



Invoicing and Billing Policy

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1. Overview

This Policy sets out the processes for the issue, payment, and retention of invoices. It also states the legal requirements for the content of the invoices. The policy also describes Professional Assessment Ltd (PAL’s approach) to pricing and fee setting.

2. Policy scope

This policy explains PAL's different fee types for PAL's services to include assessment costs for apprenticeship standards, current and reformed, qualifications and audit and compliance work.

3. Who is this policy for?

This policy is for all PAL's clients, which includes Recognised and approved Centres, Third parties to include: Training Providers/Employer Providers and Colleges and audit clients.

This policy is also for PAL personnel to include Support Services, Business Operations Director, Director of Audit and Compliance and Assessment/Account Managers.

4. Purpose

This Policy sets out PAL processes in respect of its fees, invoicing and billing including the issue, settlement, and retention of invoices. It also sets out the eligible fees allowed for PAL apprenticeship assessment services

Further information about PAL's billing and invoicing procedures, if required, can be obtained from PAL support services by using the following contact details Freephone number 0800 160 1899 or email: invoices@professionalassessment.co.uk.

Timely payment for services is an integral element of PAL's Service level contract /Centre agreements and approval declarations with our clients. If for any reason you need to discuss payment terms, please address this with PAL's Business Operations Director or a member of our PAL's Support Services Team.

For invoicing for our audit and compliance work, in the first instance any enquiries should be directed to the Director of Audit and Compliance using the following contact details info@professionalassessment.co.uk

5. Fees

It is the policy of PAL to publish and maintain a fee structure that is:

- Annually reviewed and updated as required
- Clear, fair, and transparent
- Value for money to users

5.1 Making fee information available

All general fee information will be accessible to any potential purchaser, in the case of the reformed apprenticeship standards, the fee structure is more complex and will vary depending on the level or balance of PAL: Centre Assessment.

Fees associated with awarding and assessment activities do include PAL's costs of development, registration and certification costs and the provision of assessment and support materials.

Fees associated with audit and compliance (non-regulated activities) work is priced by the Director of Audit and Compliance, based on the nature of the commissioned work, personnel allocated the work and timescales required to complete the work.

PAL will make sure fees are agreed as part of our contracting process with clients.

PAL will ensure that the information which we make publicly available is:

- Kept up to date
- Clear to a potential purchaser, in terms of what activity, service or product the fee relates to

For awarding and assessment activities the agreed fees for services will be included as an appendix to the service level contract/Centre agreement. For audit and compliance work, the agreed fee(s) will be included in the service level contract issued by PAL.

Our contracting process will ask a client whether they require purchase order numbers for invoices, the relevant contact person or department within their organisation or deals with accounts payable and if there is a requirement for PAL to go onto a preferred supplier list and what is required for PAL to meet these requirements.

6. Issuing of Invoices

PAL operates a thirty-day payment term from the invoice issue date (unless an alternative payment term has specifically been agreed and approved by a PAL Director with the client).

Between the second and fifth working day of each month, PAL processes invoices for work undertaken with the client in the preceding month. The invoice will be forwarded to the person named responsible for processing invoices, typically this information will be sent via email, unless PAL has specifically agreed to an alternative arrangement and the invoice will include a reminder of the 30 days payment terms.

Payment should be made by BACS as detailed in the invoice unless PAL has agreed on an alternative payment method.

For audit consultancy work, a 30 day payment term applies, and the invoice will be forwarded to the named contact in the service level contract.

Please note we require the client to update us if any arrangements for processing invoices within their organisation change, so PAL can update our records accordingly.

6.1 Invoice Content

All invoices will include PAL's

- VAT registration number
- Registered office address
- Registered company number
-

EPA/Assessment/Awarding Invoices

- Date invoices raised
- Customer ID (PAL internal system ID)
- Unique invoice number
- Centre Name
- Name of contact authorised to process and approve payments
- Address provided by client for accounts payable and invoices
- Employer site name (not address)- for assessment activities undertaken at employer/third party sites
- Learner /Apprentice names
- Name of standard apprentice assessed against (apprenticeship assessment activities)
- EPA/Apprentice assessment activities (referral/planning/ assessment cancellation/reassessment)
- Centre approval/Registration/Certification fees specific qualifications/EQA activities/paper certification/learner cancellations /learner changing qualifications additional qualification registration fees/bespoke qualification development work; investigation costs; additional sampling and scrutiny activities

Compliance activity (mock audit etc.)

- Net amount; VAT %; VAT amount; Gross
- Total amount payable
- Payment terms (thirty days)
- Payment details
- Payment instructions and reference information (invoice number payment reference)
- Purchase order number or client reference
- Invoice queries (free phone number and invoices@professionalassessment.co.uk)

Credit notes will contain similar information

6.2 VAT -Apprenticeship Assessment

VAT treatment for PAL's fees will be informed by the source of the funding for the service:

- Levy-funded - Supply of vocational training funded by the government is exempt from VAT under VAT Notice 701/30 so PAL will not charge VAT where levy funds are the source of funding (based on information supplied by the Centre)
- Co-Investment – employer contributions towards apprenticeship training (minimum of 5%) is subject to VAT, but the government contribution is not, so PAL will charge VAT on the employer contribution of the EPA/Apprenticeship Assessment fee. Independent Training Providers need to make clear, via the epaPRO registration process, the levy status of the Employer and the % of employer contribution
- Additional Assessment costs – other agreed fees such as reassessment and cancellation fees or agreed assessment fees over and above 20% of the funding band maximum for the standard, are a commercial arrangement with the client. The whole amount of these fees will be subject to VAT

For organisations that are not subject to VAT, PAL's Business Operations Director will confirm appropriate payment arrangements.

Audit and Compliance and non-funded work: Any amounts invoiced for compliance consultancy or non-funded work carried out will be subject to VAT

For the sake of clarification, PAL does not provide VAT advice, and all parties should check their VAT position and liabilities.

7. Fees

7.1 EPA Fees

The cost of each End-point assessment is proportionate to the overall training cost of the apprenticeship. The overall cost is negotiated by the employer and training provider, and the EPA should not be more than 20% of this agreed price. The majority of PAL's EPA fees are below 20% and typically range between 10-14% of the funding band allocation. Apprenticeship plans that involve on-site assessments of several hours, as part of several assessments can be 20% of the funding band

The table below details what is included in PAL's EPA fee and where an additional charge can be made. The cost of PAL invigilating tests/exams is included in our fee¹, we do charge for resits and retakes and cancellations, in accordance with the timelines stated in the service level contract.

Typically, we will invoice the full EPA fee at gateway, unless alternative arrangements are agreed at contracting. If an assessment plan contains a mandated qualification not delivered by PAL, the payment arrangements for the qualification will be between the Centre and the relevant AO. If PAL delivers the qualification, we will invoice for the registration and certification of the qualification at the apprentice registration.

Type	Included in EPA Fee ²	Not included in EPA Fee
Associated with the administration , registration and examination of EPA as set out in the standard(s), and their assessment plan(s), you are registered to assess against	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Registration ➤ Feedback, grading, and submission for certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Travel expenses for apprentices ➤ Any mandated qualifications specified by the Assessment Plan, as it is not part of the EPA

¹ PAL prefers to conduct invigilation's for closed-book tests, should a Centre wish to do this, PAL will need to approve, and the Centre will be required to sign an additional agreement, and all Centre invigilators will be subject to PAL checks and approvals and there will be no fee discount

² * Fees correct at date of policy issue please refer to your service level contract or speak with your Assessment /Account Manager if you require further clarification regarding fees payable. PAL reserves the right to amend our fees at any time; any amendments will be agreed with clients and a revised fees addendum to your service

Type	Included in EPA Fee ²	Not included in EPA Fee
		<p>Note the AO concerned will raise an invoice for registration and certification for the qualification as a separate invoice, which is payable as per the terms and conditions of your centre agreement</p>
<p>Associated with providing guidance and support and the materials (non-capital items) used in the delivery of EPA (equipment or supplies necessary to enable the assessment to take place)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Support materials and guidance provided to the employer, apprentice, or provider for End-point assessment preparation during on-programme learning, including, but not limited to: ➤ Assessment specifications ➤ Assessment logbooks ➤ Practice/mock assessment materials ➤ Checklists ➤ Exemplars 	
<p>Associated with ensuring trained staff and appropriate premises are available to deliver EPA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assessor fees ➤ Invigilation by PAL personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Venues for on-screen tests and other assessment activity ➤ Appropriate premises for assessment activity where required if not available in the apprentice's workplace or Training Provide/College <p>PAL expects the Centre/Employer to bear costs for additional assessment locations if the provider or employer premises are not suitable unless agreed otherwise, in which case PAL will charge for organising and arranging the venue, payable in advance of the assessment.</p>
<p>Associated with the development and maintenance of assessment instruments and tools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All assessment materials, tools, and instruments to include the maintenance of question banks ➤ Review and evaluation of assessment instrument performance 	
<p>To support any additional assessment arrangements, you may need to put in place to ensure any apprentices with special educational needs,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All reasonable adjustments requested where a human reader is selected over a screen reader, fees will reflect this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ On-programme support required by the apprentice

Type	Included in EPA Fee ²	Not included in EPA Fee
disabilities or other temporary or permanent debilitating condition or other formal assessment of needs can fairly access assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All special considerations applied 	
Associated with any further assessment required by the apprentice to achieve EPA (for instance retakes or resits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Feedback available to providers to support preparation for resits or retakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MCQs- typically first resit for free and then £150 please refer to your service level contract ➤ All other assessments (resits and retakes) £150*³-per assessment component- please refer to your service level contract ➤ Cancellation fees-please refer to your service level contract <p>Note resits and retakes and cancellations will be invoiced separately</p>
Associated with ensuring consistent and robust internal quality assurance (for instance moderation and standardisation of assessment instruments and tools, assessors, and assessment decisions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Internal quality assurance provided by the EPAO (to include moderation and standardisation) 	
Regulatory/Certification admin charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All costs associated with Regulatory activities and regulation incurred 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Costs incurred as a result of imposition of sanctions, investigations undertaken by PAL ➤ Costs of constituting review panels such as malpractice and appeals committees

7.2 Apprenticeship Assessment fees

Under the apprenticeship assessment reforms proposed in February 2025, some assessment plans include as an integral part of the assessment a mandated qualification. In some cases, the mandated qualification will provide relatively extensive coverage of the knowledge and skills, meaning little or no further assessment is required beyond the qualification.⁴ In other cases the qualification will not address the majority of knowledge and skills criteria, meaning other forms of assessment will take place to confirm the apprentice's competence.

The reformed assessment plans permit centre assessment, where the Provider/College has approved/recognised status with an AO. Fees will vary depending on whether PAL continues to undertake all of the assessment activities, or whether the assessment is shared as outlined in the relevant apprenticeship standard specification.

³ * PAL reserves the right to review resit and retake fees

⁴ Note reformed assessment plans are still in pilot and the impact of mandated qualifications and requirements for further assessment will be looked at by PAL on a plan by plan approach.

For the reformed apprenticeships, PAL will typically invoice the Centre for registration and certification costs, on apprentice enrolment, we will also raise an invoice for a start fee for assessment where the plan requires assessment activities in addition to any mandated qualification or where assessment is the only determinate of competence. The remainder of the assessment fee will usually be raised at the first assessment.⁵

Assessment arrangements will be agreed between PAL and Centres.

Type	Included in Centre Assessment Fee ⁶	Not included in the Fee
Associated with registration and assessment and centre account management activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Registration /Record of Achievement ➤ Certification (where applicable) ➤ Any administrative costs linked to systems, portals, and centre account management activities ➤ Any mandated qualifications specified by the Assessment Plan, if PAL is the chosen awarding organisation for that qualification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Travel expenses for apprentices ➤ Administration costs incurred by the Centre or employer as part of the assessment process ➤ Mandated qualification costs, where PAL is not the selected awarding organisation
Associated with providing guidance and support and the materials (non-capital items) used in the delivery of assessment (equipment or supplies necessary to enable the assessment to take place)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Support materials and guidance provided to apprentices, employers, and Centres for assessment preparation during on-programme learning, including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assessment specifications ➤ Assessment logbooks ➤ Practice/mock assessment materials ➤ Checklists ➤ Exemplars ➤ Any training/standardisations required for centre personnel to conduct centre assessments ➤ Invigilation fees- with PAL personnel acting as invigilator ➤ EQA support remote less than 2 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ EQA /PAL support activities over 2 hours duration
Associated with ensuring trained staff and appropriate premises are available to deliver assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assessor fees for assessments conducted by PAL *⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Centre Assessor fees and any associated costs around training

⁵ Note PAL will review payment points for the reformed plans when there is further information regarding apprenticeship assessment plan content

⁶ Fees correct at date of policy issue please refer to your service level contract or speak with your Assessment /Account Manager if you require further clarification regarding fees payable. PAL reserves the right to amend our fees at any time; any amendments will be agreed with clients and a revised fees addendum to your service

⁷ PAL can undertake all assessments where required or needed, arrangements will be detailed in your service level contract

Type	Included in Centre Assessment Fee ⁶	Not included in the Fee
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Venues for on-screen tests and other assessment activity ➤ Appropriate premises for assessment activity where required if not available in the apprentice's workplace- <p>PAL expects the Centre/Employer to bear costs for additional assessment locations if the provider or employer premises are not suitable unless agreed otherwise, in which case PAL will charge for organising and arranging the venue, payable in advance of the assessment.</p>
Associated with the development and maintenance of assessment instruments and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All assessment materials, tools, and instruments, to include the maintenance of question banks ➤ Review and evaluation of assessment instrument performance 	
To support any additional assessment arrangements, you may need to put in place to ensure any apprentices with special educational needs, disabilities or other temporary or permanent debilitating condition or other formal assessment of needs can fairly access assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All reasonable adjustments requested- note for readers, where a human reader is selected over a screen reader, fees will reflect this ➤ All special considerations applied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ On-programme support required by the apprentice
Associated with any further assessment required by the apprentice to achieve EPA (for instance resits or resubmission)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Feedback available to providers to support preparation for resits or resubmissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Resits, resubmissions and cancellations and marking corrections
Associated with ensuring consistent and robust quality assurance (to include EQA sampling and review and evaluation of assessment tools performance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Internal quality assurance of the assessment conducted by PAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Internal quality assurance of the centre assessments ➤ EQA support activities over 2 hours ➤ External quality assurance of centre assessments ➤ External quality assurance of any mandated qualification, if applicable ➤ Appeals and Enquiries
Regulatory/Certification admin charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All costs associated with Regulatory activities and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Costs incurred as a result of imposition of sanctions,

Type	Included in Centre Assessment Fee ⁶	Not included in the Fee
	regulation incurred if PAL is responsible for certification	investigations undertaken by PAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Costs of constituting review panels such as malpractice and appeals committees ➤ Extensive sampling or EQA activities in excess of those stated in CASS or minimum EQA activities ➤ Centre approval and re-approval fees ➤ Additional approvals for standards/qualifications not included in original approval

7.3 Regulated qualifications- Fee Types

Fee type	Explanation
a) Standard Qualification Fee	Mandatory fees for a single learner, from registration to certification This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Learner registration ➤ Learner Certification ➤ Qualification specification and assessment materials
b) Centre Fees	These are obligatory centre-level fees necessary for PAL approved Centres to undertake delivery of our qualifications. It would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Centre Approval Registration ➤ Annual Centre Fees and Compliance review ➤ Fees for External Quality Assurance Monitoring reviews and EQA support visits ➤ Fees for additional (new) qualification approvals ➤ Qualification development fees (where applicable) ➤ Centre support documents

8. Payment

PAL requires payment via Bank Transfer, unless we have agreed alternative payment arrangements

8.1 Payment Timeframe

All invoices must be paid within 30 days unless alternative terms have been explicitly agreed between PAL and the client.

8.2 Credit Control and the Collection of Debts

PAL's Financial is responsible for ensuring that:

- Invoices are issued stating that our terms of business are strictly 30 days from the issue date of the invoice.
- Invoices are raised for the whole sum due.

- Invoices are raised promptly in respect of income due to the company.
- Invoices are raised in the legal format and supporting information is retained.
- Action is taken to collect overdue debts in accordance with the company's procedures for debt recovery.
- If payment has not been made after 30 days of invoice a statement is sent out by PAL to the Customer's Finance Contact.
- If payment has not been made after 60 days the BOD authorises a second statement to be sent to the named Third Party/Centre contact who deals with invoicing and payments, with a follow-up telephone call to those customers with a poor payment history.
- If payment has not been made after 90 days PAL authorises a third copy statement to be sent to the Finance Contact, copied to the Head of the Organisation, and chased by telephone. the Centre fail to make any payment due to PAL under the Contract by the due date for payment, then, without prejudice to any other rights or remedies we have, PAL shall have the right to withhold any further service until such payment has been received, this may cause a delay in certification; this can include a block to any further learner registrations for qualifications or apprenticeship referrals unless the centre is in discussions on its plans to make payment or an agreement for receiving payment has been reached.
- If payment has not been made after 120 days, PAL can authorise a solicitor to act and if that does not result in payment PAL will issue a CCJ and involve a reliable commercial debt collection agency. PAL also reserves the right to inform the relevant Government agency and our regulator(s) of non-payment.
- PAL reserves the right to charge interest on overdue amounts in accordance with the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, as amended If the Centre fails to make any payment due to PAL under this Contract by the due date, then without limiting PAL's other remedies (including the right to terminate any agreement with the Centre or Third Party). Such interest shall accrue daily from the due date until actual payment of the overdue amount, whether before or after judgment, at a rate of 4% per annum above the Bank of England base rate from time to time. The Centre shall pay the interest together with the overdue amount and any statutory debt recovery costs.

8.3 Invoice Disputes

If the Centre genuinely disputes any portion of an invoice, it must notify PAL in writing within ten (10) days of the invoice date, clearly stating the grounds for the dispute and providing supporting evidence. The Centre must pay the undisputed balance of the invoice by the original due date. Failure to lodge a formal dispute within this 10-day window shall deem the invoice accepted in full and undisputed by the Centre.

8.4 Fee Adjustments

Adjustment of Fees. PAL reserves the right to review and amend its fee structure upon thirty (30) days' written notice to the Centre in the event that:

- i. There is any alteration, reduction, restriction, or withdrawal of funding from the DWP, the DfE⁸, or any other relevant funding body impacting the delivery of these services.
- ii. The operational costs associated with assessment and awarding experience significant or unforeseen increases.

Following such notice, the parties shall negotiate in good faith to agree upon the revised fees. If the Centre fails to respond in writing or if no agreement is reached within the thirty (30) day notice period, the revised fees shall automatically apply at the end of the notice period. The Centre shall have no automatic right to terminate the Contract due to a fee adjustment, except strictly in accordance with the standard termination provisions set out elsewhere in this Agreement

⁸ "**Funding Bodies**" means Skills England, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the Department for Education (DfE), or any successor public bodies, regulatory authorities, or government departments responsible for administering, distributing, or overseeing the funding allocated to the Centre for the delivery of the services, qualifications, or apprenticeship assessments.

▣ "**Funding Framework**" means any funding rule, guidance, methodology, grant condition, or contract issued by the Funding Bodies that governs the financial allocations or eligibility criteria applicable to the Centre or the services provided by PAL under this Contract.

▣ "**Unforeseen Cost Increase**" means any significant increase in the operational, administrative, or compliance costs incurred by PAL in developing, maintaining, assessing, or awarding the qualifications or apprenticeship assessments, which could not reasonably have been anticipated by PAL at the Commencement Date of this Contract.

8.5 Client Statements of Account

PAL invoices on a monthly basis. Statements of account can be distributed on an ad hoc basis and as and when requested.

8.6 Retention of Invoice and payment records

In accordance with the conditions for awarding/assessment organisations PAL will retain copies of the invoices and a record of the payment for six years after the activity took place. This is for audit purposes.

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed as a minimum on a yearly basis and will be updated where relevant government departments or government agencies policies or updated funding rules structurally alter the nature of our services.

10. Regulatory references

PAL is required to establish and maintain compliance with regulatory conditions and criteria. This policy relates to OFQUAL General Conditions of Recognition Ofqual regulation in relation to Section F - Providing qualifications to purchasers <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook/section-f-providing-qualifications-to-purchasers>

Sub-conditions:

- Condition F1 - Information on fees (version in force on and after 18 January 2021)
- Condition F2 - Packaging qualifications with other products or services
- Condition F3 – Invoicing

Date Created: 29/11/2020

Last Review: 28/10/2025

Next Review: 28/10/2026

Person Responsible for review: Business Operations Director

This Policy has been agreed by the PAL Board