Professional Assessment Ltd

Assessment Specification and Guidance for Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship FA0009 v1.0 Level 2



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Summary of Revisions to Assessment Specification and Guidance

Summary of Revisions	Assessment Plan Revised Version Number	Date of Revision
Nothing yet.		

Section 1 – Introduction

Overview

The assessment guidance in this specification relates to the Level 2 Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship FA0009 version 1.0.

Foundation apprenticeships are employed positions at an entry level and are for younger people, typically aged 16 to 21, who will benefit from a wide range of experiences. The Level 2 Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship provides a mix of employability skills and behaviours, technical knowledge and skills, and associated English and maths. It combines valuable hands-on practice in the workplace with off-the-job learning. The apprentice's experiences will not only help them to grow their skills but will also help to inform their next career steps.

The foundation apprenticeship is at Level 2 and is for apprentices who are employed in a retail service, supply and administration job role where they can support the administration of retail businesses, help provide excellent customer service and ultimately to ensure the efficient flow of goods and services between manufacturers and customers.

The **minimum** duration for this foundation apprenticeship is 8 months, but this will depend on the apprentice's previous experience and their access to opportunities to gain the full range of competences.

The overall foundation apprenticeship is graded as fail or pass.

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

- On-programme period of training and development in line with the apprenticeship funding rules.
- The apprenticeship assessment as set by the Assessment Organisation.

The purpose of the assessment is to confirm that apprentices have met the required level of knowledge, skills and behavioural standards set by employers. The certificate for the apprenticeship is awarded by Skills England through a process administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

The standard and accompanying assessment plan can be accessed here.

Foundation Apprenticeship Title	Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship
Level	2
Standard Number	FA0009 version 1.0
Qualification Number	610/7951/0
LARS Number	832
Named EQA Organisation	Ofqual
Duration of Apprenticeship	Typically, 8 months but the actual length of the apprenticeship will be decided by the employer.
Date the Assessment Plan is Scheduled for Review	This standard should be reviewed in accordance with Skills England's change request policy.
Mandated Qualifications or License to Practice	There are no mandated qualifications or license to practice requirements within this foundation apprenticeship.
Assessment Methods	The apprentice will be assessed by: ➢ Knowledge test. ➢ Portfolio of evidence (practical assessment).
Centre Assessment	PAL permits Centre marking of the **portfolio of evidence** for PAL approved Centres.

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. (Materials may include textbooks, journals, magazines and other publications and websites.) All information in this specification is correct at time of publication.

Introduction

This handbook contains the relevant information and guidance required of apprentices to achieve the assessment for the Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship FA0009 version 1.0 and should be used in conjunction with the Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship Padlet[1].

PAL has worked in close collaboration with employers, experts from professional bodies and Centres and Providers in developing the learning outcomes, assessment criteria and assessment tools for this foundation apprenticeship 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.

We are grateful to all who have generously shared their time and expertise to help us in the development process.

The Assessment Outcomes (AOs) outlined in the foundation apprenticeship standard are underpinned by the knowledge, skills and employability skills and behaviours that have been learned throughout the foundation apprenticeship programme. **Assessment Outcomes define what an apprentice should be able to do by the end of their programme**. The purpose of the assessment is to make sure that the apprentice meets the standard sufficiently, with all Assessment Outcomes met.

Completion of this foundation apprenticeship will certify achievement of all the technical knowledge and skills, and employability skills and behaviours as required by the assessment plan.

Assessment Delivery and Sequencing

The PAL Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship is assessed by **two discrete methods**:

- **Knowledge Test.**
- **Portfolio of Evidence (practical assessment).**

Both assessments are externally **set** by PAL as the assessment organisation, and **assessment** is undertaken at appropriate points throughout the apprenticeship.

The knowledge test and portfolio of evidence assessments can be taken in any order.

[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

There are **two options for assessment delivery** of this standard:

1. **Centre & PAL Assessed** - the **Centre assesses the portfolio of evidence** using the PAL portfolio assessment pack, and **PAL assesses the knowledge test**.

2. **PAL Assessed - PAL assesses both the portfolio of evidence and the knowledge test***.

For **Centre & PAL Assessed**, Centres **must** be approved by PAL and subject to Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy.

If undertaking Centre assessment of the portfolio of evidence, Centres will need to carry out internal quality assurance (IQA) and then liaise with PAL regarding submission of the portfolio for External Quality Assurance (EQA).

PAL will liaise with the apprentice, Centre/provider and employer to schedule the knowledge test assessment, and for submission of the portfolio of evidence.

*For the PAL Assessed option, the Provider is responsible for gathering evidence for the portfolio using the PAL portfolio evidence pack tasks and submitting the evidence to PAL for assessment.

Centre Approval Requirements

For information regarding Centre approval, please contact PAL.

PAL retains responsibility for ensuring all assessments are sufficiently reliable and valid, and the accuracy of any Centre marking.

Centre Staffing

Centre tutors, assessors and internal quality assurers (IQAs) are required as a team to have a combination of appropriate competences in learning, assessment, and internal quality assurance methodologies together with knowledge and experience of retail service, supply and administration practice.

This requires tutors, assessors, and internal quality assurers (IQAs) to demonstrate occupational competence in retail service, supply and administration at the appropriate level.

Centre Personnel Minimum Requirements

Role	Minimum Requirement
Trainer/Tutor	Teaching qualification or demonstrable experience appropriate to level.
Assessor	Level 3 assessor qualification (or working towards).
Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)	Level 4 IQA qualification (or working towards).

All Centre personnel members involved with the apprenticeship training, assessing or IQA will also need to be occupationally competent in the subject area being delivered.

Please refer to the PAL Centre Handbook for further information.

Foundation Apprenticeship Standard Objective

The overall goal of the assessment is to ensure that the apprentice has met the required level of knowledge, skills and behavioural standards set by employers and approved by Skills England, and that they are able to demonstrate these reliably and effectively, to an appropriate degree for the level of the standard.

About the Retail Service, Supply and Administration Role

Retail service, supply and administration practitioners work across a range settings, for example in a such as food, fashion, building and automotive and manufacturing.

The broad purpose is to support the administration of retail businesses, help provide excellent customer service and ultimately to ensure the efficient flow of goods and services between manufacturers and customers. Daily duties will vary dependent on where they work and whether their work is focused on working in an office or retail environment – they could also be working with a more skilled customer base, for example in trade supply.

Typical job titles include Counter Assistant, General Assistant, Retail Assistant, Sales Assistant, Customer Service Assistant, Trade Counter Assistant, Retail Support Assistant, Stock Assistant, Warehouse/Retail Warehouse Assistant, Inventory Assistant, Retail Administrator, Sales Administrator, Business Support Assistant, Online Order Assistant, Click-and-Collect Assistant.

Entry Requirements

Applicants must typically be aged between 16 and 21 at the start of their apprenticeship and be employed in a retail service, supply and administration role. Exceptions to this are set out in the Department for Education Apprenticeship funding rules. Foundation apprenticeships are for entry-level employment opportunities.

Progression

On completion of the foundation apprenticeship, the typical progression routes will likely include employment or progression onto another skills product such as a Level 2 or Level 3 apprenticeship.

Who is Professional Assessment (PAL)?

PAL provides services for Centres, (including training providers, colleges and employers), involved in the delivery of apprenticeships and adult learning. Our offer includes:

- A range of qualifications tailored to sector and employer needs.
- Assessment for a wide range of apprenticeship standards, including foundation apprenticeships. Our dedicated team offers national coverage and has built up extensive experience in administering the latest assessments.

The link to our website can be located by clicking here.

Language of Assessment

All components of the apprenticeship assessment will be conducted in English.

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

For further information on special considerations and reasonable adjustments please refer to PAL's Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments policy which can be found on PAL's website.

Gateway to Completion

Gateway to completion will be used as a checkpoint at the end of an apprenticeship programme to ensure that the apprentice has completed all necessary requirements and is ready to receive their certificate.

Before a certificate can be requested, the organisation requesting the certificate must confirm that the apprentice has achieved the requirements set out in an apprenticeship assessment plan.

For the Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship, this includes achievement of the knowledge test and portfolio of evidence, and employer confirmation the apprentice has sufficiently demonstrated the required behaviours

Section 2 – Assessment Outcomes

Apprentices will be assessed against the Assessment Outcomes and the Performance Descriptors identified in the Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship Assessment Plan.

The **Assessment Outcomes** for the Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship are:

Assessment Outcome		Mapping of Knowledge (K) and Skills (S)
AO1	**The retail sector and its service, supply and administration functions** Demonstrates understanding of the retail sector, their organisation and role, and complies with legislation, policies and ways of working.	K1, K2*, K3, K10, K14*, S9, S11
AO2	**Providing high-quality customer service** Demonstrates knowledge and skills essential to providing high-quality customer service.	K4*, K5*, S1*, S2*, S3
AO3	**Working together to support the sales process** Demonstrates knowledge and skills key to supporting the sales process, collaborating to support management processes and sales goals.	K6, K7*, K8, K9, K11*, K12, K13*, S4, S5*, S6, S7, S8*, S10, S12*

(*) English and maths are important to foundation apprenticeships. Knowledge and skills statements which offer opportunities to develop functional English and maths are identified with an asterisk. Please see Table 1 for further details.

The **Performance Descriptors** for a pass grade for the Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship are:

Foundation apprentices must demonstrate the requirements, as set out in the occupational standard:

- Reliably.
- Effectively.
- To an appropriate degree for the level of the standard.

Overall performance across the range of requirements for the foundation apprenticeship assessment is secure.

The Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship contains employability skills and behaviours. These are highly transferable and universal across Foundation Apprenticeships, and they support work-readiness. Employability Skills and Behaviour (EB) statements are not formally assessed; however, employer confirmation must be provided to the assessment organisation to confirm that they have been suitably demonstrated over the course of the Foundation Apprenticeship.

Technical Knowledge (K), Skills (S) and Employability Skills and Behaviours (EB)

Table 1 shows the technical knowledge (K), technical skills (S) and employability skills and behaviours (EB) mapped to the Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship.

Skills England will provide mapping information outlining which knowledge and skills in this Foundation Apprenticeship are mapped to the relevant content in the L2 Retailer ST0327, L2 Trade Supplier ST0334, L3 Business Administrator ST0070 and L2 Customer Service Practitioner ST0072 standards once all of these standards have been revised. PAL will update this specification upon publication of Skills England's mapping.

Table 1: Technical Knowledge, Technical Skills and Employability Skills and Behaviours

*Knowledge and skills statements which offer opportunities to develop functional English and maths are identified with an asterisk.

**EB6 does not need to be confirmed by the employer but should form a key element of the apprentice's off-the-job training package.

Technical Knowledge (K), Technical Skills (S) and Employability Skills and Behaviours (EB)	
Technical Knowledge	
K1	Introduction to the retail sector and how its service, supply and administration functions contribute to its operating environment.
K2*	Typical business structures, values, products, brands, customers, targets, and how their role and responsibilities contribute to these.
K3	The flow from supplier to distribution to store and customer.
K4*	Key methods and techniques for determining diverse customer needs and meeting these with appropriate products or services.
K5*	Fundamental approaches for communicating with customers and service recovery.
K6	Branding, visual standards, promotional activity and how these relate to merchandising.
K7*	Key principles of stock management and loss prevention.
K8	Fundamental digital tools and methods to support service, supply and administrative activities, including omnichannel basics.
K9	Teamworking values, requirements and approaches to support internal collaboration.
K10	Key regulatory and legislative requirements and methods to support key responsibilities, including the importance of their application.
K11*	Key administrative approaches and organisational tools for time management, data handling and supporting workflow.
K12	Key approaches and metrics to support continuous improvement.
K13*	Fundamental principles of equality, diversity and inclusion.
K14*	Basic commercial concepts including promotions, availability, waste and shrink, and how accurate price labels, tidy shelves and date rotation support performance.
Technical Skills	
S1*	Identify customers' needs and how products and services available can meet them.
S2*	Communicate with customers to support and recover excellent customer service.
S3	Apply sales methods and techniques to support or influence the customer in their purchasing decisions.
S4	Apply branding principles to present products to standard and support organisational goals.
S5*	Support the management and storage of stock.
S6	Support sales goals and business objectives.
S7	Use digital tools to support service, supply and administrative activities.
S8*	Use administrative approaches and organisational tools to handle data and support workflow.
S9	Comply with regulatory and legislative requirements relevant to the role.
S10	Support continuous improvement activities.
S11	Explore career opportunities in the sector and your own development needs.
S12*	Work in line with equity, diversity and inclusion principles.
Employability Skills and Behaviours	
EB1	Communicate and share information using verbal, non-verbal, written and digital methods.
EB2	Act in a professional manner including good time keeping and conduct.
EB3	Apply new learning and feedback to everyday practice.
EB4	Complete own work tasks and ask for help when needed.
EB5	Work with colleagues to contribute to team outcomes.

Technical Knowledge (K), Technical Skills (S) and Employability Skills and Behaviours (EB)	
EB6**	Seek ways to manage own financial, health and wellbeing needs using available resources.
EB7	Overcome challenges and adapt to changes at work.
EB8	Work in line with health, safety and environmental requirements.

PAL has used the Assessment Outcomes (AOs), Performance Descriptors and the Knowledge and Skills statements to inform the development of Learning Outcomes (LOs) and Assessment Criteria (ACs) for each of the Assessment Outcomes as follows:

AO1 The Retail Sector and its Service, Supply and Administration Functions

Learning Outcomes, Assessment Criteria and Amplification

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand how retail businesses operate, including how they are organised, meet customer needs and work to achieve success	1.1 Understand the purpose of the **retail sector** and its role in meeting customer needs. 1.2 Understand the role of **service functions** in supporting effective **retail operations** and positive customer experiences. 1.3 Understand how **supply and administration** activities support the day-to-day running of a retail organisation. 1.4 Understand the typical **business structures** and the roles within a retail organisation. 1.5 Understand how business values, products, brands, customers and targets contribute to the achievement of organisational goals. 1.6 Understand how individual **roles and responsibilities** contribute to organisational success.
2. Understand how products move from suppliers to customers and how to meet legal requirements in a retail role	2.1 Understand the flow of products from supplier to distribution centre, store and customer. 2.2 Understand the importance of each stage of the **supply chain** in ensuring products are available to customers. 2.3 Identify key **regulatory and legislative requirements** relevant to a retail role. 2.4 Understand the methods used to comply with regulatory and legislative requirements in the workplace. 2.5 Understand the importance of applying regulatory and legislative requirements when carrying out retail activities.
3. Understand how promotions, availability, waste, shrink, pricing accuracy, and stock presentation support retail performance	3.1 Identify basic **commercial concepts** that support retail performance. 3.2 Understand how promotional activity and product availability contribute to organisational objectives. 3.3 Understand how accurate price labels, tidy shelves and date rotation support retail performance.

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
4. Be able to apply workplace procedures to follow regulatory, legislative, and organisational requirements in retail	4.1 Follow regulatory and legislative requirements relevant to retail activities. 4.2 Apply workplace procedures to support compliance with regulatory and legislative requirements. 4.3 Work in accordance with regulatory, legislative and organisational requirements relevant to the role.
5. Be able to explore career opportunities, assess own development needs, and take part in development activities	5.1 Outline **career opportunities** within the retail sector. 5.2 Identify own strengths and development needs in relation to current and future career goals. 5.3 Take part in **development activities** to support personal and professional growth.

Amplification and Guidance

Retail sector: all businesses and organisations that sell goods or services directly to end consumers for personal use. This includes a wide range of retail formats such as shops, supermarkets, online retailers, market stalls and other sales channels. The sector Included both products (e.g. clothing, food) and services (e.g. repairs, advice).

The sector also includes the processes and activities involved in getting products to customers, such as merchandising, pricing, marketing, sales, and customer service. It operates across physical stores and digital platforms, reflecting how customers choose to shop.

Service functions: the specific support activities within a retail business that help operations run smoothly and ensure customers receive a positive experience. They focus on both supporting internal operations and directly meeting customer needs.

Typical service functions include customer service (e.g. helping customers and answering questions), stock control (e.g. making sure products are available to buy), merchandising (e.g. putting products out in a clear and attractive way), sales and checkout (e.g. serving customers and taking payments), orders and delivery (e.g. making sure customers get what they have bought), after-sales support (e.g. dealing with returns, refunds and customer issues). These functions work together to maintain availability, efficiency and service quality across the business.

Retail operations: refers to the day-to-day activities, processes and systems that enable a retail business to run effectively and serve customers. This may include making sure products are in stock and available to buy, keeping the shop or website organised and easy to use, serving customers and taking payments, making sure there are enough staff working at the right times, helping customers and providing good service, setting up offers, prices and product displays.

Amplification and Guidance

Supply and administration: supply activities (e.g. ordering stock, receiving deliveries, managing stock levels) ensure products are available to sell. Administration activities (e.g. record keeping, processing paperwork, handling data and communication) support the smooth running of the business.

Business structures: refer to how a retail business is set up and owned, including who makes decisions, how responsibilities are shared, and how the business is managed. The structure chosen affects how the business operates, grows and is controlled.

- Business structures = who owns and runs the retail business.
- Organisational structure = how the people and roles are organised within it.

The main types of retail business structures:

- Sole trader - owned and run by one person, the owner makes all decisions and keeps the profits, common for small or independent shops.
- Partnership - owned by two or more people, partners share responsibility, decisions, profits and risks, often used for small businesses run jointly.
- Limited company (Ltd) - a separate legal business from its owners, run by directors and may have shareholders, common for larger or growing retail organisations.
- Public limited company (PLC) (awareness only) - large companies that can sell shares to the public, typically national or international retail chains.

Organisational structure, common types:

- Simple/line structure – clear chain of command, often in small shops.
- Hierarchical structure – several levels of management, common in larger retailers.
- Team-based/flat structure – fewer management levels, more shared responsibility.

Roles and responsibilities: a role is a job position; responsibilities are the tasks required to fulfil the role. Roles and responsibilities may differ depending on the size and structure of the organisation. Examples of roles and responsibilities may include:

- Sales assistant/retail assistant - serving customers and providing product advice, processing payments, replenishing shelves and pricing items, keeping the store clean and presentable, helping customers find products.
- Store assistant - maintaining stock levels, receiving deliveries, processing payments, following health and safety procedures, supporting store operations.
- Customer service assistant - greeting customers, answering queries, assisting with products, handling returns and complaints, promoting offers, maintaining shop floor.
- Checkout operator - scanning items, processing payments, handling cash and cards, checking prices, providing customer service.
- Warehouse operative - receiving stock, storing goods, picking and packing orders, checking for damage, maintaining records, following health and safety.

In smaller stores roles may be less specialised, with staff often completing a wide range of tasks.

Differences between in person and online sales.

- In person sales: greeting customers, giving product advice, processing payments, maintaining displays.

Amplification and Guidance

- Online sales: managing online orders, using e-commerce systems and CRM tools, handling customer queries via email/chat, managing stock across warehouses.

Supply chain: a series of interconnected stages that move a product from raw materials to the final customer. Typically, stages include:

- Planning - ensures the correct amount of stock is ordered.
- Sourcing/procurement - secures reliable suppliers to ensure consistent supply of goods.
- Manufacturing/production - produces finished goods in the required quantity and quality.
- Warehousing and inventory management - stores goods safely and ensures stock is available when needed.
- Distribution and logistics - moves products efficiently between locations (suppliers, warehouses, stores).
- Retail and customer delivery - ensures products are available for customers in-store or online.

Regulatory and legislative requirements: Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, Consumer Rights Act 2015, Consumer Contracts Regulations 2013, Equality Act 2010, Food Safety Act 1990, Age-restricted sales legislation.

Commercial concepts: relate to how a business generates income, manages costs, and measures success. Examples include sales and revenue, costs and profit, profit margin, pricing, markup and markdown, stock control and inventory, stock/inventory turnover, key performance indicators (KPIs), conversion rate and customer spend.

Career opportunities: may include progression pathways (e.g. team leader/supervisor - assistant or department manager - store manager - area or regional manager), specialist and support roles (e.g. buying and merchandising, marketing and e-commerce, logistics and supply chain, human resources and finance), online and emerging retail careers (e.g. e-commerce assistant or manager, online order fulfilment).

Development activities: may include:

- Work-based learning, e.g. learning by doing everyday tasks, job shadowing others to learn new roles, receiving feedback from supervisors or colleagues, taking part in new tasks or responsibilities, reflecting on work experiences to improve performance.
- Training and formal learning, e.g. attending training sessions or workshops, completing apprenticeships, courses or qualifications, workplace induction or skills training, participating in webinars or e-learning.
- Coaching and mentoring, e.g. learning from experienced colleagues, receiving guidance and support, asking questions and seeking advice.
- Self-directed learning, e.g. reading policies, procedures, or industry information, researching new skills or products, practising new skills independently.
- Collaborative learning, e.g. discussions with colleagues, team meetings and knowledge sharing.

AO2: Providing High-Quality Customer Service

Learning Outcomes, Assessment Criteria and Amplification

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand how to communicate effectively with customers, meet their needs and respond appropriately to service issues	1.1 Identify **approaches** used to communicate effectively with customers. 1.2 Identify methods used to determine **diverse customer needs**. 1.3 Understand how products and services meet different customer needs and preferences. 1.4 Understand approaches to **service recovery** and how these support positive customer outcomes.
2. Be able to identify customer needs, communicate effectively and apply sales techniques to support customer experience and service recovery	2.1 Identify customer needs using appropriate communication techniques. 2.2 Identify available products and services that meet customer needs. 2.3 Recommend suitable products and services based on identified customer needs. 2.4 Communicate with customers in a professional and appropriate manner to support a positive customer experience. 2.5 Respond to customer **queries, concerns** or **complaints** to support service recovery. 2.6 Use **sales methods and techniques** to identify customer requirements and recommend suitable products or services. 2.7 Apply sales techniques to maximise sales while maintaining a positive customer experience.

Amplification and Guidance
Approaches may include: ➢ Verbal communication, e.g. spoken language either face to face or via telephone. ➢ Non-verbal communication, e.g. eye contact, body language, facial expressions, gestures. ➢ Active listening, e.g. full concentration, not interrupting, showing understanding/nodding/paraphrasing. ➢ Questioning techniques, e.g. open questions, closed questions, probing questions. ➢ Clear communication, e.g. avoiding jargon or over technical terms, using language that is easy to understand.

Amplification and Guidance

- Adapting communication to the customer, e.g. depending on age, situation, customer behaviour, cultural background, customer needs, emotional state.
- Using different communication channels, e.g. face-to-face interaction, telephone, email or written communication, online chat or digital platforms.

Diverse customer needs may include**:**

- Physical and accessibility needs - customers may require access support (e.g. ramps, lifts, clear signage), additional time or alternative formats (e.g. large print, verbal support).
- Communication and language needs, e.g. may speak different languages, have limited English, have hearing or speech difficulties.
- Cultural and social needs e.g. may have different cultural backgrounds and different expectations, values, and behaviours and may respond differently to communication styles.
- Age-related needs - different age groups may have different communication preferences or different levels of confidence or support needs.
- Emotional and situational needs e.g. may require reassurance, patience, urgent support.
- Lifestyle and personal preference needs, e.g. budgets, lifestyle, or personal choices.
- Equality and inclusion needs – customers may have needs linked to protected characteristics and may require reasonable adjustments, inclusive communication, or equal access to products and services.

Service recovery: a structured approach used to respond to service failures (e.g. complaints, faulty products, poor service, or delays), resolve customer dissatisfaction, and restore confidence in the business. Key approaches to service recovery include listen, acknowledge and apologise, take ownership, identify the problem, provide a solution, offer compensation (if appropriate), follow up, learn and improve.

Queries: requests for information (e.g. opening hours, returns policy, stock location, delivery times).

Concerns: worries or dissatisfaction not yet formal complaints (e.g. initial concerns on wait times, pricing, products).

Complaints: clear expressions of dissatisfaction requiring resolution (e.g. faulty items, wrong orders, complicated processes, missing items, incorrect charging).

Sales methods and techniques focuses on understanding the customer first. Typical methods and techniques may include:

- Questioning techniques - use a mix of open and closed questions to gather information, apply probing questions to explore deeper needs, use funnelling (broad to specific questions).
- Active listening - pay full attention to what the customer says, acknowledge and clarify understanding, identify both stated and unstated needs.
- Consultative selling approach - focus on advising rather than pushing a sale, build rapport and trust with the customer, tailor recommendations to individual needs.
- Structured sales methods (e.g. SPIN selling) - Situation questions – understand customer context, Problem questions – identify issues or needs, Implication questions – explore consequences, Need-payoff questions – highlight benefits of solving the issue.
- Features and benefits selling- explain product features (what it is/does), link clearly to customer benefits (how it helps them).

Amplification and Guidance
➢ Upselling techniques - offer a higher-value or upgraded option, explain added value (quality, durability, performance). ➢ Cross-selling techniques - recommend complementary or related products, enhance the customer's overall purchase.

AO3: Working Together to Support the Sales Process

Learning Outcomes, Assessment Criteria and Amplification

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand how merchandising and stock control support retail performance	1.1 Identify the purpose of **branding, visual standards** and **promotional activity** in a retail environment. 1.2 Understand how branding, visual standards and promotional activity support **effective merchandising**. 1.3 Understand the key principles of **stock management** and how these support business operations and customer needs. 1.4 Understand methods used to prevent stock loss and maintain **stock security**.
2. Understand how digital tools and administrative processes support service, supply and day-to-day retail activities	2.1 Identify **digital tools** used to support customer service, supply and administrative activities in a retail environment. 2.2 Understand how digital tools support the efficient operation of retail activities. 2.3 Understand the basic principles of **omnichannel retailing** and how customers interact with different sales channels. 2.4 Identify **administrative approaches** and organisational tools used to support effective workplace organisation and workflow. 2.5 Understand the importance of accurate data handling and record keeping in supporting workflow activities.
3. Understand how teamwork, communication and inclusive practices support effective working relationships and customer experiences in retail	3.1 Understand the **values and behaviours** that support effective teamwork and collaboration in a retail environment. 3.2 Identify **approaches** used to communicate and collaborate effectively with colleagues. 3.3 Identify the **principles** of equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace. 3.4 Understand how equality, diversity and inclusion support positive working relationships and customer experiences.

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
4. Understand how performance measures and continuous improvement support retail practice	4.1 Identify how to **measure** individual, team and business performance. 4.2 Identify approaches used to support continuous improvement in a retail environment.
5. Be able to present products, manage stock and support sales to meet business objectives	5.1 Present products in line with organisational branding and visual standards. 5.2 Use merchandising techniques to promote products and support organisational objectives. 5.3 Maintain product displays to meet organisational standards and enhance the customer experience. 5.4 Store and handle stock in line with organisational stock management procedures. 5.5 Maintain stock levels and availability to support customer and business needs. 5.6 Follow procedures to minimise stock loss and maintain stock security. 5.7 Contribute to sales activities that support organisational goals and targets. 5.8 Use appropriate **sales techniques** to support business objectives and customer needs. 5.9 Monitor own performance and take action to support sales and business objectives.
6. Be able to use digital tools and administrative processes to support retail activities and continuous improvement	6.1 Use digital tools to support customer service activities. 6.2 Use digital tools to support supply and stock-related activities. 6.3 Use digital tools to support administrative activities. 6.4 Apply administrative approaches to support effective workplace operations. 6.5 Use organisational tools to manage time and support workflow.

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
	6.6 Handle data and maintain accurate records in line with organisational procedures. 6.7 Contribute to **continuous improvement activities** in the workplace. 6.8 Use **performance information** to support work activities and improvement
7. Be able to work in line with equality, diversity and inclusion principles	7.1 Demonstrate behaviours that support equity, diversity and inclusion when working with colleagues and customers. 7.2 Apply equity, diversity and inclusion principles when carrying out **day-to-day retail activities.**

Amplification and Guidance

Branding: how the business presents its identity consistently to customers through visual appearance, messaging and customer experience. Branding may include the use of logos, colours, tone of voice and signage consistently in-store and online. Ensuring displays and materials reflect brand image and standards. Supporting customer recognition and trust through consistent presentation.

Visual standards: standards for store appearance to ensure it is clean, safe, organised and visually appealing, supporting a positive customer experience and encouraging sales. Visual standards may include keeping fixtures, shelves and displays tidy, stocked and correctly labelled, following company visual guidelines (e.g. planograms, layouts), ensuring clear signage and logical store flow for customers.

Promotional activity: activities to increase sales, highlight products and improve customer engagement. Promotional activities may include price-based promotions, display-based promotions, in-store communication, product-led promotions, customer engagement activities.

Effective merchandising: presenting products in a way that makes them easy to find, attractive to customers and likely to sell. Merchandising may include placing products in the right location and quantity, using layout, displays and product grouping to encourage purchases, following planograms and stock positioning guidelines, supporting upselling, cross-selling and impulse buying.

Stock management: handling and monitoring stock to ensure the right products are available at the right time, minimising waste and meeting customer demand. Stock management may include checking stock levels and replenishing shelves, rotating stock (e.g. date checking where relevant), reporting shortages, damages or discrepancies, supporting deliveries, stock counts and accurate records.

Stock security: protecting stock from loss, theft or damage. Stock security may include identifying and reporting suspicious behaviour, following security procedures (e.g. tagging, CCTV awareness, secure storage), handling stock safely and securely, supporting stock checks and loss prevention processes.

Amplification and Guidance

Digital tools may include:

- Customer service tools (Point of Sale (POS).
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems.
- Self-checkout and mobile payment systems.
- Online chat or customer service platforms.
- Supply/stock management tools (inventory management systems, barcode scanners/RFID systems, automated ordering systems, warehouse management systems).
- Administrative tools (retail management software/ERP systems.
- Accounting and finance software (e.g. payroll, invoicing), scheduling and workforce management systems, data reporting and analytics tools).

Omnichannel retailing: integrating all sales channels to provide a seamless, consistent and customer-focused experience. Principles may include

- Integration of all channels - all channels (e.g. store, website, app, social media) are connected and share information such as stock levels, customer data and promotions.
- Consistent customer experience - customers receive the same quality of service, pricing and information across all channels.
- Customer-focused approach - the strategy is centred around customer convenience and expectations.
- Seamless customer journey - customers can start, continue and complete their purchase across different channels without starting again.
- Use of shared data and technology - retailers use digital tools (POS, CRM, stock systems) to share real-time data across channels.

Administrative approaches may include: using structured methods to plan tasks and allocate time effectively, organising, assigning and monitoring tasks to ensure work is completed efficiently, having clear processes that show how work moves through the business, using agreed procedures and guidelines to ensure consistency, maintaining accurate and organised records to support operations, ensuring clear communication between staff and departments, checking that work is completed effectively and improving processes.

Values may include respect -valuing others' views, roles and contributions, trust - reliability and honesty between team members, accountability - taking responsibility for individual tasks, commitment - contributing to shared goals and team success, integrity and fairness - behaving ethically and consistently.

Behaviours may include clear communication - sharing information and updates with colleagues, active listening - understanding others' ideas and responding appropriately, cooperation and support - helping colleagues when needed, positive attitude - contributing to a constructive team environment, flexibility - adapting to changing tasks or priorities, problem-solving - working together to resolve issues.

Approaches used to communicate may include verbal, written and non-verbal communication. Approaches used to collaborate may include sharing information, task coordination, active listening and feedback, use of digital tools, team meetings and briefings – aligning on goals and responsibilities.

Principles:

- Equality: treating individuals fairly and giving equal access to opportunities, preventing discrimination based on protected characteristics, following legal requirements.

Amplification and Guidance

- Diversity: recognising and valuing differences between individuals, understanding that people have different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives, encouraging representation from a wide range of groups.
- Inclusion: creating an environment where everyone feels respected, valued and able to contribute, removing barriers that may disadvantage individuals, promoting a sense of belonging in the workplace.

Examples of practice include treating colleagues and customers with respect, avoiding discriminatory language or behaviour, supporting inclusive communication and accessibility, following workplace equality policies and procedures, challenging inappropriate behaviour or reporting concerns.

Measure may include:

- KPIs (key measures) - check results against set targets.
- Targets and goals - compare what was planned to what was achieved.
- Productivity - how much work is completed.
- Quality checks - looking at mistakes or errors.
- Time measures - whether work is finished on time.
- Money measures - sales, costs, or profit.
- Customer feedback - comments, reviews or complaints.
- Observation - watching how work is carried out.
- Appraisals/reviews - regular discussions about performance.
- Scorecards or dashboards - simple charts or trackers of results.
- Benchmarking - comparing to others or set standards.
- Following rules - checking work meets policies or procedures.
- Attendance - timekeeping and absence levels.
- Team results - what the team achieves together.
- Trends over time - checking if performance improves or drops.

Sales techniques may include identifying customer needs through questioning and active listening, recommending suitable products or services, explaining features and benefits, suggesting relevant alternatives, highlighting promotions, offers or loyalty schemes, recommending complementary products or services (add-on selling or cross-selling), suggesting enhanced or higher-value options where appropriate (upselling), addressing customer questions or concerns, and supporting customers to make informed purchasing decisions that meet both customer needs and business objectives.

Continuous improvement activities: ongoing actions taken to review and improve how work is carried out to increase efficiency, quality, customer experience and business performance (e.g. identifying problems or inefficiencies in service, stock or admin processes, suggesting ideas to improve ways of working, adapting processes following feedback or performance results, supporting changes such as new systems, layouts or procedures).

Performance information: data and feedback used to measure how well individuals, teams or the business are performing against targets or expectations. This may include both numerical data and qualitative feedback (e.g. key performance indicators (KPIs), stock data such as availability, turnover, waste or loss, customer feedback, reviews or satisfaction scores, individual or team performance results).

Amplification and Guidance
Day-to-day retail activities may include serving customers at the payment point, greeting and assisting customers on the shop floor, answering customer queries about products or services, restocking shelves and displays, pricing and labelling products, handling returns, exchanges or complaints, keeping the shop clean and tidy, checking stock levels and reporting shortages, setting up promotions or displays, packing goods or preparing items for collection/delivery, processing online orders, picking and packing items, following health and safety procedures while working, communicating with team members during a shift.

Section 3

How is Assessment Delivered?

The apprentice will be formally assessed against the assessment criteria for each of the Assessment Outcomes. The assessment will be completed using two discrete assessment methods and will include synoptic assessment, i.e., takes a view of the overall performance of the apprentice in their job.

The assessment activities will be completed as follows:

- Knowledge test.
- Portfolio of evidence (to include direct observation of the apprentice as the main source of evidence).

The knowledge test is externally set and externally assessed by PAL. The portfolio of evidence is externally set by PAL. PAL permits internal Centre assessment of the portfolio of evidence, subject to Centre Approval and Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy.

The content and structure of the assessment methods is provided by PAL to ensure consistency across all apprentices and Centres/Providers. The employer, with the support of the Centre/Provider where appropriate, will work with the apprentice to agree how the apprentice goes about completing the components of the assessment and will provide guidance along the way as required. The Centre/Provider will ensure that the evidence presented for assessment meets the assessment plan requirements.

In order to pass, the apprentice must achieve a pass in both assessment methods; apprentices who fail one or more method will fail the apprenticeship.

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

Sample Assessment Materials

For this standard, PAL provides two sample knowledge tests and a sample portfolio assessment pack.

All guidance and sample materials can be accessed from the PAL Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship Padlet.

Assessment Method 1: Knowledge Test

The knowledge test will comprise of multiple-choice questions (MCQ) which test the knowledge areas of assessment outcomes AO1, AO2 and AO3 in the foundation apprenticeship standard.

The assessment will be comprised of **35 multiple choice questions**, and the apprentice must choose 1 correct answer from 4 responses per question – each question is worth 1 mark.

The apprentice has **55 minutes** to complete the test.

The test is externally marked by PAL.

The assessment is available in an online format. Paper-based versions will be made available to those who require a reasonable adjustment.

Knowledge Test Grade Boundaries

Grade	Minimum Mark	Maximum Mark
Fail	0	20
Pass	21	35

Knowledge Test Specifics

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

Table 2: Knowledge Test Criteria

AO	LO	AC	Assessment Criteria (AC)	Knowledge Statement
AO1	LO1	1.1	Understand the purpose of the retail sector and its role in meeting customer needs.	K1
AO1	LO1	1.2	Understand the role of service functions in supporting effective retail operations and positive customer experiences.	K1
AO1	LO1	1.3	Understand how supply and administration activities support the day-to-day running of a retail organisation.	K1
AO1	LO1	1.4	Understand the typical business structures and the roles within a retail organisation.	K2
AO1	LO1	1.5	Understand how business values, products, brands, customers and targets contribute to the achievement of organisational goals.	K2
AO1	LO1	1.6	Understand how individual roles and responsibilities contribute to organisational success.	K2
AO1	LO2	2.1	Understand the flow of products from supplier to distribution centre, store and customer.	K3
AO1	LO2	2.2	Understand the importance of each stage of the supply chain in ensuring products are available to customers.	K3
AO1	LO2	2.3	Identify key regulatory and legislative requirements relevant to a retail role.	K10
AO1	LO2	2.4	Understand the methods used to comply with regulatory and legislative requirements in the workplace.	K10
AO1	LO2	2.5	Understand the importance of applying regulatory and legislative requirements when carrying out retail activities.	K10
AO1	LO3	3.1	Identify basic commercial concepts that support retail performance.	K14
AO1	LO3	3.2	Understand how promotional activity and product availability contribute to organisational objectives.	K14
AO1	LO3	3.3	Understand how accurate price labels, tidy shelves and date rotation support retail performance.	K14
AO2	LO1	1.1	Identify approaches used to communicate effectively with customers.	K5
AO2	LO1	1.2	Identify methods used to determine diverse customer needs.	K4
AO2	LO1	1.3	Understand how products and services meet different customer needs and preferences.	K4
AO2	LO1	1.4	Understand approaches to service recovery and how these support positive customer outcomes.	K5
AO3	LO1	1.1	Identify the purpose of branding, visual standards and promotional activity in a retail environment.	K6
AO3	LO1	1.2	Understand how branding, visual standards and promotional activity support effective merchandising.	K6

AO	LO	AC	Assessment Criteria (AC)	Knowledge Statement
AO3	LO1	1.3	Understand the key principles of stock management and how these support business operations and customer needs.	K7
AO3	LO1	1.4	Understand methods used to prevent stock loss and maintain stock security.	K7
AO3	LO2	2.1	Identify digital tools used to support customer service, supply and administrative activities in a retail environment.	K8
AO3	LO2	2.2	Understand how digital tools support the efficient operation of retail activities.	K8
AO3	LO2	2.3	Understand the basic principles of omnichannel retailing and how customers interact with different sales channels.	K8
AO3	LO2	2.4	Identify administrative approaches and organisational tools used to support effective workplace organisation and workflow.	K11
AO3	LO2	2.5	Understand the importance of accurate data handling and record keeping in supporting workflow activities.	K11
AO3	LO3	3.1	Understand the values and behaviours that support effective teamwork and collaboration in a retail environment.	K9
AO3	LO3	3.2	Identify approaches used to communicate and collaborate effectively with colleagues.	K9
AO3	LO3	3.3	Identify the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.	K13
AO3	LO3	3.4	Understand how equality, diversity and inclusion support positive working relationships and customer experiences.	K13
AO3	LO4	4.1	Identify how to measure individual, team and business performance.	K12
AO3	LO4	4.2	Identify approaches used to support continuous improvement in a retail environment	K12

How can a Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprentice Prepare for the Knowledge Test?

The Centre/Provider should be able to provide opportunities for the apprentice to undertake practice questions and sample tests. PAL strongly recommends the results of a sample test are used to determine readiness for assessment, and we provide 2 sample tests for this apprenticeship.

The apprentice should:

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

Examination Conditions

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

PAL will mandate that all tests are taken onscreen. Paper-based versions will only be made available following a validated reasonable adjustment application, therefore greatly limiting the risk of test reliability and test security. Paper-based assessments will also all be invigilated in-person by trained PAL staff and associates.

There will be two approaches PAL will follow in terms of invigilation. The primary approach will be for trained PAL staff and associates to invigilate all onscreen tests on a remote basis. In cases where Centres have been approved to provide their own invigilators, tests will remain to be delivered onscreen.

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 Assessment Ltd.'s Invigilation policy. The invigilator must verify the suitability of the test venue and the identity of the person taking the test and must ensure appropriate methods to prevent misrepresentation, for example, screen share and 360-degree camera function with an administrator/invigilator where the test is taken remotely.

Some of the key conditions for the assessment are:

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

Where there is a conflict of interest, for example a relative working within the establishment, PAL's Conflict of Interest policy will be implemented.

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 PAL's Reasonable Adjustments policy.

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

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

Assessment Method 2: Portfolio of Evidence

The portfolio of evidence should be produced using the PAL apprentice portfolio assessment pack during the on-programme period of the foundation apprenticeship. The portfolio should show that the apprentice has met the required level of knowledge and skills set by employers and approved by Skills England, and that they are able to demonstrate these reliably and effectively, to an appropriate degree for the level of the standard.

PAL provides a **mandatory portfolio assessment pack** to apprentices, employers and Centres/Providers. The assessment pack contains the assessment tasks for the PAL Level 2 Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship. A discrete assessment approach has been taken, meaning that each assignment covers assessment outcomes and assessment criteria.

The purpose of these assessments is to demonstrate that the required knowledge, skills, and behaviours to work as a retail service, supply and administration practitioner have been acquired.

These are formal assessments for which the quality and accuracy of work will be assessed. It is therefore important that work is carried out to the highest possible standard. It is important to demonstrate both knowledge and understanding of the subject and the knowledge and understanding in applied practice, using the tasks in the assessment pack.

Skill-based criteria must include **direct observation** as the main source of evidence and must be carried out over an appropriate period of time. Evidence should be naturally occurring.

PAL permits Centre assessment of the portfolio of evidence for Centres approved by PAL, in line with the CASS strategy. External quality assurance will be completed by PAL; further information is provided in the PAL's EQA Guidance for Centres.

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

Apprentice Authenticity

Apprentices are required to sign and date a Statement of Authenticity for their portfolio evidence. The apprentice statement confirms the evidence submitted is all their own work and has not been completed by a third party. Additionally, the apprentice statement confirms the evidence provided has been completed in accordance with PAL instructions.

Where Centre assessment takes place, Centres are required to complete a Centre Statement of Authenticity to confirm the apprentice is registered on a programme with the Centre.

PAL has provided an authenticity declaration on the Portfolio Assessment Record which can be accessed from the Administration Assistant Apprenticeship Padlet. Centres can also use their own version; however, it must capture the same information as the PAL record. For PAL assessed portfolios, the authenticity declaration is on the Portfolio Mapping Record.

Apprentices are permitted to make use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications as research tools and for spelling and grammar checks. All use of AI must be acknowledged and referenced by the apprentice when submitting their assessment evidence. However, AI must **not** be used to replace the own work of the apprentice, and all assessment evidence must be confirmed as authentic apprentice work.

AI can be used to critique work, make suggestions for improvements (as long as the final work presented is reflective of the apprentice's capability), support creation of tables or graphs to illustrate data, design PowerPoints and create professional reports.

AI must not be used in a way that replaces the apprentice's own knowledge, skills, or decision-making. All final assessment evidence must reflect the apprentice's independent understanding, experience and judgement, not the output of an AI tool.

Apprentices must acknowledge any use of AI tools in their assessment submissions. This includes naming the tool used, describing how it was used, and referencing any content it provided in line with academic standards. Centres/Providers must ensure apprentices understand how to do this and retain evidence to support authenticity.

Unacknowledged and unreported use of AI may be considered malpractice by the apprentice and will be judged as a minimum as maladministration by the apprentice and Centre/Provider.

Please refer to the PAL AI Policy for further details.

Assessment Design and Activities

When considering assessment tasks, PAL have ensured that:

- The selected assessment task/activity is relevant to the content of the assessment outcome.
- There are clear instructions given to apprentices as to what is expected for each assessment, what evidence is required for each unit and how to map evidence.
- Apprentices are clearly told how long the assessment will take (if it is a timed activity), what the word count is (for written activities), whether there are any tolerances regarding the time/word count, and what reference or other materials they may use (if any) to complete it.
- The language used in the assessment is free from any bias.
- The language and technical terms used are at the appropriate level for the apprentice.

Validity, Authenticity, Relevancy, Currency, and Sufficiency

In addition to the specific assessment criteria in each unit, the apprentice's work must be:

- Accurate, current, and authentic.
- Relevant in depth and breadth.

The evidence presented must meet VARCS requirements.

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

Table 3: Portfolio Assessment Criteria Mapping

AO	LO	AC	Assessment Criteria	Knowledge and Skills Statement
AO1	LO4	4.1	Follow regulatory and legislative requirements relevant to retail activities.	S9
AO1	LO4	4.2	Apply workplace procedures to support compliance with regulatory and legislative requirements.	S9
AO1	LO4	4.3	Work in accordance with regulatory, legislative and organisational requirements relevant to the role.	S9
AO1	LO5	5.1	Outline career opportunities within the retail sector.	S11
AO1	LO5	5.2	Identify own strengths and development needs in relation to current and future career goals.	S11
AO1	LO5	5.3	Take part in development activities to support personal and professional growth.	S11

AO	LO	AC	Assessment Criteria	Knowledge and Skills Statement
AO2	LO2	2.1	Identify customer needs using appropriate communication techniques.	S1
AO2	LO2	2.2	Identify available products and services that meet customer needs.	S1
AO2	LO2	2.3	Recommend suitable products and services based on identified customer needs.	S1
AO2	LO2	2.4	Communicate with customers in a professional and appropriate manner to support a positive customer experience.	S2
AO2	LO2	2.5	Respond to customer queries, concerns or complaints to support service recovery.	S2
AO2	LO2	2.6	Use sales methods and techniques to identify customer requirements and recommend suitable products or services.	S3
AO2	LO2	2.7	Apply sales techniques to maximise sales while maintaining a positive customer experience.	S3
AO3	LO5	5.1	Present products in line with organisational branding and visual standards.	S4
AO3	LO5	5.2	Use merchandising techniques to promote products and support organisational objectives.	S4
AO3	LO5	5.3	Maintain product displays to meet organisational standards and enhance the customer experience.	S4
AO3	LO5	5.4	Store and handle stock in line with organisational stock management procedures.	S5
AO3	LO5	5.5	Maintain stock levels and availability to support customer and business needs.	S5
AO3	LO5	5.6	Follow procedures to minimise stock loss and maintain stock security.	S5
AO3	LO5	5.7	Contribute to sales activities that support organisational goals and targets.	S6
AO3	LO5	5.8	Use appropriate sales techniques to support business objectives and customer needs.	S6
AO3	LO5	5.9	Monitor own performance and take action to support sales and business objectives.	S6
AO3	LO6	6.1	Use digital tools to support customer service activities.	S7
AO3	LO6	6.2	Use digital tools to support supply and stock-related activities.	S7
AO3	LO6	6.3	Use digital tools to support administrative activities.	S7
AO3	LO6	6.4	Apply administrative approaches to support effective workplace operations.	S8
AO3	LO6	6.5	Use organisational tools to manage time and support workflow.	S8
AO3	LO6	6.6	Handle data and maintain accurate records in line with organisational procedures.	S8
AO3	LO6	6.7	Contribute to continuous improvement activities in the workplace.	S10
AO3	LO6	6.8	Use performance information to support work activities and improvement.	S10
AO3	LO7	7.1	Demonstrate behaviours that support equity, diversity and inclusion when working with colleagues and customers.	S12
AO3	LO7	7.2	Apply equity, diversity and inclusion principles when carrying out day-to-day retail activities.	S12

Section 4 - Grading

Completion of this foundation apprenticeship will certify achievement of all of the technical knowledge and skills, together with all of the employability skills and behaviours described.

The Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship includes fail and pass grades with the final grade based on the apprentice's combined performance in each assessment activity.

To achieve a pass overall, the apprentice must demonstrate the requirements, as set out in the occupational standard:

- Reliably.
- Effectively.
- To an appropriate degree for the level of the standard.

Overall performance across the range of requirements for the foundation apprenticeship assessment is secure.

The apprentice **must** achieve a pass in both assessment methods. Grades from each method of assessment will be combined as follows.

Knowledge Test	Portfolio	Overall Grading
Fail	Any grade	Fail
Any grade	Fail	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass

Resubmissions and Resits

PAL's approach to resubmissions and resits for the Level 2 Retail Service, Supply and Administration Foundation Apprenticeship ensures fairness, transparency, and apprentice success while maintaining the apprenticeship's integrity.

There will be no limit on the number of attempts an apprentice can take to successfully achieve a passing grade in the Knowledge Test or Portfolio Assessment.

PAL's resubmission and resit policy and pricing policy is available on PAL's website or by request to info@professionalassessment.co.uk

Section 5 – General Guidance

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

If assessors judge that RPL can applied to any of the learning outcomes, the please refer to the PAL Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy.

Evidence for valid RPL evidence could include the successful completion of extensive induction programmes, statutory and mandatory training, in addition to other appropriate recognition already achieved, for example, health and safety or equality and diversity.

Where RPL is used, it **must** be clearly recorded in the assessment summary record for the unit.

Relevant prior learning or experience **is unlikely to exist for apprentices aged 16 to 18**, unless they have:

- Previously started or completed an apprenticeship.
- Done other training aligned to an occupational standard, for example, a T-level.
- Been in post-16 employment relevant to their apprenticeship.

You need to:

- Check the apprentice's personal learning record (if it exists).
- Have a discussion with the apprentice to check if they have any relevant prior learning or experience.

If they do not have any relevant prior learning or experience, you do not need to take any further action. This means, you do not need to:

- Complete a skills scan.
- Make any adjustments to their training or the price of the apprenticeship.

Apprentices applying RPL will always be included in the sample selected by the PAL External Quality Assurer.

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.

Whilst AI is a useful tool and commonly used in businesses, where used for assessment purposes it must be clearly referenced. The use of AI-generated content which is not declared and appropriately referenced may constitute plagiarism and/or malpractice. Apprentices must declare all use of generative AI tools used during preparation of assessment evidence.

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 is available on PAL's website or by request to info@professionalassessment.co.uk

Enquiries and Appeals

All PAL Centres are required to have in place their own enquiries and appeals policy and procedure. Where the Centre has undertaken the assessment, PAL expects apprentices to exhaust their Centre process before making an enquiry or submitting an enquiry to PAL. PAL will typically not consider an appeal if the Centre appeals process has not been exhausted.

For PAL assessments, the Centre should direct their enquiry or appeal to PAL directly.

Enquiries: Allow Centres and apprentices to ask for clarification or exemplification on specific or general issues, relating to the design, development, delivery or award of qualifications and reformed apprenticeship standards.

Appeals: Allow Centres and apprentices to question a decision or judgement regarding an assessment outcome. An appeal is a process through which the outcome of a decision may be challenged.

PAL's Enquiries and Appeals policy is available on PAL's website or by request to info@professionalassessment.co.uk

Complaints

All PAL Centres are required to have in place their own current complaints policy and procedure.

Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction about the standard or quality of service, behaviour, action or inaction by or on behalf of PAL.

To help PAL resolve a complaint or address specific concerns, it helps to have as much information as possible, in respect of what has happened, when the event happened and who was involved and contact details.

PAL's Complaints policy is available on PAL's website or by request to info@professionalassessment.co.uk

Maladministration and Malpractice

PAL wants malpractice to be reported and would encourage anyone who has information regarding malpractice to come forward and report the matter. Allegations of malpractice can be reported to PAL by employers, Providers/Colleges, regulators, funding agencies, apprentices, other AOs and members of the public. Sometimes these reports are anonymous, which does not mean PAL will not follow up on such allegations, but it may limit our ability to conduct a thorough review and investigation.

Where requested, PAL will not disclose the identity of individuals reporting cases of suspected malpractice, unless legally obliged to do so.

Maladministration: Includes any actions, neglect, default, or other practice that compromises the assessment or quality assurance process, including the integrity of apprenticeship assessments, the validity of any results or certificate requests or the reputation and credibility of PAL.

Malpractice: is taken to mean any deliberate or intentional and/or planned act, default or practice that compromises the integrity and reliability of any aspect of the assessment process and the validity of any results and certificates, or the reputation and credibility of PAL.

PAL's Maladministration and Malpractice policy is available on PAL's website or by request to info@professionalassessment.co.uk

How to Contact PAL

For general information, enquiries and complaints, please contact: info@professionalassessment.co.uk

To make an appeal, please contact: appeals@pal-awarding.co.uk

To declare a conflict of interest, please contact: conflicts@pal-awarding.co.uk

To report a case of malpractice or maladministration please contact: malpractice@pal-awarding.co.uk

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

Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are modifications made to an assessment to enable an apprentice to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding. The nature of any reasonable adjustment depends on the apprentice's specific identified needs, the apprentice standard, and the assessment methods.

PAL's assessments are designed to be accessible, inclusive and non-discriminatory. All apprentices must be treated fairly and equally and be given every opportunity to achieve the foundation apprenticeship.

Apprentices who require reasonable adjustments should discuss their requirements with their Centre, who should refer to PAL's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations policy for guidance.

PAL's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations policy is available on PAL's website or by request to info@professionalassessment.co.uk

Certification

PAL will request the apprenticeship certificate for successful achievements using the apprenticeship service portal. PAL does not certificate the apprenticeship standard; its role is to request the certificate.

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

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

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

Glossary of Terms

Centre - Ofqual defines a Centre as "an organisation undertaking the delivery of an assessment (and potentially other activities) to Apprentices on behalf of an Awarding Organisation".

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

PAL – Professional Assessment Limited.

IQA - Internal quality assurance/assurer, the department and/or personnel who are responsible for the quality of apprenticeship assessment both internally to the Centre and internally to PAL.

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

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

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

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

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

Assessment Outcomes - summarises occupational standard content into clear assessment outcomes, mapping specific knowledge and skills statements to each outcome.

Performance Descriptor - defines the characteristics of a 'pass' grade and any higher grades to ensure consistent standards across Centres.