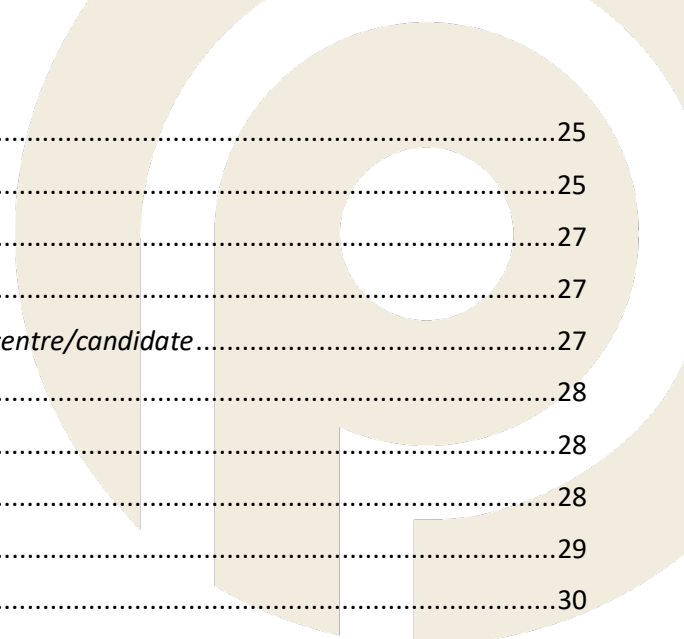# Professional Assessment Ltd

Retailer ST0327/AP01 Level 2
End-Point Assessment Specification & Guidance

Contents

Summary of Revisions to End-Point Assessment Guidance and Specification

Summary of Revisions	Revised Version Number	Date of Revision
Removal of the requirement for apprentices to attempt the upskill to L2 English and Maths Functional Skills prior to Gateway.	n/a	From 01/08/2022
Gateway Declaration Record updated – Appendix 1	n/a	From 01/08/2022
Transfer of External Quality Assurance Provider (EQAP) from People 1st to Ofqual	n/a	From 31/12/2022
PAL referencing added to the knowledge test specifics table	n/a	From 19/12/2023

Overview

The end-point assessment in this specification relates to the Retailer ST0327 AP01 Apprenticeship. This apprenticeship is at level 2 and is for apprentices who are responsible for helping customers buy products or services from retail organisations.

A retailer needs to have a good understanding of the stock being sold, and the different ways in which a customer can shop and pay for their purchases. They should be motivated by the desire to complete a sale and knowing that a customer is happy with their purchase, seeking opportunities to exceed expectations. A retailer can work in a variety of establishments such as small boutiques, large high street chains, supermarkets, department stores, garden centres, farm shops and specialisms such as funeral services, or in remote environments such as on-line and mail order retail.

The typical duration for this apprenticeship is 12 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 Pass/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 1 mathematics and English qualifications.

➢ End-point assessment (EPA) - all components, within the assessment window.

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

As the end-point assessment organisation, Professional Assessment Ltd will claim for the certificate on behalf of the apprentices. 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 Apprentices and Technical Education (IfATE)

Standard Title	Retailer
Level	2
Standard Number	ST0327
LARS Number	101
Named EQA organisation	Ofqual
Duration of Apprenticeship	Typically, 12 months but the actual length of the apprenticeship will be decided by the employer.
Duration of End-Point Assessment	3 months

Date the Assessment Plan scheduled is 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 1 Maths and Level 1 English. There are no mandatory professional qualifications within this apprenticeship.
End-Point Assessment Methods	Knowledge Test Practical Observation Professional Discussion

Introduction

This handbook contains the relevant information and guidance required of apprentices to achieve the EPA for the Retailer apprenticeship and should be used in conjunction with the Retailer ST0327/AP01 Padlet[1] – Assessment Information for Training Providers, 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 EPA components to receive the apprenticeship certificate.

References to third-party material made in this specification are made in good faith. Professional Assessment Ltd 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.

Professional Assessment Ltd (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 a synoptic 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

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[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

apprenticeship. In this context, independence, means without influence or bias and the 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 the end-point assessment must be made by the independent assessment organisation.

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

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

Apprenticeship Standard Objective

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

Progression

This apprenticeship provides an ideal steppingstone into specialist, team leading, supervisory or first line management roles within retail and higher level training and apprenticeships.

Who is Professional Assessment (PAL)?

Professional Assessment Ltd provides services for training organisations 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 full-time, 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' meeting to agree that the apprentice has gained the required level of knowledge, skills, and behaviours, along with English and maths at a level 1.

To confirm this meeting has taken place, the employer, training provider and apprentice are required to complete a Gateway Declaration Record, an example of which is included in the Appendix of this handbook[2], alternatively, training providers and employers can use their documentation, with the caveat, that the document must record the information as stipulated on the Professional Assessment Gateway form.

Professional Assessment Ltd also needs evidence of functional skills attainment (or equivalent qualifications). Please check with the EPA team via info@professionalassessment.co.uk to check which qualifications are accepted as suitable alternatives to functional. Evidence must be in the form of a certificate.

Professional Assessment will not take an EPA booking until the required evidence is submitted. For auditing purposes, the Gateway Declaration Form 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 Professional Assessment apprenticeship certificate consent form, apprentice ID form and authentication of evidence form to be completed at the Gateway meeting and submitted. If the three documents are not made available at the gateway review, the independent end-point assessor will collect these documents, as part of the assessment planning process.

If the planning meeting will be completed on-line, these documents will need to be shared as part of the assessment planning process and emailed to epasupportservices@professionalassessment.co.uk.

The recommended approach during the on-programme assessment (month 1-12) 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.
- ➢ 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.
- ➢ 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 - this can be used in reviews with the line manager and training provider as well as contributing to the professional discussion as part of the end-point assessment.

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

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[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
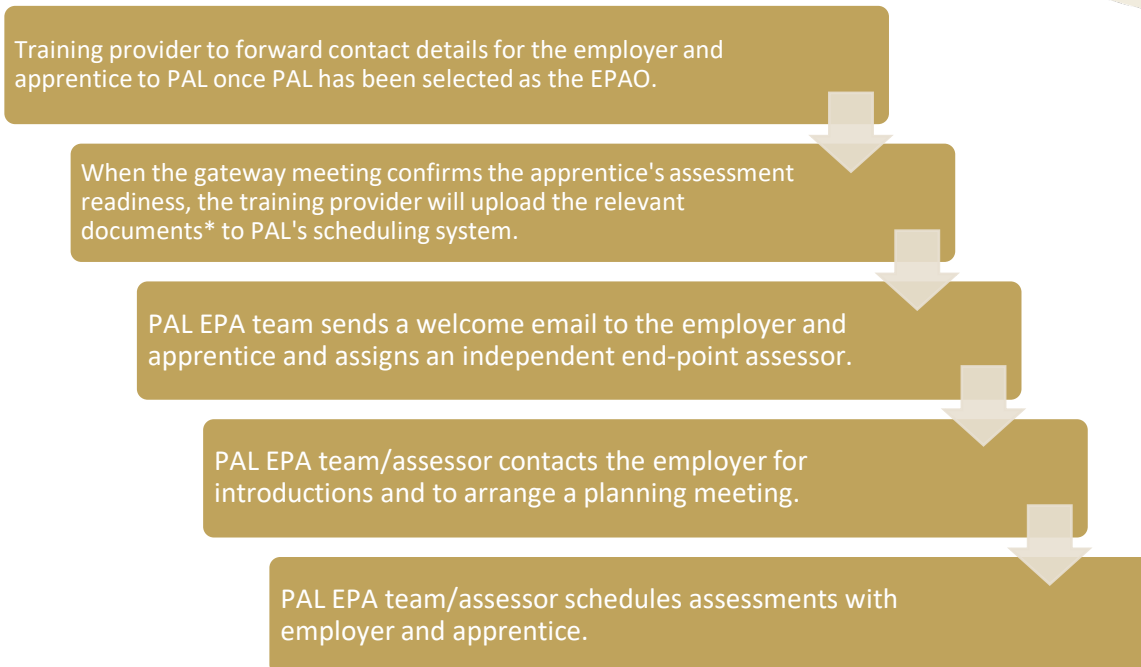
Language of assessment

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 Standard Support policy and Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments policy.

How is end-point assessment delivered?

Training provider to forward contact details for the employer and apprentice to PAL once PAL has been selected as the EPAO.

When the gateway meeting confirms the apprentice's assessment readiness, the training provider will upload the relevant documents* to PAL's scheduling system.

PAL EPA team sends a welcome email to the employer and apprentice and assigns an independent end-point assessor.

PAL EPA team/assessor contacts the employer for introductions and to arrange a planning meeting.

PAL EPA team/assessor schedules assessments with employer and apprentice.

Relevant documents:
- ➢ *A completed Gateway record confirming readiness and/or subsequent updates.*
- ➢ *Certified evidence of functional skills achievement or acceptable equivalents.*
- ➢ *Any relevant supporting documents or certificates that support the readiness case.*

The focus of the end-point assessment is on the apprentice being able to demonstrate competence in the role and meet the requirements of the standard, illustrating this through the work that they have done. It takes place once the apprentice has met the Gateway criteria, and consists of the following assessment methods:

1. Assessment of knowledge through a test using scenarios, questions, and responses.
2. Assessment of competency through a practical observation.
3. Assessment of knowledge and competence through a professional discussion.

The assessment plan mandates that the test must be the first assessment component, followed by the observation and finally the professional discussion.

For the Retailer standard, all apprentices will be assessed in the areas of:

- Customer
- Business
- Financial
- Marketing
- Communication
- Sales and promotion
- Product and service
- Brand reputation
- Merchandising
- Stock
- Technical
- Team
- Performance
- Legal and governance
- Diversity
- Environment.

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 content meets the assessment plan requirements but does not have a role in the formal end-point assessment or grade decision.

The methods of assessment will build up a cumulative picture of how well the apprentice has met the requirements of the standard. The apprenticeship includes fail, pass and distinction grades with the overall grade based on the apprentice's combined performance in each assessment method. The apprentice must pass all three assessment methods to pass overall. In order to achieve a distinction, the apprentice must demonstrate competence across all of the pass assessment criteria, and all of the distinction assessment criteria from the observation and professional discussion. These criteria will be detailed further on in this specification.

If any assessment activity is failed it must be retaken. Apprentices cannot achieve the apprenticeship without gaining at least a pass in every assessment activity.

Grading Indicators

This apprenticeship includes fail, pass, and distinction grades. An apprentice achieving a pass grade is expected to be fully competent in all areas of the standard. The distinction grade is designed to recognise the small proportion of apprentices who are seen as outstanding employees, regularly going beyond what is required to be competent in the role and seen as having greatest potential for the future.

The apprentice who **fails** could be described as:	The apprentice who achieves a **pass** could be described as:	The apprentice who achieves a **distinction** could be described as:
➢ currently unable to meet all of the key standards set for the role (both what is delivered and how it is delivered)	➢ someone who meets the requirements for the role (both what is delivered and how it is delivered), but rarely or never exceeding them	➢ consistently exceeding the standards set for the role (both what is delivered and how it is delivered)

The apprentice who **fails** could be described as:	The apprentice who achieves a **pass** could be described as:	The apprentice who achieves a **distinction** could be described as:
➢ currently unable to demonstrate they can meet the key standards at the level	➢ doing what is typically expected at this level, but rarely or never above and beyond the minimum standards	➢ going beyond what is typically expected at this level
➢ currently unable to perform well in all standard situations	➢ able to perform well in standard situations but may struggle to adapt to non-typical scenarios	➢ able to perform well in difficult situations or when under pressure
➢ unable to fulfil all parts of the job well to a satisfactory standard	➢ being seen as an able colleague, but not necessarily a 'shining star'	➢ being seen as a role model by others
➢ someone who needs further development in order to be able to work effectively in all aspects of the job role at this level	➢ can work effectively at their level, but shows little or no immediate potential to be able to work or progress upwards	➢ able to work upwards as well as with peers
➢ someone who does not understand every aspect of the job role	➢ showing they understand the job role, but not always the wider context of the work they are doing	➢ showing they understand the wider context of the work they are doing

The following flow chart sets out the sequences of the Gateway meeting and end-point assessment.
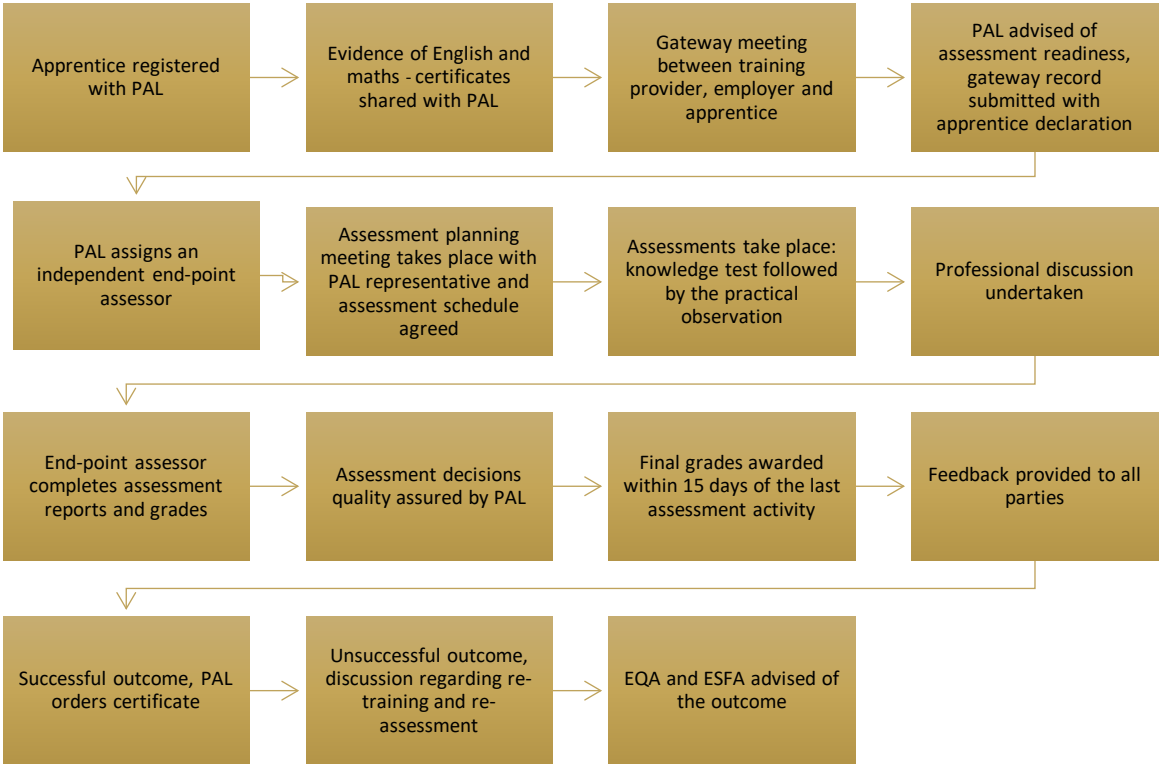
Who can carry out end-point assessment?

End-point assessors for this standard are required to:

- ➢ Have excellent knowledge and understanding of the apprenticeship standard.
- ➢ Hold a recognised current workplace assessment qualification.
- ➢ Have current, relevant occupational expertise, and knowledge, at the relevant level of the occupational area(s) they are assessing, which has been gained through 'hands on' experience in the industry.
- ➢ Practice standardised assessment principles set out by the assessment organisation.
- ➢ Have sufficient resources to carry out the role of independent end assessor i.e., time and budget.
- ➢ Undertake relevant and effective CPD activity to meet PALs requirements.

All 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.

Professional Assessment Ltd 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 full range of skills, knowledge and behaviours have been met; this includes the knowledge test, practical observation, and professional discussion.

Internal quality assurance requirements

Professional Assessment Ltd requires all quality assurance staff to hold a recognised internal quality assurance qualification. IQA staffs are subject to the requirements of an end-point 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, and are assessed consistently, reliably and fairly by all EPAs. Policies can be shared upon request, please contact info@professionalassessment.co.uk. Essential policies are also available via the Padlet and our website.

In accordance with these policies Professional Assessment Ltd will:

- ➢ Develop and maintain a set of assessment tools, to be used by all assessors when carrying out assessments.
- ➢ Ensure assessors for this standard meet with the assessment plan competency requirements.
- ➢ Train and develop all assessors to ensure reliable and consistent assessment of Retailer 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.
- ➢ 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 Retailer apprenticeship will be undertaken by Ofqual.

Standardisation and moderation

All 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 or our independent observation team may accompany assessors carrying out EPA to ensure that the EPA is being administered safely, securely and in line with Professional Assessment guidance.

For further information on quality assurance, standardisation and moderation please see PAL's policies.

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, 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.

End-point assessment planning and scheduling

Employers and/or training providers[3] 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, we will allocate an independent end-point assessor, and either they or a PAL representative will arrange a planning meeting on receipt and validation of the gateway evidence.

The purpose of the planning meeting is to share information with the independent end-point assessor, in order to support the assessment process and to agree a plan for the upcoming assessment activities for the apprentices. The independent end-point 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.

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[3] Note PAL endeavours to have agreements with both employers and training providers, to ensure all parties are aware of our service offer and role in the apprenticeship journey.

The end-point assessment will be conducted over a period of three 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.

Re-assessment requirements for each component

For **Component 1** – Knowledge test: if the apprentice does not meet the requirements to achieve the minimum marks to pass the knowledge test in their first assessment attempt, they can retake another (different) test.

For **Component 2** – Practical workplace observation: if the apprentice's activities do not meet the requirements to achieve the minimum requirements in their first assessment attempt, a further full observation assessment of the apprentice will be carried out.

For **Component 3** – Professional discussion: if the apprentice's evidence does not meet the requirements to pass the professional discussion in their first assessment attempt, a further full discussion assessment of the apprentice will be carried out.

If an apprentice fails two or more components, they will be referred to the training provider for a further period of teaching and learning before end-point assessment can continue or restart.

When retaking an assessment activity, the maximum grade that can be achieved for that activity is a pass.

A maximum of two resits per assessment activity will be permitted.

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 assessor, but if this is not possible PAL reserves the right to assign a different assessor.

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.

Any assessment method resit/retake must be taken during the maximum EPA period; otherwise, the entire EPA must be retaken, unless in the opinion of the EPAO exceptional circumstances apply outside the control of the apprentice or their employer. Resits/retakes are not offered to apprentices wishing to move from pass to distinction.

Assessment Methods

This guide has been produced as a support document to help the apprentice to prepare for end-point assessment. It has been designed to be used alongside the Retailer Assessment plan and marking criteria.

As previously noted, the Retailer Standard is made up of three assessments: a knowledge test, a practical workplace observation and a professional discussion.

All end-point assessments should take place within the apprentice's usual working hours and will be planned by the independent end-point assessor with the apprentice and line manager at the planning meeting to comply with the assessment plan and business requirements. The independent end-point assessor will discuss the business expectations, procedures and brand standards to gain insight into the establishment's requirements and will utilise this information to support assessment decisions.

Assessment decisions will not be communicated by the independent end-point assessor straight away, they will document and record their assessment decisions within five working days of the assessments taking place. These decisions are then shared for internal quality assurance checks prior to being communicated to the apprentice, employer, and training provider. The assessments are, in part, inter-dependent, so a final assessment decision cannot be made until all elements of assessment have been completed. Employers can access a detailed summary record of assessment by accessing PAL's online system.

Knowledge Test

Key facts about the knowledge test

The knowledge test will comprise of a set of scenario-based questions which test the knowledge areas of the standard. Some questions will require the apprentice to consider a course of action or solution to a situation/problem based on a 'real-life' workplace activity in line with the identified requirements of the standard. The questions will be scenario based requiring the apprentice to demonstrate reasoning and joined up thinking, demonstrating synoptic performance against the key elements of the standard.

The standard requires that the apprentice has a breadth of knowledge relevant to the retail sector so they are expected to know about the business environment, general terminology and the Retailer role in general, outside of their own specific areas of operation, company processes and procedures.

The assessment will be comprised of 20 multiple-choice questions (MCQ) and the apprentice has 30 minutes in which to complete the test, plus 10 minutes reading time.

How will the knowledge test be graded?

In order to pass the multiple-choice test, the apprentice must correctly answer questions across the breadth of the standard.

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

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

Knowledge test grade boundaries

Total Mark	Grade		
13/20 65% and above	Pass		
12/20 and below, equal to or less than 64%	Fail		

Note – there is no distinction grade for the knowledge test, an apprentice can either pass or fail the test.

Knowledge test specifics

The test will contain questions in the following areas of the apprenticeship standard. In order to pass, apprentices will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a representative proportion of the standard.

Theme	PAL Ref	Knowledge
Financial	R1	➤ General principles of operating commercially in the retail environment
	R1	➤ What costs are (the cost of all resources including for example: stock, packaging items, stationery, time, etc.)
	R1	➤ How a different approach to just one process that does not affect great customer service can save the business money (e.g. the use packaging material)
	R1	➤ Key performance indicators that support the profitability of the business
	R1	➤ The sales targets for the business and how businesses aim to reduce waste
	R1	➤ Where and when wastage can occur and how to minimise it (e.g. reducing the rate of returned goods)
	R1	➤ Techniques and opportunities for increasing sales in the business at the lowest cost (e.g. time invested into achieving the sale)
Communications	R5	➤ Why excellent communication is so important to businesses
	R5	➤ The impact on businesses of poor or inappropriate communication
	R5	➤ The impact of body language in communication
	R5	➤ The importance of non-judgmental listening in the communication process
	R5	➤ A variety of communication methods to deal with different situations
Brand reputation	R7	➤ The link between brand reputation and business success
	R7	➤ Understand how conduct both during and out of working hours can impact on brand and business reputation (including use of social media)
	R7	➤ Recognise how own actions impact on brand reputation both positively and negatively
Merchandising	R8	➤ Recognise the importance of window and store displays in translating brand or business identity to customers
	R8	➤ The implications of misrepresentation of or damage to the product through excessive alteration in merchandising
	R8	➤ How merchandising can support the sales process
Stock	R2	➤ Recognise the importance of ensuring the right level of stock in the business, stock control and understand the implications of poor stock control in the business
	R2	➤ How to keep accurate stock records and why this is important to ensuring the right levels of stock are maintained
	R2	➤ Why security is important when storing stock
Marketing	R6	➤ What 'business positioning' is and how it relates to market share and competitors
	R6	➤ What a unique selling point is, how businesses benefit from them
	R6	➤ What a promotions and advertising campaign is and why businesses use them

Theme	PAL Ref	Knowledge
	R6	➢ How methods used for promotion impact on the customer's purchasing decision
	R6	➢ The importance of being aware of local competitors and their offers
	R6	➢ What a strapline is and how it is used
Legal and governance	R9	➢ How consumer legislation protects the rights of customers
	R9	➢ How consumers are protected from unfair trading practices
	R9	➢ The main requirements of consumer credit, data protection, weights and measures, licensing and age-related legislation, how they protect consumers and how they impact the business
	R9	➢ The main requirements of legislation in relation to health, safety, security and confidentiality
	R9	➢ How to identify and assess risks to health, safety and security
	R9	➢ How to work safely and how to deal with risks, accidents and emergencies
	R9	➢ The legal and commercial implications to the business of contravening legislation
	R9	➢ Own role and responsibilities in relation to complying with legal requirements
Environment	R10	➢ The main environmental matters that have implications for businesses and if there are any that have particular relevance for the local business community
	R10	➢ How work activities impact on the environment

What is meant by scenario-based questions?

A scenario-based question presents a scene, problem, challenge or situation that an apprentice may have reasonably expected to have experienced in their role and asks them select typically from four options, the most reasonable and accurate response. Some questions may require more than one response, the question will specify this, where that is the case.

As part of the on-programme delivery model, the apprentice should be afforded regular opportunities to undertake practice questions and complete at least one mock test, in exam-like conditions, before the gateway review.

PAL will provide access to mock questions.

Examination conditions

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

The assessment can be conducted either on or off the employer's premises but must be undertaken under the correct examination conditions to comply with Professional Assessments Ltd Invigilation policy and, where assessments are commissioned via a third party, a secondary policy of requirements.

Some of the key conditions for the assessment are:

➢ A controlled environment (away from day-to-day work pressures).
➢ The environment must have suitable lighting, ventilation, and privacy.
➢ The apprentice must be undisturbed.
➢ An exam in progress sign is displayed.
➢ The apprentice has access to a clock.
➢ A dictionary be made available (in compliance with third party policies.)

- Where group testing is completed, apprentices must have sufficient space and will face in the same direction, the examination must begin at the same time for all apprentices, apprentices who complete their assessment sooner and others must not distract others from their assessments.

As the assessment is externally set and marked, the assessment can be invigilated by a number of persons including:

- The independent end-point assessor
- The on-programme trainer
- An employer representative (dependent on the test issuer, PAL will notify if employer invigilator is permissible).

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

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

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

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

Observation

Key Facts about the observation

The practical observation is a two hour assessment (+/- 10% at the discretion of the end-point assessor) which **must** include observation of the customer, business, communication, and brand reputation elements of the standard working within the apprentice's specialism in their usual workplace. This assessment provides excellent opportunity to assess the apprentice synoptically, working in line with requirements for legislative compliance, business standard operating procedures and customer service practice.

During the two hour observation, the apprentice should have the opportunity to move from one area/function of the business to another if required. This should enable them to best demonstrate how they have applied their knowledge, skills and behaviours to achieve genuine and demanding work objectives.

Only in exceptional circumstances can the assessment be split, for example, if the apprentice is working across two different sites for the same business, and this must be agreed with the end-point assessor at the planning meeting.

Planning for the observation

The observation in the workplace will follow the knowledge test and must take place before the professional discussion.

The apprentice and employer are required to provide a two week working schedule, including business levels, for the end-point assessor to determine when to carry out the observation during the planning meeting. The assessor will plan the observation in conjunction with the apprentice and employer. Observations must be planned in advance to allow for quality assurance activity.

It is recognised that in a small number of retail environments, such as betting shops or funeral directors, an independent end-point assessor may have an adverse impact on customer behaviour and therefore the retail operation. In such operations, should the method described above not be feasible the independent end-point assessor must propose an alternative method to People 1st who will advise on the most appropriate course of action. This may, for example, include the independent end-point assessor observing whilst posing as a customer or other member of the team and utilising additional information through audio or visual recordings and witness testimony.

For retailers working in a remote environment, such as in telephone, on-line and mail order retail it is recognised that opportunities to merchandise, particularly if selling a utility or service rather than a product, may be limited. In these instances, the minimum observation requirements for merchandising do not need to be met; however the apprentice must have gained the skills, knowledge and behaviour through their programme of learning and development, which may be obtained in a simulated environment. This inclusion ensures consistent coverage of the whole standard and aids the apprentice should they transfer to an onsite retail environment in the future. The end-point assessment will then incorporate merchandising into the professional discussion to assess the apprentice's competence in this area, it is not required as part of the observation.

The observation scheduling must:

➢ Maximise the apprentices opportunity to demonstrate competence across the standard requirements.
➢ Be conducted at a time which reflects typical working conditions and avoids seasonal periods of low levels of trading.
➢ Allow the apprentice to demonstrate all aspects of the standard being observed.
➢ Take a synoptic approach to observing the overall competence.
➢ If necessary, the apprentice should have the opportunity to move to a different area of the business to perform another part of their role in order to generate evidence for the observation.

PAL encourages apprentices to take ownership of their end-point assessment process and, if they wish, plan relevant workplace activities during the timescale of the observation, which will showcase their skills against the assessment plan standards. For example, an apprentice may wish to take part in a team briefing session to demonstrate their communication skills.

It is important that the end-point assessor is unobtrusive and does not affect business activities. If a customer comments on the presence of the observer, the assessor will advise them that an assessment process is in progress, with minimum distraction for the apprentice and the business.

With regard to the ratio of end-point assessors to apprentices required for a workplace observation, the expectation is that this will normally be 1:1. There may be work environments, however, where it is possible to fairly assess more than one apprentice during the same four hour period. The focus must be on ensuring that the apprentice(s) is not disadvantaged in anyway and has the maximum opportunity to perform to the best of their abilities. The end-point assessor would seek approval from the quality manager for authorisation in this instance.

Observation Specifics

In order to pass the practical observation, the apprentice must satisfy the end-point assessor that they are capable across four key areas of the standard as detailed in the table below. These four areas are:

- ➢ Customer
- ➢ Business
- ➢ Communications
- ➢ Brand reputation

In order to pass, all apprentices will demonstrate ALL of the following during the observation:	
Customer	➢ Make every interaction with a customer an opportunity to increase, gain, maintain or re-establish their loyalty ➢ Clearly communicate accurate, relevant and helpful information to customers, checking their understanding ➢ Deliver excellent customer service in line with the business' culture and values in all activities ➢ Ask appropriate questions in order to help customers ➢ Shows a genuine interest in customer service which clearly demonstrates understanding of how own behaviour will influence customers' opinion of the business, their purchasing decision, and ultimately overall profitability ➢ Present the culture of the organisation through own personal presentation and interaction with customers
Business	➢ Interact with customers and build a rapport in a way that demonstrates an understanding of the business vision, objectives and brand standards ➢ Use service techniques and procedures that deliver the brand standards ➢ Carry out all activities in a manner that promotes the value of the business brand standards to customers, team members and other stakeholders (e.g. suppliers)
Communications	➢ Communicate with an awareness of the situation, adapting it as necessary, and responding appropriately ➢ Support customer interactions by adapting body language and tone to the person/ people being served
Brand reputation	➢ Uphold and personally demonstrate a positive brand and business reputation at all times

All other criteria can be assessed by EITHER the observation OR the professional discussion. Please refer to Appendix 2 – Annex E for full details, including those required to achieve a distinction grade.

During the workplace observation

The independent end-point assessor will record their assessment decisions on the observation assessment record (written), which is securely stored within the apprentices folder to communicate decisions for quality assurance.

The assessor may wish to take supporting photographic evidence, to aid in communicating and evidencing their assessment decision. There are no specific requirements for photographic evidence of the observation, this is determined at the discretion of the assessor.

Where photographs are used, appropriate evidence could include:

- ➢ Communication records such as shift handover notes
- ➢ Completed due diligence records (within legal parameters).

The evidence will be named via conventions: Apprentice first name - surname - evidence type, e.g. temperature record. The assessor will upload evidence to the apprentice's folder within 48 hours of the assessment for secure storage.

What could cause an observation to be abandoned or halted?

Abandoning or halting a practical observation would be subject to the judgement of the end-point assessor, for example, whereby the apprentice or others may be endangered by a breach of legislative requirements such as health and safety practices. The assessment under this circumstance will result in a fail. In all circumstances the employer (line manager), apprentice and internal quality assurer should be advised of a halted, abandoned, or deferred assessment by the assessor and the rationale for the decision recorded. It will be the responsibility of PAL's quality manager to advise the training provider, EQA body and, where applicable, the ESFA of the situation and any re-bookings.

An assessment may be made void, for example in an emergency evacuation procedure, requiring evacuation from the location. This would not result in a fail - PAL would, in discussion, either void the assessment or dependent on the time taken, count this as one observation and then undertake a second observation.

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

Professional Discussion

Key facts about the professional discussion

The professional discussion assessment is a 60 minute discussion (+10% at the discretion of the end-point assessor) between the apprentice and the end-point assessor. The employer is required to be present to support (but not lead) the apprentice and to confirm information provided, supporting authenticity.

The professional discussion will include areas of the standard which have not yet been evidenced by other assessment methods.

The professional discussion is an opportunity for the apprentice to showcase evidence of the additional learning or professional development they have undertaken during the apprenticeship.

Professional discussion specifics

The discussion will be divided into three stages:

- ➢ A review of the period of learning, development, and continuous assessment.
- ➢ Coverage of the remaining areas for the professional discussion.
- ➢ Personal development and reflection – focussing on the professional development area.

After introductions the apprentice will be invited to give a five-minute summary of how they feel they have performed during their programme (self-appraisal). Their summary should include the highlights and lowlights and what key lessons they consider they have learnt during their programme.

The second stage of the discussion will focus on the remaining areas of the standard, not completed in the observation.

The final personal development section of the professional discussion is an opportunity for the apprentice to sum up how their journey as an apprentice has developed their personal skills and what they would like to do in the future to continue their development. The apprentice is encouraged to refer to examples of personal development

planning undertaken, including the impact of this and will evaluate feedback received on their performance. The professionalism/professional development areas of the standard will be the focus of this part of the discussion.

In order to pass, all apprentices will demonstrate ALL of the following during the professional discussion:

Professional Discussion – Pass Criteria	
Customer	➢ The key features and benefits of excellent customer service as defined by the business and in contrast to other businesses in the industry ➢ The importance of excellent customer service to business success and the implications of poor customer service ➢ The importance of repeat business and ways to encourage customer loyalty in the retail industry ➢ What is meant by a 'customer experience' ➢ Where to find information on customers within the business ➢ Typical customer profile(s) – i.e. who the target customers of the business are and the products/services that they typically purchase ➢ An appreciation of different types of customer, their motivation to purchase products/service and their different needs ➢ The unique needs of certain customers and how to help them in line with business procedures and environment (e.g. helping a mother with a buggy in a small shop, or a person with a disability) ➢ How to recognise and adapt approach to different customer behaviours, emotions and emotive needs (i.e. the needs of customers purchasing a funeral care service will be very different from purchasing a new family car, or a customer having to work on a tight budget) ➢ Different methods customers want to use to purchase products e.g. in-store, orders, on-line and how to make it a positive experience ➢ How customers' purchasing habits are influenced through social trends and the media ➢ How the culture of different businesses impacts on the style of interaction with customers
Business	➢ Where to identify the vision, objectives and brand standard / style of the business ➢ The purpose of a vision statement, the benefits to the business as a whole and how it impacts on own role ➢ The purpose of setting objectives and why they are important for businesses to be successful ➢ How objectives relate to own role in the business ➢ The importance of the business brand standards, in relation to the product and/or services it offers ➢ Positively presents the business brand standards in all communications with customers ➢ Has a conscientious attitude to deliver brand standards and protecting the reputation of the business, for example always following service expectations or procedures ➢ Operates in an accountable manner taking ownership for own actions and their implications on the business
Marketing	➢ What the unique selling point of the business is and how it compares to other organisations ➢ How businesses are positioned in the wider market alongside competitors ➢ How to promote products and services to achieve business objectives ➢ Where in the business to find the latest guidance and information on promotions and advertising campaigns ➢ How the business compares with its competitors in terms of product offer, pricing and service

Professional Discussion – Pass Criteria	
Sales and promotion	➢ How sales targets differ according to the retail calendar ➢ Own contribution to meeting sales targets ➢ Different selling techniques and how and when to use them
Brand reputation	➢ Deal with relevant situations that may affect brand reputation in line with company policy
Stock[4]	➢ Check storage areas are clean, tidy and have sufficient space for stock being delivered and deal with in line with business procedures if not ➢ Check delivery or holding areas are clean and tidy and necessary unloading equipment is available and in working order ➢ Check stock on delivery to make sure it is of the correct type, quantity and quality ordered ➢ Deal with incorrect type or quantities, faulty or substandard stock in line with business procedures ➢ Manage stock and carry out correct rotation procedures to maintain quality and prevent loss, damage or deterioration ➢ Complete all paperwork and records accurately and clearly in line with business requirements ➢ Follow the business requirements for the security of the storage of stock ➢ Has the confidence to return incorrect, faulty or substandard goods ➢ Takes a calm and considered approach when issues occur, minimising the risk or disruption caused
Technical	➢ Takes action quickly and decisively when issues occur
Team	➢ What makes an effective team and what is meant by team dynamics ➢ Ways in which team members/teams work together, interact and provide supports to each other to meet business objectives ➢ The implications when team members do not work together ➢ Different methods, including the use of effective negotiation, to positively influence a team ➢ The importance of positive listening, valuing difference of opinion and challenges in order to reach suitable agreements/actions ➢ The roles and responsibilities of team members ➢ The information and resources that colleagues may need and where to obtain it if not known ➢ The importance of fulfilling agreements made with team members or keeping them informed if there is a problem ➢ Build effective working relationships with all team members ➢ Set an example to others through a professional and positive approach to all work activities ➢ Strengthen team dynamics e.g. by demonstrating a personal commitment to excellent work ethics e.g. time keeping, fulfilling agreements, taking a fair approach ➢ Demonstrate an interest in other team members' roles and how they relate to own ➢ Take a positive approach to helping team members to support the business, offering help to busy team members where possible ➢ Co-operate with team members at all levels ➢ Actively support other team members' learning

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[4] For retailers working in a remote environment, such as in telephone, on-line and mail order retail it is recognised that opportunities to control physical stock items and storage areas, particularly if selling a utility or service rather than a product, may be limited. All apprentices must have a full knowledge and understanding of stock as detailed in the apprenticeship standard and how this applies within their environment; however specific assessment criteria, listed under the 'stock' element of Annex E (IV) can be discussed and competence ascertained through theoretical discussion rather than workplace examples.

Professional Discussion – Pass Criteria	
Performance	- How work objectives are agreed and recognise the benefits they can bring to the individual and the business - How own roles and responsibilities impact on team goals - The benefits to the business of more effective ways of working - The benefits of performance improvement to the individual and business - The benefits of a personal development plan - How to identify own learning needs and improve own performance and identify - Demonstrate drive and commitment - Take ownership for own performance and personal development
Diversity	- Different diverse cultures and backgrounds dependent on local demographics of the business - Implications of relevant diversity and equality legislation - Understand the importance of and how to follow policy in relation to equality and diversity - What local demographics mean in relation to the business products and services - The importance of understanding customers and local demographics to business success - Identify how to listen in a non-judgemental manner - How own use of language, body language, gestures and tone of voice may appear to customers and colleagues; and how theirs may affect your perceptions of them - How to contextualise conversations
Environment	- Actively promotes environmental initiatives/projects in the business - Sets an example to others by working responsibility and efficiently to avoid waste, encouraging team members to do the same - Take opportunities to use more environmentally aware methods in all work activities - The purpose and process of waste control and stock taking requirements of the business - The re-using and re-cycling expectations within the business and why these are important • The principles or policies of the business relating to the environment and why it's important to follow them

All other criteria can be assessed by EITHER the observation OR the professional discussion. Please refer to Appendix 2 – Annex E for full details, including those required to achieve a distinction grade.

Preparing for the discussion

The discussion will be planned in advance to allow the apprentice to prepare fully. It is possible that the apprentice can complete the professional discussion on the same date as other assessments, but the knowledge test and practical observation must be completed prior to this assessment taking place.

The apprentice will receive their written agenda a minimum of 5 days prior to the assessment and may bring additional materials to assist them to demonstrate their competence. The discussion must be appropriately structured to draw out the best of the apprentice's energy, enthusiasm, competence, and excellence.

In circumstances where, for example, another assessment such as the practical observation is completed on the same day as the professional discussion, the independent end-point assessor will review the agenda, prior to the discussion, to prevent over-assessment of what has been evidenced, and to ensure full coverage of the standard. If there are amendments or additions to the agenda, the apprentice will be allowed a maximum of 30 minutes to review these changes and prepare before the discussion is commenced.

The professional discussion will be conducted in a 'controlled environment' i.e., a quiet room, away from the normal place of work. An employer representative is ideally expected to be present at the professional discussion unless

unforeseen circumstances mean unavailability on the day. The independent end-point assessor will make a judgement, to ensure fair opportunity for the apprentice, on whether the assessment will continue on such occasions. This will be reported to the internal Quality Assurer and Quality Manager.

What can the apprentice bring to the professional discussion?

The apprentice can bring evidence such as a personal development plan, learning journal, training records or performance reviews, or any other evidence they believe demonstrates their learning and progression throughout the apprenticeship programme. They can also bring supporting evidence for any of the agenda points, such as work products and documents they have produced during the course of their apprenticeship.

In order to best prepare, the apprentice could:

➢ Review the agenda, identify key points they want to include in the discussion
➢ Ensure they understand all areas of the agenda, seek clarification for any aspects they do not.
➢ Make notes that they can bring with them for prompt
➢ Identify if there are any support materials such as the learning record or feedback forms that they wish to bring with them to illustrate points (such as appraisal/performance reviews, feedback from peers/leaders, personal development plan)
➢ Check they have a suitable quiet area arranged for the discussion to take place. And if the discussion is being completed remotely, that there is adequate internet signal.
➢ Provide as much detail as they can and don't be afraid to "show off".

How can the professional discussion be undertaken?

The method in which the professional discussion is undertaken should be the method that best suits the apprentice.

The professional discussion can be completed via face to face or remote assessment. Where 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 end-point assessor for internal quality assurance.

If the apprentice elects to use web conferencing, the end-point assessor will ask them to confirm that they have access to the appropriate technology. A quiet room must be located to record and a good internet connection is required. Contingencies will be discussed in the assessment planning phase of the assessment process, should the webinar not proceed according to plan. Some conferencing software requires a download and install on the computer.

Tips for successful remote assessment:

➢ Webinar software will ask the apprentice to check audio and camera capacity, do this if there are any problems, let the assessor know.
➢ During the professional discussion, the apprentice should pay attention to the sound, make sure the EPA can hear them and vice versa.
➢ The apprentice should speak clearly and to the microphone and ask for clarification if they do not understand a question
➢ The assessor will ask questions about the apprenticeship experience and how the apprentice demonstrates competence across the standards. Having real life experiences and examples of how they have excelled in their role will help the apprentice succeed in this element of assessment.
➢ The assessor will monitor the assessment duration, and they will provide the apprentice with a time guide, but they should also keep track of the time

Where the interview is completed face to face, the independent end-point assessor should complete a written summary of the professional discussion and submit this with the digital recording for quality assurance purposes.[5]

Any video or audio recordings will be saved securely within the apprentice's online folder for QA access and be named using the correct conventions: Apprentice name – Professional Discussion Recording.

The written marking report will be documented within the apprentice's secure online folder and be named using the correct conventions: Apprentice name - Professional Discussion Record.

The professional discussion will be conducted in a 'controlled environment' i.e., a quiet room, away from the normal place of work.

The professional discussion date and timings will be planned in advance to allow for quality assurance activity in line with sampling requirements and will cover the key elements of the standard identified in Annex A.

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

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[5] Note in exceptional cases, PAL may allow an apprentice to be exempt from a digitally 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

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 Retailer Padlet, 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@rofessionalassessment.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 special considerations and/or reasonable adjustments have been requested, the end-point assessor at the assessment planning meeting will finalise any such arrangements. Discussions regarding a special consideration 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.

PAL's Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustment policy is in place to ensure fair access to assessment and can be accessed on the Retailer Padlet, 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 ESFA portal service and PAL will issue the apprentice with a Record of Achievement.

PAL will notify the relevant External Quality Assurance and the ESFA of end-point assessment activities, from the time an apprentice is registered to the time they undertake assessment; notification to these bodies includes successful achievements, completion. Incomplete assessments are recorded.

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

Cancelling or rescinding results - PAL reserves the right to cancel results if malpractice is identified and/or payment has not been received.

Validity, Authenticity, Relevancy, Currency, and Sufficiency

The evidence presented must be meet VARCS requirements.

- ➢ **Valid** - is the evidence appropriate to demonstrate the particular standard that it is intended to cover?
- ➢ **Authentic** - is the evidence proven to be the apprentice's own work, have any reflective accounts/statements being authenticated by a supervisor/manager?
- ➢ **Relevant** - Is the evidence relevant to the particular standard that it is intended to cover and has a clear judgement?
- ➢ **Current** - does the evidence relate to the on programme element of the apprenticeship?
- ➢ **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 end-point 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 meeting – 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 endpoint 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 which documents the requirements of the standard and assessment methods.

Appendix 1 – Gateway Meeting Record for Retailer

Guidance Notes

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

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

Completion of this Gateway Declaration Record confirms that the employer and training provider is satisfied the apprentice has fulfilled all requirements to apply for end-point assessment.[6]

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

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

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

Apprentice Name	Click or tap here to enter text.	Apprentice Contact Number	Click or tap here to enter text.
Apprentice ULN	Click or tap here to enter text.	Apprentice Email Address	Click or tap here to enter text.
Line Manager Name	Click or tap here to enter text.	Line Manager Contact Number	Click or tap here to enter text.
Employer Organisation	Click or tap here to enter text.	Line Manager Email Address	Click or tap here to enter text.
Training Provider Name	Click or tap here to enter text.	Gateway Review Date	Click or tap to enter a date.
Start Date of Apprenticeship		End Date of Apprenticeship	Click or tap to enter a date.
Has the minimum apprenticeship duration of 12 months been met, as defined in the ESFA funding rules?		Yes ☐ No ☐	

Section 1: Confirmation of Evidence

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

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[6] Please refer to the latest ESFA funding rules guidance.

Requirement	Achieved by the apprentice	Evidence provided (e.g., PLR, certificate, statement of results)
Maths Level 1	Yes ☐ No ☐	Click or tap here to enter text.
English Level 1	Yes ☐ No ☐	Click or tap here to enter text.

Gateway Review Outcome

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

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

Section 2: Declaration

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

Employer and Training Provider Declaration

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

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

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

Employer		Training Provider	
Name	Click or tap here to enter text.	**Name**	Click or tap here to enter text.
*Signature	Click or tap here to enter text.	***Signature**	Click or tap here to enter text.
Date	Click or tap to enter a date.	**Date**	Click or tap to enter a date.

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

Apprentice Declaration

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

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix 2 – Annex E (V)

This annex lists the criteria that can be assessed EITHER by observation OR by professional discussion, in addition to the mandatory pass criteria previously detailed for each individual method of assessment. Table 1 is the PASS criteria and Table 2 is the DISTINCTION criteria.

Table 1

In addition to demonstrating all pass criteria have been achieved, apprentices must demonstrate ALL of the following EITHER during the observation OR evidence competence as part of the professional discussion to achieve a **PASS** overall	
Customer	- Use the business offer to support efforts to enhance customer loyalty (e.g. from a friendly, helpful attitude to formalised reward schemes) - Utilise understanding of customer profiles by quickly identifying what the customer needs and offering options that will meet or exceed their expectations - Listen to and deal with customers' questions, queries and complaints effectively in line with business requirements - Use methods of communication and rapport building that are in line with the business and adapt accordingly to different customers - Take a positive approach to receiving feedback and learn from the experience to improve own customer service offer
Communications	- Use a range of communication styles according to the person being communicated to - The typical style and methods of communication used by the business - Demonstrate empathy for the person being communicated with - Has an awareness of own communication style and how to manage it depending on the circumstances
Financial	- Use methods that will enhance sales and reduce costs for the business whilst delivering great customer service - Use methods of financial control that are appropriate to the style of the business - Use methods of work that will meet or exceed financial targets - Deal with matters of financial loss (e.g. wastage, returned goods) in a manner that minimises further loss, but in accordance to the requirements of the business - Handles matters appropriately to minimise the risk of financial loss (e.g. bad customer service can lead to additional costs and handling stock inappropriately can lead to damage and wastage) - Acts responsibly and sensibly to reduce waste (e.g. looks for opportunities to reduce waste but doesn't take inappropriate risks that will compromise customer service)
Marketing	- Use accurate information to explain product and service offers (e.g. the period the offer/promotion is available for), and price comparisons to customers - Select best method of promoting a product or service to support business objectives - Take every opportunity to promote the unique selling point of the business and or its products/services - Openly share knowledge with colleagues and customers
Sales and promotion	- Selects and uses a range of selling techniques appropriate to situation, product and/or service being sold - Talks to customers to identify sales opportunities - Takes opportunities to increase the size of the sale (e.g. basket size, promoting offers and bi-products) - Actively sells without intimidating or pressurising the customer
Product and service	- The importance of up to date product/service knowledge - Where to identify product/service knowledge - Key facts of product/service knowledge needed to support and complete sales - The importance of identifying customer needs in order to sell products and services that will meet and/or exceed their expectations

	In addition to demonstrating all pass criteria have been achieved, apprentices must demonstrate ALL of the following EITHER during the observation OR evidence competence as part of the professional discussion to achieve a **PASS** overall
	➤ How to link product features and benefits to customer needs and profile ➤ How to keep up to date on business brands, products and services e.g. notice boards; internal newsletters; intranet; team briefings ➤ If and how the product fits into a wider range of products and the differences /links between them ➤ Ask customers questions about the products/services they are looking for and the features and benefits that will meet or exceed their needs ➤ Identify products/services which match customer requirements ➤ Discuss relevant options, giving customers opportunities to ask questions and clarify information ➤ Close the sale with the customer, confirming what they want to buy and provide relevant information e.g. any relevant customer rights ➤ Decide if it is appropriate to sell additional bi products/services to the customer and highlight them accordingly ➤ Displays energy and motivation ➤ Has pride in the delivery of products and services
Merchandising	➤ Identify key areas to achieve maximum visual impact and create a display area that optimises the merchandise; props and materials and is aesthetically pleasing ➤ Collect and style required stock for display for maximum effect to enhance the theme, support the merchandise and communicate effectively with the target market(s) ➤ Select and place all merchandising material, in an effective composition to support the branding of the merchandise and communicate effectively with the target market(s) ➤ Follow business guidelines for displaying stock ➤ Conduct checks to ensure the display result is safe, neat and tidy, clean, finished on time and in line with business expectations ➤ Maintain the display area so that at all time its presentation is in line with business expectations ➤ Evaluate the effectiveness of the window display in supporting the intended merchandise and brand ➤ Analyse feedback and respond appropriately making suggestions for improvements ➤ Listen, reflect and respond positively and constructively to feedback
Technical	➤ Identify types of technology and their uses in different types of business operation ➤ Identify technology and its uses within the business ➤ How technology supports the effective and efficient sale of products and services to customers ➤ How to use relevant technology correctly ➤ Identify the technology in the work environment and use it efficiently and effectively ➤ Know what to do when technology fails ➤ Strictly follow instructions and procedures, including safety, when using technology ➤ Use technology safely and appropriately ➤ Take action quickly and decisively when issues occur
Team	➤ Balance own priorities/work objectives at the same time as supporting team members as agreed ➤ Keep team members informed on the progress towards joint tasks ➤ Determine when and how to communicate matters that have implications on the business e.g. relating to service, safety and quality ➤ Share knowledge and information with team members, selecting the appropriate communication method and time of day

	➢ Adapt communication according to the team member(s) being communicated to (e.g. distinguishing between new members of staff, colleagues at the same level and senior level staff) ➢ Effectively participate in briefings/meetings, actively listening and asking questions to confirm understanding	
Legal and governance	➢ Maintain the confidentiality and security of customer data when recording, retaining and sharing information ➢ Follow business health and safety procedures when carrying out work activities ➢ Follow business procedures to comply with consumer protection law ➢ Identify health, safety and security risks and minimise, deal with or report to the appropriate person in line with own limits of authority ➢ Deal with accidents and emergencies calmly and in line with business procedures ➢ Promote a safe and secure working environment through setting an example to others	
Diversity	➢ Use a range of communication styles to suit the person you are talking to ➢ Adapt communication in different contexts ➢ Make enough time and effort and respond flexibly and positively so that own working practice engages all customers ➢ Seek clarification and manage situations ➢ Use techniques to minimise misunderstanding and improve communication ➢ Demonstrate fairness and integrity in all work activities ➢ Display empathy towards others	
Environment	➢ Carry out all work activities following the principles and/or procedures of the business e.g. when stock should be disposed of and in what manner; method of carrying out service activities to minimise waste ➢ Monitor stock/resources (and where relevant equipment that stock is contained within) as required by the business to ensure it maintains its quality ➢ Deliver service in a manner that minimises overall waste but is always in the best interest of the customer ➢ Follow business requirements to identify and record the causes of wastage ➢ Take measures to prevent wastage	

Table 2

In addition to demonstrating all pass criteria have been achieved, apprentices must demonstrate ALL of the following EITHER during the observation OR evidence competence as part of the professional discussion to achieve a **DISTINCTION** overall

Customer	➢ Go beyond customers' expectations giving at least one example: how, what here when e.g. turned a complaint into an opportunity to retain customer ➢ Uses initiative to improve sales and/or customer service
Business	➢ Consistent representation of the business values ➢ Being proud and passionate as a brand ambassador

Brand reputation	➢ Understand how the following impact on brand and business reputation and how to apply then in own organisation:
	    o media and social media
	    o business ethics and corporate social responsibility
	    o political action such as sabotage or terrorism
	    o impact of business activities on people and the environment
	➢ Know how to and the importance of reporting situations that threaten brand and business reputation in a timely manner to the appropriate person

	In addition to demonstrating all pass criteria have been achieved, apprentices must demonstrate ALL of the following EITHER during the observation OR evidence competence as part of the professional discussion to achieve a **DISTINCTION** overall
	➢ Know how to and the importance of following business policy/procedure if approached by the media ➢ Follow procedures to prevent the misuse of social media

Financial	➢ Uses own initiative to have impact on one or more of the following:
	     o Sales increase
	     o Waste reduction
	     o Quality of customer experience and retention
	     o Cost efficiently

Marketing	➢ Makes recommendation to improve marketing and promotion with examples given from continual assessment
Communication	➢ Demonstrates outstanding communication skills internally and externally ➢ Recognised by all (e.g. customers, team, management) as "great" with people
Product and service	➢ Accurately describe the features and benefits of relevant products to customers in a way which helps them identify the differences ➢ Has pride in the delivery of products and services ➢ Comprehensive range of product, knowledge and understanding can be demonstrated over and above what a customer can find for themselves ➢ Can clearly and accurately summarise information to others in a way which is easily understood ➢ Genuine rapport with customer and going off script when engaging with them ➢ Breadth of knowledge around benefits, insight into usefulness of product specs ➢ Use of devices and relevant merits of each
Merchandising	➢ Understand how to maximise the creative use of space through the layout of the designated display area ➢ Understand how props and events are used in merchandising ➢ Understand how to plan and install window and store displays effectively and safely ➢ Understand the importance of and know how to prepare products for display
Team	➢ View difficult situations and issues from colleagues' perspective and provide support, where necessary, to move things forward ➢ Identify conflicts of interest and disagreements with colleagues and respond to them in ways that minimise impact on the work being carried out ➢ Provide feedback to colleagues on their performance and encourage them to feedback on own performance in order to identify areas for improvement ➢ Identify potential conflicts and take action to reduce or eliminate them ➢ Get involved in planning and leading sections of meetings
Stock	➢ Shows integrity, fairness and consistency in decision making
Performance	➢ Seeks opportunities for going beyond the basic requirements of the role ➢ Identifies and takes opportunities that will develop self. These could be internal or external (such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award) but must clearly link to development in an increase in performance at work