentation tools such as Canva, Emaze, Canva).
- Flip chart and writing and drawing materials (if required).
- Video.
- Computer.
- Notes.
- Any other requirements as notified to PAL on submission of the presentation.

It is the responsibility of the apprentice, employer, training provider and PAL to ensure accessibility where required and to have advised of any reasonable adjustments.

The presentation must be undertaken in a controlled environment (a quiet area, free from distractions and influence) and the apprentice will present 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.

What is the format of the questioning?

The presentation will be followed by a question and answer session with the independent assessor to enable a discussion of the topic in more depth, and to further draw out the apprentice's ability to demonstrate how they have met the grading criteria for the method of assessment.

Independent assessors must use the question bank devised by PAL as a source for questioning and are expected to use their professional judgment to tailor those questions appropriately. Independent assessors are responsible for generating suitable further questions in line with PAL's training and standardisation process. The questions relating to underpinning knowledge, skills and behaviours must be varied yet allow assessment of the relevant knowledge, skills, and behaviours.

The independent assessor will record the answers digitally and summarise in writing as required by the Operations or Departmental Manager assessment plan.

How can an operations or departmental Manager prepare for the presentation?

- Structure their project proposal content as described in the guidance document.
- Practice in front of an audience.
- Complete a practice presentation assessment with feedback from their training provider.
- Check that the presentation is sufficient to meet the topic and criteria for assessment.
- Proofread written work to check for errors and mistakes, as well as for a 'sense check'. Is appropriate language used? Is correct terminology used?
- Ensure that, if technology is being used to present, that it is available, and they are competent in its use.

PAL will use plagiarism software to check the authenticity of work.

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 but a fail. 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 – Gateway Review Record for Operations or Departmental Manager ST0385/AP04

Guidance notes for Gateway Review

Introduction

Determining the readiness of an apprentice for the independent end assessment phase of their programme is a very important milestone. An internal formal meeting 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) and on-programme assessor plus the apprentice. Documentation regarding how the apprentice has progressed so far during their programme should be available in this meeting.

Structure of the meeting

The meeting should last for approximately 60 to 90 minutes and after introductions the apprentice should be invited to give a five-minute summary (this can form their competency statement) of why they feel they are ready for the next stage of their apprenticeship i.e. the end-point assessment. Their summary should include the highlights and lowlights of their learning and what key lessons they consider they have learnt during their programme.

The next part of the meeting should be focussed on the detail contained within the 'on-programme progression documentation' with the on-programme assessor and line manager asking in-depth questions in order to be assured that the apprentice is competent and ready for the final stage of their assessment.

Confirmation will be completed that the portfolio of evidence has been reviewed, that it is sufficient to meet all standards of the assessment plan requirements and is ready in an appropriate format to be submitted to Professional Assessment Ltd.

The on-programme assessor should then give their summary of the meeting, followed by the line manager. The apprentice will be advised when they will have the formal outcome of the meeting (normally verbally from their line manager). This will be once the on-programme assessor and line manager have had time to review and discuss their notes. It is recommended that the feedback is given as soon as practicable after the discussion.

Recording the meeting

The 'Readiness for Independent Assessment Record' (Gateway review record) must be completed once the on-programme assessor and line manager 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 on programme assessor and line manager wish to add supplementary space has been provided. It is important that the 'Record' is not customised.

Operations or Departmental Manager ST0385/AP04 Gateway Review Record

Apprentice name:		Contact number:	
		Contact email address:	
Line manager/employer name:		Contact number:	
		Contact email address:	
On-programme assessor name:		Contact number:	
		Contact email address:	
Organisation name and address:		Meeting date:	
Training provider name:		Meeting time:	
Start date of apprenticeship:		End date of apprenticeship:	

Confirmation of maths and English attainment – supporting evidence will be required to be attached and uploaded:

Maths	Date of achievement	English	Date of achievement
Maths Level 2		English Level 2	

Other Requirements:

<p>It is a requirement that the apprentice's portfolio of evidence, and project proposal title and scope are completed and submitted to PAL as part of the Gateway.</p> <p>Templates can be found on the PAL ODM Padlet.</p> <p>Please note – if any of the answers are 'No', the Gateway will not be accepted by PAL.</p>	<p>Portfolio of Evidence:</p> <p>Is the portfolio of evidence complete and ready for submission?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Project Proposal Title and Scope:</p> <p>Is the project proposal title and scope complete and ready for submission?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>Is the portfolio mapping document completed in full?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Has the employer signed a statement to confirm the real business application of the project proposal title and scope?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>Has the employer signed a statement to confirm that the portfolio evidence is valid and attributable to the apprentice?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>		

The Gateway meeting should include:

A factual desk-based summary of work undertaken during apprenticeship (e.g. area(s) of the business worked in, projects undertaken and focus of development).

The apprentice is required to give a verbal review at the start of the meeting (as to why they believe they are ready for the next stage of their apprenticeship i.e. the end-point assessment). The focus is on the content, with the expectation that the delivery will be clear. It is not an assessment of 'presentation skills'.

Please give evidence of the extent to which the apprentice for this meeting was:

Well prepared, informative and professional	
--	--

Has the apprentice provided a competent summary to continue with the Gateway review? YES NO

If the summary **was** competent but improvements could be made in the future, that in particular will support their EPA please comment on improvements below:

If the summary **was not** competent please detail below where improvements could have been made and indicate next steps:

Competency-based questioning and discussion against the Operations or Departmental Manager Standard ST0385/AP04

In addition to evidence generated to date, progress made and formative assessment activities, the on-programme assessor should utilise competency-based questions at the Gateway review to determine assessment readiness with the employer and apprentice.

Examples of evidence to support the apprentice’s answers can include but not restricted to: workbooks, observation reports, performance appraisals, CPD log, professional discussions, presentations, on job training, off job training, feedback by managers and team meetings/briefings.

A copy of the Standard needs to be available at the meeting. During the meeting additional questions will arise and need, therefore, to be documented in the matrix. The purpose of this discussion is to focus on:

- any areas of the Standard which it is considered are not fully covered in the ‘on programme documentation’ in order to enable the apprentice to add information
- any areas of the Standard for which evidence is not sufficient or not available
- confirmation/identification of the areas of the Standard the apprentice appears to have excelled in if any

Please use the ‘Operations or Departmental Manager AP04 Gateway Review Example Questions’ document to support the discussion. Please note, these questions are for guidance, the training provider and employer can decide upon and produce questions to support their decisions.

Please note, evidence for the four **behaviours** (takes responsibility, inclusive, agile and professionalism) should be embedded into the examples provided by the apprentice for knowledge and skills. Additional questions can be asked if required.

	Question(s)	Apprentice Response(s)	Comment(s)/Points of Development
Knowledge and Skills			
Operational Management			
Project Management			
Finance			
Leading People			
Managing People			
Building Relationships			
Communication			
Self-Awareness			
Management of Self			
Decision Making			

Summary

Summarise how the apprentice has prepared for each aspect of the end-point assessment and note if any further support/revision/coaching are required.

Assessment method:	Detail how the apprentice has prepared for end-point assessment:
Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.	
Project proposal, presentation and questioning.	

Review of the questioning and discussion session

From the discussion and evidence provided above are you satisfied that the apprentice is ready for end-point assessment? Record a summary of your decision of end-point assessment 'readiness' in the boxes provided below:

	On-programme assessor comments:	Line manager comments:
In which areas (if any) has the apprentice demonstrated excellence?		
In which areas (if any) has the apprentice more work to do to achieve competence?		

	On-programme assessor comments:	Line manager comments:
What support could be given to help the apprentice improve?		
What is the target date for completion?		

Any reasonable adjustments required? Please detail below and include any supporting evidence. State N/A if not applicable:

Outcome of meeting

Taking into consideration the summary provided by the apprentice at the start of the meeting and the discussion based on in-depth questioning, is the apprentice ready to progress to independent end-point assessment?

Yes No

Signature of line manager:	
Signature of on-programme assessor:	

Use this space to record any additional information not recorded elsewhere in this form: