

End-Point Assessment Manual

General Introduction

This is version **seven** of the Endpoint Assessment Manual.

It is each stakeholder's (third parties) responsibility to ensure that its staff involved in the provision of the EPA Service familiarise themselves with the latest version of this document.

This document will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Business Operations Director, and the latest version is available via the Padlets that we share with third parties. **We do not provide printed copies of this document, unless specifically requested.**

Our contracting process and pricing policy details our terms and conditions, to include fees for cancellations and resits and/or retakes.

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1. Introduction to the Manual

This document is for any Customer with Apprentices enrolled on an Apprenticeship wishing to use Professional Assessment Limited (PAL), end-point assessment (EPA) service. The manual provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of those parties involved in the apprenticeship programme, and specifically focuses on end-point Assessment.

Where PAL¹ has been selected as the preferred EPAO for a specific apprentice, we ask the apprentice is registered on our system as soon as possible and at least 90 days prior to the planned gateway review. Guidance on working with our end-point assessment platform is available via the epaPRO system, in the support materials section, under the generic tab and the guides can also be found in the epaPRO user guidance section of the apprenticeship standard padlet.

The gateway review takes place when, the employer, training provider and apprentice judge the apprentice:

- has met the Gateway requirements for a specific standard
- has completed and served the appropriate duration of the On-Programme learning element of an Apprenticeship; and
- is ready to undertake the EPA

2. Readiness

The evaluation of readiness should be a tripartite agreement between the apprentice, employer, and provider, however the final decision to proceed with assessments, belongs to the employer.

This Manual details the processes for the EPA Service, including:

- Assessment
- Results and Post Results (including re-sits).

¹ PAL EPAO number is 0095

- Quality Assurance.

Please note application, booking and registration of apprentices is covered in PAL’s epaPRO. Please note our service level contract, along with our pricing and invoicing policy details terms and conditions and fees.

3. Definitions

A glossary of terms can be found in appendix two

4. EPA Service

An EPA Organisation (EPAO) approved by the ESFA and listed on the Register of Approved EPAOs and Training Providers (APAR) for specified standards they can offer an endpoint assessment service.

Professional Assessment Ltd (PAL) provides an independent EPA service to administer a range of standards assessments’ to Apprentices, as specified in the relevant Assessment Plan. Assessment Plans and Standards are located on the Institute for [Apprenticeships and Technical education \(IfATE\) website](#).

An EPAO also has to be registered with a qualifications regulatory body and acquire their approval to design and deliver each named apprenticeship standard before they can actively enrol or engage with stakeholders to act as an EPAO for the specific standard. For most apprenticeship standards outside of higher education, the regulator is Ofqual. This means that apprenticeship standards are subject to the same conditions, as any other qualification regulated by this body.

5. EPA Support

PAL can be contacted via:

- Our free phone number 0800 160 1899-
- Our inquiry email info@professionalassessment.co.uk
- Our website www.professionalassessment.co.uk contains useful information and links to our registration system and once a customer of ours there is a dedicated support email
- Our EPA support email epasupportservices@professionalassessment.co.uk
- Employers and Providers can also access information from the epaPRO platform, and we encourage clients to use the portal, as it is updated daily and will provide information on registrations, EPA progress and results

We endeavour to respond to all general enquiries within three working days, if we are unable to meet these response timelines, we will provide you with a reason as to why and advise when a response can be expected.

The PAL Team

Role	Responsibilities
EPA Team- Assessment Administration and Management	The EPA Team is responsible for processing bookings, arranging the administration of assessments, and handling the release of, and enquiries about, results. They will support all PAL customers from the assessment schedule stage and until the Results are processed. Contact them via the epasupportservices@professionalassessment.co.uk The team can be contacted Monday- Friday from 08.30 to 17.30 except for Bank Holidays and the period between Christmas and the New Year.

Role	Responsibilities
	For general inquiries regarding PAL's business service offers and general information relating to PAL's activities our info @ email can be used. The free phone number is available during office hours and messages can be left out of office hours.
EPA Team -Business Operations	This team is responsible for providing advice and guidance to prospective Employers and Providers and coordinating all client relationship activities, including contract negotiations, handling complaints, and reviewing conflicts of interest and handling social media updates and co-ordinating the newsletter distribution. The EPA management team led by the Business Operations Director line manage the independent Assessors
Quality Team	The quality team led by the Quality Manager oversees quality assurance and are responsible for the checking of assessment results. They are also lead on the training and development of PAL assessment team. The team is also involved in investigations of assessment materials breaches; appeals and enquiries and investigating alleged acts of malpractice, maladministration and advising on the application of special considerations, reasonable adjustments, and accessible assessment.
Audit Team	The Audit Team is responsible for overseeing PAL's internal audit function, to include supporting PAL's self-evaluation and maintaining PAL's risk register. The Director of Audit and Compliance is PAL's Data Protection Officer.
Resource Development Team	This team is responsible for assessment design, development and compilation of assessment resources and maintenance of PAL's on-line library of resources. The team works with consultants and technical advisors to ensure assessment materials meet the requirements of employers, apprentices and providers and the relevant regulators. This team is responsible for making applications for new standards to the relevant agencies and approved register. The team is line managed by the Qualifications Director, who also undertakes the role of PAL's Responsible Officer.
Independent Assessors	The independent assessors are responsible for conducting the assessments, from assessment planning to the reporting of assessment outcomes. They have relevant occupational and assessment experience to carry out all aspects of the EPA, and Professional Assessment offers assessment out of office hours and on weekends, where it is deemed that is the best option for the apprentice.
Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs)	IQAs are responsible for quality assuring the administration and assessment decisions of IAs through standardisation and sampling and they authorise final results for the apprenticeship certificate claim.
Responsible Officer and Deputy Responsible Officer	<p>PAL's Responsible Officer (RO) is the Qualifications Director. The Deputy Responsible Officer (DRO) is the Managing Director. The role of the responsible officer encompasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ any matters relating to our compliance with Ofqual's Conditions of Recognition, ➤ our ability and commitment to undertake the efficient development, delivery, and award of standards (qualifications), ➤ the standards of qualifications and/or standards that we deliver or propose to deliver and make available, ➤ any matters which may affect public confidence in

Role	Responsibilities
	<p>apprenticeship standards and/or qualifications, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the accessibility of our standards assessments qualifications, including our compliance with the Equalities Law <p>The Deputy Responsible officer supports the RO and acts as the RO in their absence, supported by the regulation (events notification team) team which is comprised of the Resource Development Lead, EPA Manager, Director of Audit and Compliance and the Business Operations Director.</p>

A range of support materials and resources to aid assessment readiness are made available to apprentices, employers, and providers, when a current and live contract is in place with PAL. The EPA team can direct you, as to how to access such materials.

Fact sheets and an overview for each standard PAL is approved to deliver can be accessed via our website and our on-line resources platforms called Padlets.

Responsibilities of the Provider, Employer and EPAO at each stage of the apprenticeship are detailed in **Appendix One**. PAL’s service level contracts also highlight responsibilities and confirm PAL’s terms and conditions for delivering end-point assessment.

6. Background to Apprenticeships

In addition to the information provided in this manual, we also make available fact sheets for each standard and specifications.

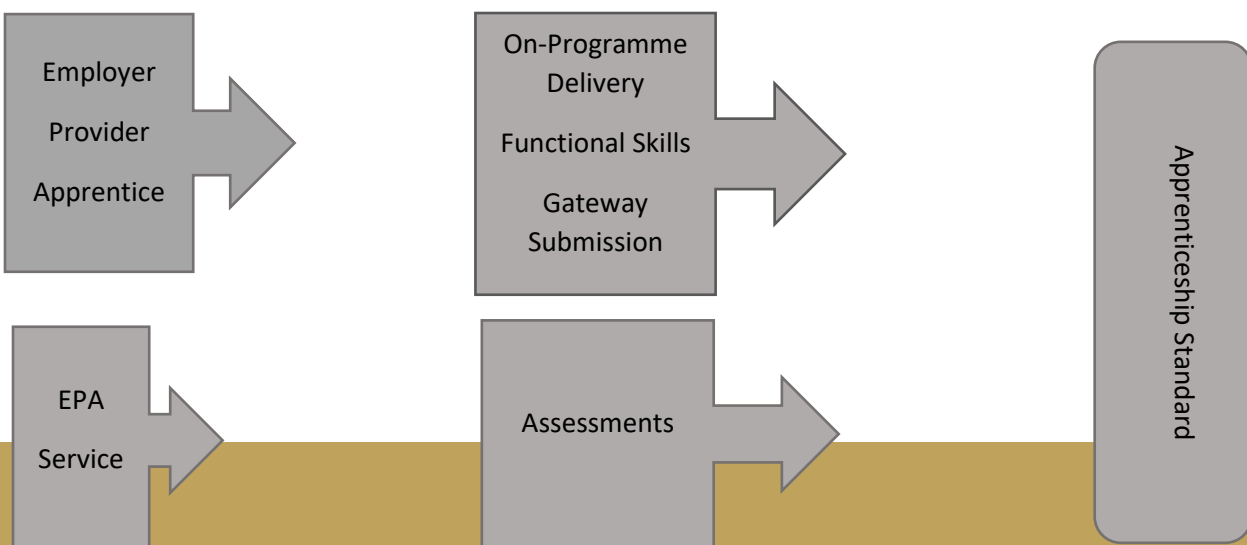
In response to government reform, Apprenticeship Standards have been designed to meet the changing needs of Employers, Providers and Apprentices. Trailblazer groups which are made up of employer (sector) representatives supported by IfATE compile the apprenticeship standards.

Note in July 2023 IfATE confirmed their intention to allow the introduction of mandated qualifications into the delivery of apprenticeships, of which an element of the qualification is to be assessed in EPA. As more information becomes available as to how this will be delivered, PAL will advise our clients.

Apprenticeship standards aim to:

- give Employers control in designing Apprenticeships
- increase the flexibility of delivery
- simplify the funding system; and
- improve the effectiveness of training

Apprenticeship Structure



Providers

A Provider's role in delivering an Apprenticeship is providing off-the-job knowledge-based learning. The majority of an Apprentice's experience will be on-the-job learning and mentoring.

A Provider will also need to support the Employer in practical work-based learning to prepare Apprentices for end-point assessment and to facilitate the 20% provision of off- job training (please refer to the latest funding rules for clarification regarding the 20% application).

Types of Providers

The three types of Providers in England are listed in the table below.

Types of Providers	
Main Providers:	Are organisations that deliver on-programme learning to levied and non-levied employers and contract the EPAO on behalf of their employer.
Employer Providers:	Are levied Employers who deliver on-programme apprenticeship learning directly and solely to their staff.
Supporting Providers:	Are organisations that assist with the training of apprentices and provide this service to either main Providers or employer Providers.

Please note Training Providers are also known as Training Organisations and can be Colleges or commercial, independent, or not-for profit training providers.

Qualifications

Currently there is no mandatory requirement for vocational based qualifications, or diplomas or professional qualifications within Trailblazer Apprenticeships unless explicitly required, e.g., for a license to practice. At present 40% of assessment plans contain a mandatory qualification.

Trailblazer Groups, if they so wish, can build mandatory qualifications into the Apprenticeship Standard, or include recommended qualifications in the Assessment Plan. This process as of July 2023 is being formalised, further information is available from IfATE

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/developing-new-apprenticeships/mandated-qualifications-policy-excluding-degrees/>

Where qualifications are not included in the Apprenticeship Standard, Employers and/or Providers can if they wish:

- Build qualifications into their offer; this will incur registration and certification charges from the selected awarding organisation
- Build into their offer non-accredited training options

It is essential to read an Apprentice Standard Assessment Plan to understand what knowledge, skills, and behaviours an apprentice must demonstrate to prove competence and how the end-point assessment will be delivered.

Functional skills in English and Maths or approved English and Maths equivalents need to be achieved by the apprentice before they can enter gateway and proof of their achievement must be provided, (unless there are any IfATE instructions that allow for a variation of this requirement or the Apprentice is participating in a pilot programme, that provides certain dispensations). Proof of required qualifications will need to be made available to PAL.

On-Programme Delivery

Before any training is delivered, the apprentice's starting point needs to be established. The Provider and Employer, with the apprentice, should be involved in the initial assessment process and agree on any resulting apprenticeship delivery plan.

During the delivery phase of the apprenticeship programme, the apprentice should receive regular progress reviews. The reviews are likely to include one-to-one monitoring, and the apprentice should receive developmental feedback from both their employer and provider, so they know where performance is aligned with the standard and where further improvement is needed.

The Provider is responsible for the delivery of English and Maths (functional skills) training or checking that the apprentice has the relevant qualifications, which exempt them from taking the functional skills tests. Even where the apprentice has the necessary qualifications, English and maths delivery should be embedded into the on-programme offer.

The Provider is primarily responsible for the quality assurance of the delivery of the on-programme element of the apprenticeship programme but Employers, should also contribute to this function. Employers have a responsibility to ensure apprentices have access to the right on-job training, are in a job role that allows them to aspire to the standard requirements and provide apprentices access to the Providers training services. Finally, the employer has a responsibility to validate EPA readiness and to work with the assigned EPAO to ensure EPA arrangements are planned, booked, and conducted in accordance with the apprenticeship agreement they have made with the relevant training provider and promised the apprentice.

Best practice regarding determining readiness, includes the Provider and Employer making sure the apprentice has access to mock or practice assessments and has performed in these in a competent manner.

The gateway review should take place at the end of the agreed training period and the Provider, the apprentice and employer should determine and decide on readiness. Professional Assessment can provide guidance regarding the recording of gateway activities, but it is not the role of PAL to determine the apprentice's readiness for assessment.

EPA Methods

Each Apprenticeship Standard contains details of the method of EPA that the Apprentice will need to complete such as:

- externally marked examinations and knowledge test assessments
- professional discussions
- oral Q&A or interviews with the assessor
- practical tasks; skills challenges
- presentations
- showcase portfolios
- work-based tasks/projects; and
- workplace observations

End-point assessments will typically include two or three assessment activities and the aggregation of the assessment activities and outcomes will determine an overall grade awarded to the apprentice. The purpose of the

end-point assessment is to establish the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours as prescribed by the standard and respective assessment plan, have been met.

Apprentices will need to pass every assessment component to achieve an overall pass. Assessment plans will describe grade levels.

7. External EPA Documents

The following documents (produced by Trailblazer Groups) define what is required by Apprentice for their Apprenticeship in their chosen sector/job role:

- Apprenticeship Standard – set the key requirements for the Apprenticeship including required skills, knowledge and behaviours required. Apprenticeship Standards also capture the minimum duration of the Apprenticeship and any required qualifications

The Assessment Plan details the requirements for EPA including:

- what is required for EPA
- what will be assessed
- how it will be assessed
- how the overall Apprenticeship will be graded
- who will carry out the EPA
- assessor and IQA expertise
- External Quality Assurance Provider (EQAP), identity.

The Assessment Plan will also include details of any qualifications that are required to be completed prior to the EPA, either prior to starting or during the Apprenticeship.

Once an Assessment Plan is approved, it will be published online, and the Apprenticeship will be marked as 'approved for delivery.' Assessment standards and the latest assessment plan for a specific standard can be found on the IfATE website.

Professional Assessment Limited Resources

Professional Assessment resources include:

- Factsheets- available from our website and Padlets
- EPA Manual, available on each standard Padlet (Padlets are PAL's online library of resources available for each standard)
- EpaPRO Guides for Providers and Employers that explains how to register apprentices, update their details, and track their assessment journey using EpaPRO, available on both the Padlets and epaPRO system
- Apprenticeship Standard Specifications-available on the Padlet
- Assessment resources to support end-point assessment preparation- available on the relevant Apprenticeship Standard Padlet

Each Standard has a dedicated Padlet; Professional Assessment will share the link with our clients when we have a contract in place. The Padlets are updated centrally, so our clients always have access to our most current resources and information.

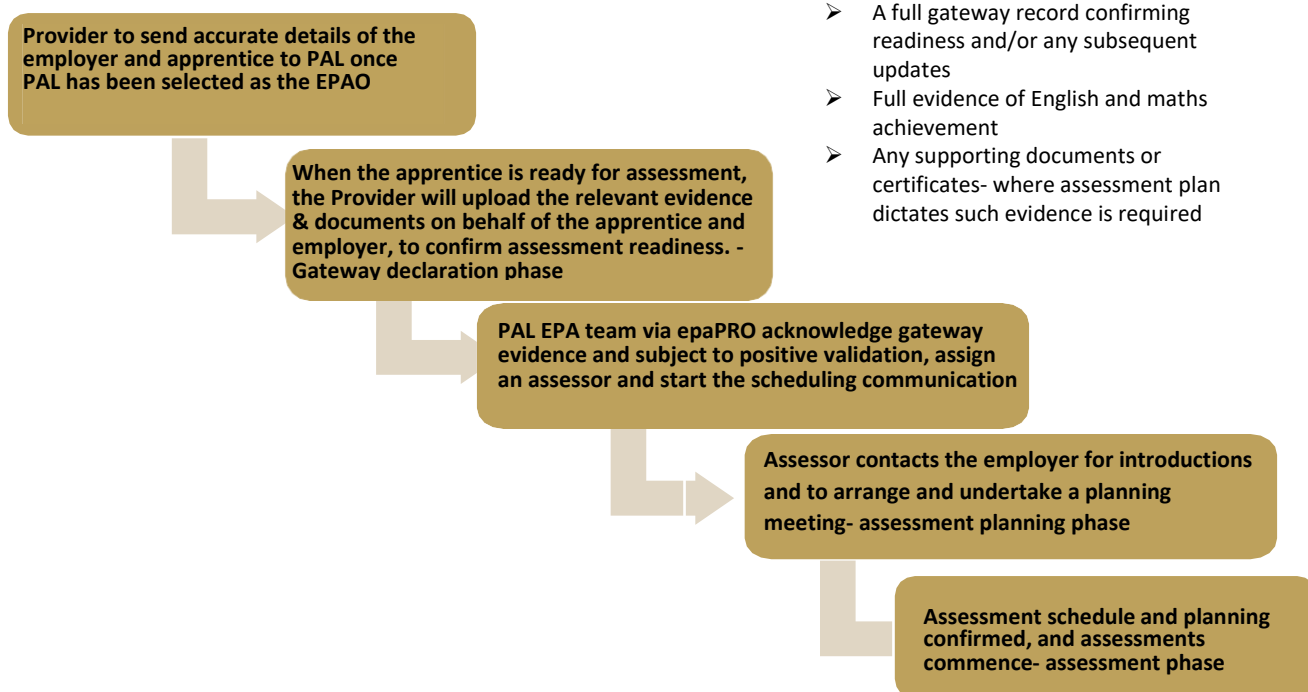
EPA Service

To access Professional Assessment services and register apprentices on our online system, a signed contract needs to be in place. Our team can provide the details of our contracting process, service timelines and fees. Our

assessment costs are detailed in our price list which is available on our website, and we only invoice for eligible expenses as described in the conditions for being on the register of end-point assessment organisations.

As part of the contract negotiations, the PAL team, talk with employers and providers, to ensure all parties are clear about our EPA offer and to confirm that the employer is satisfied with the selection of the EPAO. Note in 2023 the ESFA gave Training Providers greater influence over the selection of an EPAO, however it is still the case that an employer can have the final say in an EPAO selection.

A separate guide for accessing epaPRO is available for employers and Providers, and our EPA team can provide training on its use, to include registering apprentices and accessing reports. Professional Assessment offers an on-demand assessment service and will do its best to meet your preferred dates, however late notified requests for assessment, means we cannot always offer our customers first date choices. We do request that Providers update gateway dates if the initial date is not going to be met.



It is the Provider and Employer’s responsibilities to ensure all required pre-gateway evidence requirements are met and submitted to Professional Assessment.

The provider is responsible for registering the apprentice, with PAL, and they are accountable for the accuracy and completeness of the information they provide. Training Providers should ensure registration of an apprentice with an EPAO is compliant with the latest ESFA apprenticeship regulations. For late registrations, we cannot guarantee requested assessment dates.

Our service level contracts and data protection and privacy policy and privacy statement provide further information on our data requirements and data protection.

Data Protection

Data Protection Laws place obligations on those that control and process information relating to individuals. Customers must provide Apprentice Data to Professional Assessment upon Registration:

- information which refers to a living individual who can be identified from that information ('Personal Data'); and
- information relating to a living individual's physical or mental health ('Sensitive Personal Data')

8. Data Protection Notice

When collecting personal data or sensitive personal data, providers and employers must ensure that Apprentices are aware of the data that will be collected and how it will be used.

It is the responsibility of providers and employers to ensure that the information they provide to their stakeholders regarding data protection is, always, accurate and compliant with any data protection laws.

Apprentice's personal data is required for the following purposes:

- to undertake administration and assessment in relation to the assessment for which the Apprentice is registered
- to request certification from the ESFA on the achievement of all components of the assessment
- to contact apprentices directly for the purpose of assessment and quality assurance purposes, or to support them, if they are made redundant for example, but wish to have access to end-point assessment
- to carry out investigations into allegations of suspected malpractice, plagiarism, and cheating
- to inform Apprentices of products or services offered by PAL that will support assessment readiness
- to disclose to its regulators for the purpose of regulation and external quality assurance checks and activities
- to communicate to relevant industry bodies; and to disclose to relevant industry bodies, where so required by law, to; i) account for Apprentices where there is a requirement to do so; and ii) contact an Apprentice directly if there is a requirement for such bodies and the information is not readily accessible by other means
- in relation to Sensitive Personal Data, to administer requests for reasonable adjustments/Access Arrangements

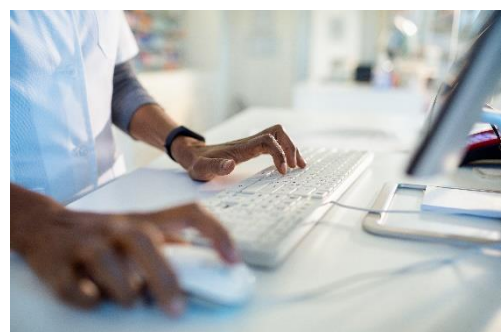
Data Requirements

The provider should share the required data and information PAL within 90 days of apprenticeship enrolment, to include an expected/estimated gateway readiness month and year. The provider will need to complete the necessary fields in the ILR (to include EPA selected- identification number and EPA fee).

Provider to share with the EPAO (PAL) the following information:

Apprentice (Learner) data

- Learner Name (as appearing on the ILR)
- Learner Date of Birth
- Learner Sex
- Learning Start Date on standard
- Learner registration date
- ULN



with

Employer data

- ERN
- Name of Organisation (Head office and address and contact details for invoicing purposes, where the employer is responsible for picking up additional fees, e.g., cancellation fees and reassessment fees)
- Site address and line manager name and contact details (phone and email)

PAL will inform the provider of assessment results (note Employer and Apprentice advised at the same time) on completion of assessment schedule and both the provider and PAL will submit data to ESFA, within the claim period timelines. Note providers and employers, using their log-in credentials can establish assessment progression and results.

ESFA will check and validate the following data.

- UKPRN
- ULN
- Learner Name
- Learner Date of Birth
- Learner Sex
- Learning Start Date
- Standard Code (available on the relevant assessment standard plan starting ST)
- Achievement Outcome in the ILR
- Employer Reference Number (ERN)
- Employer name and address; town; postcode (this must be the name and address of the person nominated by the employer organisation to receive the apprentice certificate).

9. Gateway

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

The employer and provider must hold a meeting or have some form of communication to agree that the apprentice has gained the required level of knowledge, skills, and behaviours, along with any mandatory qualifications including where appropriate English and maths at a level set by the Apprenticeship Standard.

To confirm this meeting has taken place, the employer, provider, and apprentice are required to complete a Gateway declaration form. PAL can provide such a gateway document, alternatively providers and employers can use their documentation, with the caveat, that the document must record the information as stipulated on the PAL gateway form.

Professional Assessment also needs evidence of functional skills attainment (or equivalent qualifications). Submission of proof of 'equivalent' functional skill attainment, must be valid and endorsed as acceptable equivalents by the ESFA.

For those standards requiring RQF qualification attainment or industry recognised certification, certificated evidence must be submitted to PAL, as part of the gateway submission.

PAL will not confirm an EPA booking until the required evidence is submitted.

For auditing purposes, the gateway declaration form should be signed and dated by all parties, or email confirmation supplied, provided that all parties have agreed on readiness. Ideally PAL likes the receipt of the apprenticeship certificate consent form, apprentice ID form and authentication of evidence form to be completed and submitted as part of the gateway submission. If the three documents are not made available at the gateway review, the assessor

can collect these documents, as part of the assessment planning process, or the EPA team will request the Provider make them available prior to any assessments or grades being issued.

10. EPA Booking and Assessment Planning

It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure that the end-point assessment only takes place once the minimum duration of an apprenticeship has been met. The ESFA funding guidance and appropriate apprenticeship standard assessment plan and PAL standard specification can offer further information. PAL will also undertake their own gateway checks and where any gateway evidence cannot be suitably validated, PAL reserves the right to and will reject the gateway evidence.

Should an end-point assessment occur before the minimum duration has been met, then the results will be claimed as a 'fail'.

The Provider will be required to book and pay for all resits/retakes for all apprentices affected. It is the Provider's responsibility to oversee and arrange if or how they collect these fees from their employers.

Providers and employers are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the information being supplied at the time of the gateway submission, this will include any information to include reasonable adjustments, and assessment access arrangements that the assessor will need to assimilate, to ensure fair and reliable assessments.

Please see guidance notes regarding registering and booking assessments in the epaPRO guides. The EPA team are available to address any issues regarding registering apprentices or scheduling assessments.

READINESS

PAL STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT PARTICULAR ATTENTION IS MADE TO ENSURING THAT THE APPRENTICE IS COMPETENT, IN THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE END-POINT ASSESSMENT, PRIOR TO MAKING A RESERVATION FOR THE EPA. FAILURE TO DO SO, MAY DISADVANTAGE THE APPRENTICE AT THE EPA.

Once the gateway information is received, Professional Assessment will confirm receipt, the epaPRO guides show how employers and providers can check gateway status. If there is missing or unsubstantiated information, PAL will advise and request the additional information. The gateway information must be agreed and validated by PAL, before any assessment can be planned. Note validation of the gateway by the EPAO, starts the EPA clock (assessment timeframe allocated for the standard and noted in the assessment plan). **It is important to note EPA timeframes do vary between apprenticeship standards, so it is vital all parties know what the timeframe is before entering into EPA.**

Where the gateway information has been substantiated, the EPA team will contact the employer and apprentice, to book the assessment planning activities. **If after three contact attempts, PAL cannot contact the employer and or apprentice, PAL will refer the apprentice back to the provider and any provisional assessment dates or timelines will be subject to revisions.**

Successful gateway validation will confirm the assignment of an assessor.

The EPA managers will assign assessors to apprentices, ensuring assessors have the requisite skills and experience and where on-site assessments are involved to look at locations, and logistics, to minimise excessive travel. Conflict of interest is also a factor in allocating apprentices to assessors, and PAL

undertakes checks to confirm that any assessment is 'independent'.

The assessor or in some cases a member of the EPA team will contact the apprentice or the employer to confirm the arrangements for the assessment planning meeting. The assessment planning meeting will typically be conducted via a webinar unless there has been a request which has been approved by PAL for a face-to-face meeting.

Further information, regarding the assessment planning meeting, is made available via our on-line resource Padlets.

At the assessment planning meeting, the dates for all the required components of the independent assessment will be confirmed. The assessor will also prior to this meeting request that the apprentice brings any required information, such as a Provider overview or project brief. It is vital that the employer and apprentice check what additional information is needed, such information will typically be cited in the relevant assessment plan and information will also be mentioned on the Padlet (online resource).

11. Assessment

Assessments will take place at the dates, time, and work site (or via webinar technology) as agreed at the assessment planning meeting and documented in the planning form. Should the employer or apprentice need to change assessment at short notice, the employer should refer to the cancellation policy, as cancellations could be liable for cancellation fees. If PAL has to cancel at short notice, a member of the EPA team will advise concerned parties and re-schedule as quickly as possible. There may be circumstances that to facilitate a timely assessment, PAL has to substitute an assessor, where this is necessary, PAL will inform all relevant parties and ensure the replacement assessor is suitably qualified and meets the conflict of interest checks.

Where evidence such as projects needs to be assessed, the project should be submitted in the timeframe established in the assessment plan. Late submissions can delay the assessment timescales and potentially result in additional assessment charges.

For a portfolio assessment, or portfolio review, the provider must grant the assessor access to the apprentice's portfolio. The EPA team will confirm access arrangements and a timescale when it is not mandated by the assessment plan. Alternatively, portfolio evidence can be shared in secure and labelled folders.

In exceptional circumstances, (with the approval of the EPA Team), the provider may be permitted to submit the assessment evidence in hard copy. Under such circumstances, additional charges may apply.

11a. Externally Marked Examinations/Tests

Some standards require the apprentice to complete a test as part of the end-point assessment process. The test can be either a multiple-choice test (MCQ), or a situational judgement, or scenario question based test. Where such an assessment is used, the assessment plan will provide some information regarding the number of questions and test duration and test format, PAL will additionally provide information on the relevant on-line resource Padlet, and an overview is provided in fact sheets and in the appropriate specification.

PAL will also provide further information regarding test requirements, to include access to practice and sample questions on standard Padlet.

Some standards will require a written test (note this is unusual and the majority of tests are formatted as multiple choice questions, with four possible answer options), again the assessment plan will provide information around the format, and PAL will provide guidance via the Padlet.

It is the responsibility of the provider and/or employer to ensure the apprentice has had the opportunity to access at the very least a sample question paper, as provided by PAL.

The assessor at the assessment planning meeting will detail the type and nature of the exam/test involved, this will include where an exam/test is required, the invigilation arrangements and ensure that all the parties are aware of the test environment requirements. The assessor will also check which testing method is preferred, as a default, PAL will offer an online test for MCQs unless a paper-based or offline test is requested. The assessor at the assessment planning meeting will advise the apprentice of the penalties of cheating and confirm that the selected test environment is suitable.

The invigilation policy and information PAL makes available should be accessed by all parties.

It is the responsibility of the apprentice and employer to ensure they are familiar with the pass mark for tests; PAL will confirm this at the assessment planning meeting.

In some assessments it is a requirement that the test element of the assessment is the first component and must be passed before moving to the next part of the assessment, where this is the case, this will inform PAL's assessment sequencing; where there is flexibility in the sequencing, PAL will agree the assessment sequencing.

11b. On-site assessment

Observations of work and practical skills challenges, typically take place at the work site of the apprentice, and tests and assessments such as professional discussions can also take place at these locations, subject to appropriate checks.

The assessment planning discussion will inquire as to the site suitability for assessment and is the responsibility of all concerned parties, to ensure the assessment site is fit for purpose. PAL also advocates that the employer and apprentice advise colleagues and other relevant stakeholders of on-site assessments, from a health and safety perspective and to ensure that where an exam, or sterile assessment environment is required, such conditions are understood and met.

Where a sterile environment is required for such assessment activities as a timed skills challenge or trade test, it is the responsibility of the provider/employer to ensure that the environment is adequately resourced and that any resources and supplies are paid for and made available to the apprentice. **The provider or employer is responsible for the purchase of any required commodities, facilities fees, where applicable and the provision of equipment and resources.** Such arrangements should be agreed independent from PAL, but such arrangements must be agreed and in place, prior to the independent assessment.

Observations of work performance will be planned to ensure the apprentice has the best opportunity to demonstrate a wide range of skills, as denoted in the apprenticeship standard and accompanying assessment plan. The employer should also make sure that the apprentice's colleagues are aware of the assessment, so they do not adversely affect the outcome of the assessment.

Timed assessments will be executed in the timeframe as specified in the assessment plan; it is the responsibility of the apprentice and employer to ensure they know what the time frames are. Where there is any permitted +/- variance, this will be made clear in the supporting information PAL provides and restated at the assessment planning meeting, and prior to the commencement of an assessment.

The host of the assessment site is also responsible for ensuring:

- the site and any relevant equipment meets any pertinent requirements for the assessment such as health and safety, and technical requirements
- a site contact is available who will be responsible for informing the assessor of any fire evacuation procedures and how to report any incidents which may occur in line with the site's policies and procedures

Should such assessments need to be cancelled due to the assessment environment presenting as unsuitable on the day of the assessment, the employer may be subject to cancellation charges. The assessor has the right to cancel an

assessment if they deem the location is not fit for assessment, as it prohibits the opportunity of a valid and reliable assessment for the apprentice.

11c. Portfolio, Project, and Assignments

The apprentice is responsible for ensuring such work is a product of their efforts, the Training Provider, Apprentice and Employer need to be familiar with PAL's plagiarism, and cheating policy and apprentices are required to sign an authentication form.

Apprentices are responsible for ensuring they present evidence in the designated format, stipulated by the assessment plan and guidance provided by PAL. PAL will provide assessment amplification via the Apprentice Standard Padlet, and the employer and provider should check prior to the gateway review that the apprentice's evidence is valid, authentic, current, sufficient, and reliable.

Unless stated otherwise it is expected that written work will be available in electronic format and where word counts are in place, it is the responsibility of the apprentice to ensure they comply with the word count.

11d. Professional Discussions, Presentations and Competency-based Interviews

It is the responsibility of the employer and apprentice to check if an employer's presence² is required at any of the above assessment activities. Please note presence typically does not permit the employer to actively participate in or influence the assessment activity unless the assessment plan specifies a more active role. In most assessment plans, the use of these assessment methods do not require the presence of an employer or any other representative and the assessment is between the assessor and apprentice only.

The apprentice with the support of their employer and provider should know what evidence or notes they can bring to such assessments. Usually, this information is available in the assessment plan, and PAL provides guidance on the Apprentice Standard Padlet. At the assessment planning meeting the assessor will confirm arrangements.

Where an assessment plan specifies that the EPAO must forward a bespoke agenda in advance of an assessment, the assessor will comply with the timeframe as described in the assessment plan, as a rule, this will be within five working days of the assessment taking place.

Most assessment plans, where professional discussion is used, advocate that the apprentice only has access to a standard agenda, in advance of their assessment. A standard agenda can be accessed through the relevant Padlet. The assessor will then bespoke the agenda, in line with the pertinent assessment plan and PAL's specifications and the questions will not be shared in advance, nor will the assessor leave the questions with an apprentice, or allow copying of such questions; likewise, the apprentice will not be able to retain any discussion recordings.

PAL will adhere to the timescales afforded to such assessments, and it is the responsibility of the apprentice to make sure they know what the timelines are and the employer and provider at the gateway review, should establish the apprentice's readiness in relation to these areas of assessment. Where the assessment plan allows some variance with the time allowed for such assessments, PAL will apply these, where there is no guide provided by the assessment planning, PAL sets the time allowance. PAL set time allowances are based on assessment instrument testing to ensure they are fair and afford the apprentice the opportunity of demonstrating the necessary competence.

Where such assessments take place at a worksite or approved location, it is the responsibility of the employer, or person in charge of the centre location to ensure there are suitable facilities to undertake assessment; this will include a room set up for the purpose, where the assessment will not be interrupted. Prior to any assessment, the

² Note presence does not mean any involvement in the assessment activity or making the assessment decision

assessor will review the arrangements, and will reserve the right to delay or cancel any assessment, if the arrangements are not conducive to a fair assessment.

Where webinar technology, are used to conduct such assessments, it is the responsibility of the employer and apprentice to ensure they have access to the internet/appropriate software and are confident in its use. If the provider is providing the resources/equipment for remote assessment, it is their responsibility to ensure all technical resources are fit for purpose. PAL will use Teams as our preferred platform and if required will provide additional instruction regarding how to access a Teams meeting.

Where assessment panels are required by the assessment plan, it is the employer's responsibility to:

- make arrangements for the attendance by an employer's representative review panel if so needed (in line with the Assessment Plan)
- ensure that any of the employer's representative has no conflicts of interest, this will be checked by PAL
- ensure that any of the Employer's representatives have been briefed regarding any specific access arrangements and reasonable adjustments and special considerations; and
- provide the PAL assessor with the identity of the representative at the point of assessment planning, so that the assessor has this information prior to the assessment

If the assessment plan notes that the employer has no 'say' in the assessment activity, it is the responsibility of the assessor to ensure this is the case. Where the assessment plan allows the employer or panel members to take a more active role, PAL will want to brief the participants and check the suitability of any questions, they wish to ask. In the situation another party has involvement or influence in an assessment decision, PAL will require the relevant organisation to comply with the assessment plan and any conditions regarding centre status.

At the current time, no other party is involved in assessment marking, grading, or making assessment decisions for the apprenticeship standards PAL currently offers

The employer or provider must inform and agree on any change in the employer representative with the EPA Team prior to the date of the assessment, for any panel activity, where applicable. The EPA team will inform the relevant assessor.

12. Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

Where reasonable adjustments have been requested, the assessor at the assessment planning meeting will confirm such arrangements. Discussions regarding a reasonable adjustment request should be made in accordance with PAL's special considerations and reasonable adjustment policy and reasonable adjustment guidance.

A reasonable adjustment request form is available via PAL's website and can be found in the policy section. All reasonable adjustment requests are subject to PAL's quality team's ratification.

It is the responsibility of the Training Provider or Employer, acting on behalf of the apprentice to make such requests. PAL's special consideration and reasonable adjustment policy provides information regarding the process for making such requests. Note Special Considerations are applied post assessment, as they aim to address and ensure fair assessment, where the assessment environment may have produced problems or issues that had a detrimental impact on the apprentice and their ability to demonstrate their full capabilities. Reasonable adjustments must be agreed prior to assessment.

13. The responsibility of the Assessor

The assessor should behave in accordance with the PAL job description and specific guidance and instructions has issued in the respective assessment plan. At the assessment the assessor should as a minimum undertake the following checks:

- check that the apprentice is ready to take the assessment
- check the apprentice's identification; and
- check that authorisation of any access arrangements/reasonable adjustments have been passed

The assessor should undertake the assessments in accordance with the assessment plan requirements, using PAL's, assessment instruments and recording documentation. The assessor should confirm assessment arrangements and proceed with the assessments, as agreed at the planning meeting.

Assessment and quality assurance arrangements and notification of results, will be within the stipulated assessment timeframe, as specified in the standard assessment plan. PAL's aim is always to facilitate assessment in an efficient fashion, which avoids a protracted assessment, simultaneously we appreciate business constraints and always endeavour to meet the reasonable requests and requirements of the apprentice and employer.

The assessor will not issue any assessment results or grades during or immediately post the assessment. Assessment decisions are subject to quality assurance checks.

The assessor will advise the apprentice and employer of the appeals and enquiries policy and procedure. The provider and employer, have the responsibility of:

- checking the apprentice understands the assessment process
- checking the apprentice knows what is required of them
- ensuring the apprentice is fully aware of the assessment timings

The apprentice equally has the responsibility to follow the agreed assessment plan and all parties should make use of the materials and information provided by PAL, in support of end-point assessment. The assigned assessor will check the apprentice is ready for and happy to be assessed, prior to commencing an assessment.

14. Cancellation of an assessment activity

The Assessor may cancel or stop the assessment for a variety of reasons, including:

- no access to required systems
- required resources/materials not being present at the assessment location
- health and safety concerns
- concerns over identity of the apprentice
- Apprentice being absent; or arrival so late to render the planned assessment impossible to achieve
- Apprentice being unable to continue with the assessment
- sufficiently competent panel members not being available for panel reviews (where required)
- potential malpractice being identified; and/or
- the assessor cannot for some other reason be confident in the outcome of the assessment

It may be that some issues, including those listed above, can be resolved on the day for the EPA to take place. If there is a change in circumstance which resolves the above issues, then the assessor will confirm with the EPA team that the assessment is still able to take place. Refusal shall not be unreasonably withheld.

It should be noted that the assessor can only assess the evidence as presented at the time of the assessment.

Where there is a system failure, for example with an on-line testing system, PAL would organise a re-sit of the test.

15. Results

Assessors upload all completed assessment documentation for quality assurance, to the Professional Assessment Quality Team. In certain assessment plans, where it is required that one element of assessment be completed and passed before moving to the next, PAL can issue interim results, via epaPRO. PAL will require apprentices to

complete an apprentice consent form to claim their apprenticeship certificate, this document is required so PAL can request the apprenticeship certificate from the ESFA on the apprentice’s behalf.

The PAL internal quality assurers (IQAs) will in line with PAL’s quality assurance and sampling strategy review the assessment reports, grades and decisions before the summary report and overall result and grade are released.

PAL will request the apprenticeship certificate, for successful endpoint assessments from the ESFA. Please note it is not the EPAO that produces and sends out the apprenticeship certificate, this is the responsibility of the ESFA and their chosen agents. **PAL will issues Records of Achievement, but these are not formal certificates and should not be treated as such.**

Resits or retakes where required will be discussed with the apprentice, employer, and provider. Resit and retake fees are detailed in PAL’s price list and information is also contained in the service level contract.

Results will be made available in 15 working days, from the final assessment, unless alternative arrangements and timelines have been agreed. PAL allows 15 working days for the third parties to enquire or appeal an assessment grade or overall result. If no such enquiry or appeal is received in this timescale, PAL will notify the ESFA of the results, as they stand.

Action/ Task	Expectation/ Timeframe
Completion of internal quality assurance activities associated with all required assessment components.	IQA time and activities are within the assessment plan timeframe. If the IQA deems actions or further evidence or moderation are required, this can extend the process
Submission of apprenticeship claim to ESFA.	In line with ESFA certification processes

PAL will process the completion (passes/merits^{*3}/distinctions and fails) and PAL will advise the ESFA of the outcome and overall assessment grade via the dedicated ESFA portal. EPA Pro system allows certification application for successful completions as well.

The issue of Apprenticeship Completion Certificates can be delayed if the information in the Individual Learner Record does not match those submitted by the PAL EPA Team.

The apprenticeship certificate is sent to the employer, unless there is a valid reason for sending the certificate to an alternative destination, a valid reason could include business closure, or the apprentice being made redundant from the employer. Regarding redundancy and the taking of EPA, please refer to the latest funding rules, if you require any further clarification, please contact PAL’s EPA team.

Cancelling or Rescinding Results

Professional Assessment reserves the right to cancel or rescind results if:

- malpractice is identified and proven

We will not withhold certification over financial matters, where an apprentice has completed their assessment. Please refer to our Withdrawal and sanctions policy as well as service level contracts for actions we will take where our terms and conditions have been breached.

³ * Many assessment plans do not have a merit grade

Post Results

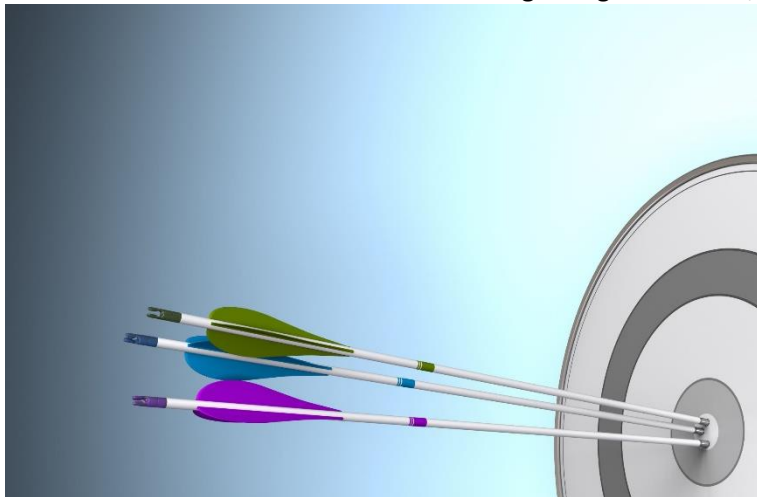
16. Results Enquiry

Where Apprentices are unhappy with the results of their assessments, the employer, apprentice, or provider can enquire about the results.

The PAL quality team can take you through the appeals and enquiry procedure and there is a dedicated email for appeals, which is epaappeals@professionalassessment.co.uk

Where an apprentice, provider or employer does not wish to appeal the assessment result but does want to complain about the EPA service, please see our complaints policy and contact our Business Operations team.

We also collect feedback from customers regarding our service, to help us improve our service.



17. Resits and Retakes

Please see our resit and retake policy. Please see our Pricing Policy. If you require further information, please contact the EPA team.

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

Our EPA team are available to discuss the resit and retake procedures. It is the responsibility of the provider and employer to be familiar with the grades and outcomes of the standard (s) they are working with. In the majority of cases PAL will charge a resit or retake fee, to the provider, please refer to our pricing policy or if you are a provider your service level contract will contain this information. PAL would not charge a resit or retake fee, if the reasons for such an event is the fault of PAL, i.e., the PAL assessor or PAL provided incorrect information that affected the apprentice's ability to complete the assessment, or where proven maladministration or malpractice is committed by a PAL representative.

In some cases, the resit or retake will limit the grade the apprentice can achieve, where a limiting grade is applied, this is noted in the relevant assessment plan and also noted in PAL's Resit and Retake policy.

Please note in no circumstances can an apprentice resit or retake an aspect of assessment to achieve a higher grade if they have passed and the assessment process was valid.

18. Fees and Cancellations

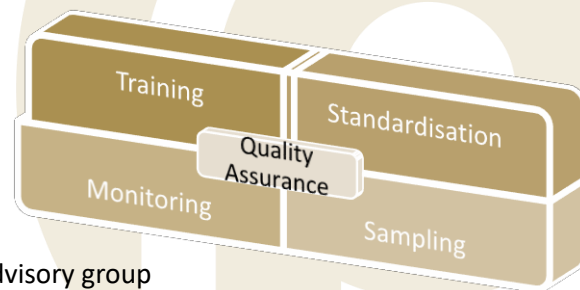
Please see our price list, which includes cancellation fees- PAL will have discussed these charges during contract negotiations.

19. Quality Assurance

PAL understands that Apprentices, Employers, and providers invest time and resource in the on-programme delivery and that apprentices have shown considerable determination and worked hard to reach the end-point assessment stage of the programme. PAL believes apprentices deserve the best opportunity to prove what they can do. It is vital

that all assessments are carried out securely and correctly, and that all assessment decisions are valid and reliable.

PAL endeavours to offer a fair and robust assessment service and to do this we ensure all our assessment and IQA team are well-trained, have a comprehensive knowledge of apprenticeship programme delivery from recruitment of an apprentice to certification and know how to undertake synoptic assessments.



All our PAL team, associates, consultants/ technical advisors, and advisory group members are subject to our conflict-of-interest policy. All assessors are expected to attend training, and standardisation activities as required. Our maladministration and malpractice policy, confidentiality policy, equality, diversity and inclusion policy alongside our sanction and suspension policy, demonstrates our ethos to assessing with integrity.

In all of our assessment activities we adhere to the assessment plan, and where we believe an aspect of assessment, as prescribed in the assessment plan is lacking in clarity or unviable, we talk with the relevant stakeholders and the regulator to ensure we can make our assessment processes as fair and efficient as possible. PAL will also inform the regulator where the assessment plan contradicts Ofqual's general conditions or EPA conditions, or if the guidance offered in the assessment plan, undermines valid and reliable assessment, to ensure that any recommendations PAL makes in regard to fair assessment, is in line with other significant stakeholders expectations.

For detailed information regarding our approach to design and development of assessment instruments, you can make contact with the development team via the info@ email- please make the subject of your email enquiry about design and development. If you wish to have more information on assessment delivery and awarding of results, please use the info@ email and mark your email for the attention of the PAL quality team.

20. Essential Assessor Requirements

Independent assessors must demonstrate that they:

- have no vested interest or personal stake in the outcome of assessing Apprentices
- undertake formal training and standardisation to ensure that assessment decisions are consistent and reliable
- comply with relevant PAL policies
- submit assessment decisions for quality assurance sampling in a timely fashion
- are subject to quality assurance checks; and
- meet continuing professional development requirements to maintain occupational competence

We also require that all our assessors and PAL personnel have a DBS (Disclosure and barring) check.

Training

All Assessors are required to undertake induction training to prepare them for the assessor role. Assessors are also required to maintain their occupational competence and attend standardisation activities and training as organised by PAL.

21. Standardisation and Moderation

All assessors are required to attend standardisation meetings, to ensure the consistency of 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 webinars.

Standardisations activities for PAL assessors are managed and co-ordinated by the PAL Quality team.

22. Monitoring

IQAs may accompany or be an observer via webinar to assessors carrying out assessment to ensure that the assessment is being administered safely, securely and in line with Professional Assessment guidance. The quality team will undertake post assessment checks, on a sampled basis, to ascertain assessor's conduct.

The quality team are also responsible for risk rating assessors and the quality manager oversees the risk (RAG) rating process.

Assessment documentation and assessment activities may also be subject to review by relevant regulatory bodies and in some circumstances an assessor may be accompanied by a representative from a government agency or the relevant regulator. Please see section 26.

23. Sampling

Assessors will be sampled for the administration of the various assessment methods and the related assessment decisions, based on their experience and performance and outcomes of quality assurance, and assigned risk (RAG) bandings.

IQA reporting ensures thorough and robust quality assurance is maintained to meet regulatory requirements. IQA reports also identify assessment trends and support the dissemination of best practice in assessment.

24. The Apprentice First

PAL will take all reasonable steps to ensure that all apprentices undertaking assessment are not disadvantaged in any way and have access to a valid (in accordance with the apprenticeship standards and accompanying assessment plan) and secure EPA. This includes ensuring that apprentices:

- are confident that Assessors and IQAs will adhere to relevant policies, codes of practice and codes of conduct
- have their personal data protected
- are kept safe, and that risk assessments are undertaken where appropriate; and
- are treated fairly and without prejudice.

25. External Quality Assurance

End-point assessment organisations such as PAL are subject to external quality assurance reviews to ensure the assessments delivered are valid, reliable, free from bias, transparent and fair. Responsibility for external quality assurance for the apprenticeship standards, PAL operates is Ofqual.

In addition to Ofqual, the OfS will take on the EQA responsibilities for other standards in 2022, these standards will relate to Higher Education.

PAL is under an obligation to comply with the conditions of the APAR register and any other pertinent regulatory body that oversees end-point assessment. It also requires its stakeholders to work and act in accordance with such conditions.

26. Third Party Involvement at Assessments

Third parties in this context can include members of the PAL Quality Team, Management or Directors and notably representatives from external organisations such as Ofqual.

Wherever possible the presence of additional personnel at an apprentice's assessment should only be for a defined and beneficial purpose and at all times the apprentice and employer should provide their permission for such an activity.

Third Party Presence at Assessments- Planning and Communication

There are occasions where either a member of the PAL Quality Team or a representative from Ofqual may wish to observe a live assessment, where this is the case and where possible this will be discussed with the apprentice and employer at the assessment plan meeting. If the request to observe is made after the planning date, the EPA team, or some cases the PAL Quality team will liaise with the apprentice and employer to check firstly if third party presence is viable, appropriate, and acceptable.

If the apprentice and employer are satisfied that the presence of another person does not present an issue regarding business commercial confidence or undermine the apprentice's confidence regarding the ensuing assessment, PAL will proceed with the assessment and third party presence.

For retrospective third party observations or reviews of assessment evidence, PAL will advise the apprentice of the undertaking and seek their permission. ⁴ Granted permissions or refusals will be noted as an additional note in either the assessment planning document, or in the notes section of epaPRO.

Any third party attending an assessment (this can include a member of the PAL Quality team or a representative from the regulator or other recognised agency or organisation) will provide the following:

- The name(s) of the third party (parties) and PAL will confirm with the representative there are no conflicts of interest with the assessor, apprentice, or employer
- Assurances that they understand that no recording can be made of any aspect of the assessment for their own purposes, no materials can be taken from the assessment and in no way can they actively participate or influence the assessment itself or any possible or attributable results or grades, unless there is a risk to any persons involved health, safety and or well-being and this has not been managed appropriately by any other parties involved in the assessment
- Assurances that the third party will abide by any rules and regulations associated with the assessment site and ensure their conduct is aligned to PAL's assessor protocols, and the requirements of the specific assessment plan and apprenticeship standard

Third Party Attendance and Protocols

Subject to PAL receiving the necessary assurances and confirmation from the apprentice and /or employer as detailed earlier on in this document, PAL expects the following from third parties attending an assessment or reviewing recorded assessments and supporting evidence.

- Where a third party attends a live assessment, they will introduce themselves to the apprentice and employer representative and confirm the purpose of their attendance.
- Any third party is expected to adhere to PAL's protocols and policies in accordance with good assessment practice.
- Third Party representatives for live onsite assessments will ensure they arrive on time and have an appropriate form of ID and the correct PPE where required and they will observe all health, safety and security requirements as requested by the employer.

⁴ Note this applies to where the third party is from an external organisation. For PAL personnel and notably the PAL quality team it is standard practice to sample

- If a third party attendee arrives late to an assessment, the assessor has the right to refuse access to the assessment if the late arrival is perceived as being a disruption. to the apprentice.
- Third parties should be present for the entirety of the assessment unless they are required to leave the assessment as a result of an emergency or advance warning has been given that they will only be able to attend part of the assessment.
- As part of any briefing and prior to the commencement of the assessment, the assessor will confirm that the third party representative will not be involved in the assessment, nor will they be able to influence any assessment decisions or results.
- Apart from the written notes a third party will not record any aspect of a live onsite assessment. Where a third party is attending a remote session, they will ensure post any introductions, their microphone and camera are switched off and they will not be allowed to use any function such as the chat function.
- Third parties if reviewing assessments and evidence retrospectively will not be allowed to take evidence away or have access to recordings outside of the duration agreed for the purpose of the review, unless the third party has the authority and remit to demand such access.
- if at any time the assessor and/or apprentice feels the third party representative is having an adverse effect on the apprentice's ability to concentrate or undertake the assessment, or they pose a risk to safety the third party representative will be asked to leave the assessment.
- If the third party wishes to ask the apprentice, or employer any questions, they will seek permission from the persons concerned and only ask these at the conclusion of the assessment.
- Any points of clarification or questions to the assessor will be made after the assessment and after the apprentice/employer has left the meeting or assessment location.



Appendix One Roles and Responsibilities

Stage	Employer Responsibilities	Provider Responsibilities	EPAO Responsibilities
Pre Gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure each Apprentice can meet the requirements of the Assessment Plan ➤ Guarantee that Apprentices are given the mandatory 20% off the job, to achieve their Apprenticeship (note it is the Training Provider's responsibility to record the 20% OJT) ➤ Liaise with the Provider to identify and agree on suitable assessment windows as to when Apprentices will be ready to be booked onto an EPA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promptly register each Apprentice for EPA, via epaPRO- our scheduling system ➤ Identify, request, and seek authorisation for any Reasonable Adjustments arrangements which may be needed for an Apprentice, in accordance with PAL's guidance ➤ Provide appropriate On-Programme training/assessment to ensure each Apprentice meets the required skills and knowledge level of their Apprenticeship ➤ Advise each Apprentice of the EPA process (Registration to Results) ➤ Liaise with the Employer to identify and agree on suitable dates as to when Apprentices will be ready to be booked onto an EPA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide access to relevant apprenticeship standard support materials ➤ Make accounts, access users are set up correctly for Provider and employer to utilise epaPRO

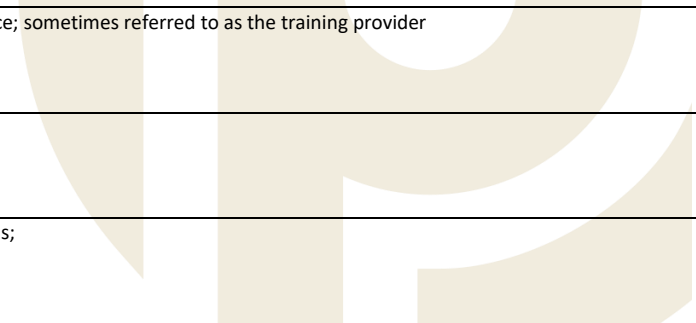
Stage	Employer Responsibilities	Provider Responsibilities	EPAO Responsibilities
Gateway and Assessment scheduling and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work alongside the Provider to ensure the timely sign off at Gateway of the Apprentice's competence and readiness for EPA ➤ Assist with Gateway Evidence as required or requested by PAL's specification, and assessment plan ➤ Ensure Apprentices are given sufficient time to complete any Gateway Evidence requirements leading up to the EPA ➤ Make provisions for optimum dates for EPA and possible alternatives in readiness for assessment planning and scheduling discussions ➤ Confirm apprentice's readiness for EPA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with the Employer to ensure the timely sign off at Gateway of the Apprentice's competence and readiness for EPA ➤ Make a Gateway submission to Professional Assessment, for Apprentices where the minimum duration of an Apprenticeship has been met and the apprentice is registered as being in-training ➤ Provide additional details to Professional Assessment to progress to facilitate assessment scheduling ➤ Provide all mandatory information to fulfil the ESFA requirements ➤ Make any requests for Reasonable Adjustments, if required and not already done so and provide the necessary evidence ➤ Provide required Gateway Evidence for Maths and English guaranteeing these are original and sufficient ➤ Ensure the provision of any other Gateway Evidence deemed by the Assessment Plan as part of the Gateway process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide information and any required documents to facilitate gateway submissions ➤ Set up assessment scheduling call and assign assessor ➤ Check Gateway Evidence submitted as part of the Gateway process is sufficient, for EPA to progress. ➤ Confirm apprentice ID ➤ Arrange time and date for assessment planning appointment via videoconferencing or telephone ➤ Complete assessment planning with employer and apprentice, confirming all EPA arrangements and assessment conditions in accordance with the assessment plan and PAL's apprenticeship standard specification

Stage	Employer Responsibilities	Provider Responsibilities	EPAO Responsibilities
EPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Make certain that the Apprentice is available for their EPA ➤ Advise PAL of any changes regarding agreed dates and timings for independent assessment ➤ Ensure appropriate environment is booked and made available for the Apprentices to carry out required activities for their EPA, if at the Employer's own premises ➤ Ensure appropriate environment to meet health & safety requirements ➤ Ensure employer representation for assessments such as professional discussions and presentations are in place, where the assessment plan dictates the presence but not the involvement of an employer/line manager. ➤ Any equipment and technology required is available and in full working order, to demonstrate the Apprentice's competence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Upload any additional evidence in support of the EPA and in accordance with the timelines specified in the assessment plan and confirmed in assessment planning discussion ➤ Liaise with the Employer to ensure that EPA arrangements are satisfactory ➤ Make sure the Apprentice is available to carry out required activities for EPA ➤ Check back with the apprentice that they are confident about their EPA ➤ Securely manage any sensitive Assessment Documentation (where applicable, note PAL rarely asks a Provider or Employer to handle any assessment documentation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Check venue to meet health & safety requirements ➤ Check webinar/virtual environment suitable and free from disruptions and distractions ➤ Ensure appropriate introductions and briefings are issued pre and post assessment delivery ➤ Attend sites to carry out face to face assessments ➤ Undertake virtual assessments and invigilation in line with PAL's protocols ➤ Assess Assessment Evidence

Stage	Employer Responsibilities	Provider Responsibilities	EPAO Responsibilities
Post-EPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Issue apprenticeship certificate to the apprentice- as the certificate is sent to the designated employer address ➤ Work with the Provider, if applicable, to action any feedback on areas, where the Apprentices has not achieved and may require further support for their reassessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Update the Individual Learner Record with achievements ➤ Support the apprentice as required if resits or retakes are required ➤ Re-book any Apprentices who have not achieved a particular EPA assessment and need to resit in the assessment window or retake once appropriate support has been given. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Complete assessment activities and grade overall EPA ➤ Quality assure assessment activities ➤ Provide summary feedback/assessment report ➤ Process results via epaPRO ➤ Inform ESFA of assessment outcome and grades ➤ Claim Apprenticeship certificate from the ESFA where the apprentice successful and inform ESFA of overall fail

Appendix Two Glossary of Terms

APAR	The ESFA register for approved training providers and end-point assessment organisations
Gateway	means the point at which an apprentice has completed their training and is ready to enter EPA;
Gateway Declaration Form	means the document completed by the Employer, Provider and the Apprentice following the Gateway Meeting;
Gateway Evidence	means the documents completed by the Apprentice, the Provider and/or the Employer and provided to PAL to confirm completion of the training element of the apprenticeship;
Gateway Meeting	means the meeting to agree that the Apprentice has gained the required level of knowledge, skills, and behaviours, along with any mandatory qualifications as well as passing English and maths at a level set by the Apprenticeship Standard;
Manual	means this Manual to the End-Point Assessment Service;
IA	means Independent Assessors. Note PAL uses the terms assessors; independent assessors (IAs) and independent end-point assessors (IEAs) interchangeably, they all refer to the same person/function.
Individual Learner Record	means the Apprentice's record of learning and training that the Provider completes throughout the Apprenticeship
IfATE	means Institute for Apprenticeships and technical education;
On Programme	means the period an Apprenticeship is undertaken by an Apprentice prior to EPA;



Providers	means the organisation providing training to the Apprentice; sometimes referred to as the training provider
Registration	means the processing of registering for an EPA
Trailblazer Apprenticeships	means new Apprenticeships designed by <i>Trailblazer</i> Groups;

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Persons Responsible for review: Business Operations Director, EPA Managers and Quality Manager

This manual has been agreed by Linda Martin, Managing Director