

End-point assessment

End-point assessment (EPA) tests the knowledge, skills and behaviours that an apprentice has gained during their training. Unique to each standard, EPA demonstrates the competence of an apprentice in their role. This competence is valued by current and future employers.

You can find [EPA plans](#) on the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education's (the Institute) website. Only approved EPAOs can carry out assessments as set out in the assessment plan.

Gateway

Gateway takes place before an EPA can start. The employer and training provider will review their apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviours to see if they have met the minimum requirements of the apprenticeship set out in the [apprenticeship standard](#), and are ready to take the assessment.

Minimum requirements

To meet the minimum requirements set out in the apprenticeship standard an apprentice needs to:

- display occupational competency
- have evidence of or pass functional skill levels in English and maths
- complete mandatory training
- take any qualifications set out in the standard
- meet the minimum duration for their apprenticeship training

Only apprentices who complete gateway successfully can start the EPA.

Employer role and responsibilities

Before gateway

EPA is a vital part of an apprenticeship and should be planned for at the start of an apprenticeship programme. The [apprenticeship funding rules](#) explain how EPA is funded. Employers are responsible for deciding when their apprentices are ready to pass through gateway and take their EPA.

To support their understanding of EPA and to inform their gateway decisions employers should:

- download and understand the [standard and assessment plan](#) for the apprenticeship from the [Institute's website](#)
- choose an EPAO at the same time as choosing a training provider, (training providers may do this on behalf of employers if they have been given permission)
- choose the correct EPAO for registered professions
- agree a gateway date at the beginning of the apprenticeship, or at least three months before the apprentice is expected to be ready for EPA - share this date with the training provider and apprentice
- tell the apprentice about EPA at the start of the programme, so that they are aware of all requirements
- inform the EPAO of planned gateway and EPA dates at least three months in advance to give them enough time to prepare
- make the EPAO aware of any additional needs of the apprentice so that they can make reasonable adjustments
- check the dates that the apprentice will sit other qualifications in the apprenticeship standard early on - mandatory qualifications need to have been completed in advance of gateway
- hold regular reviews throughout training with the training provider and the apprentice to assess their progression against the assessment plan and familiarise apprentices with assessment methods; this way the apprentice can be passed through gateway at the correct time
- actively engage with the chosen EPAO from the beginning of the apprenticeship, making good use of the materials they provide to prepare the apprentice
- keep everyone (apprentice, provider and EPAO) up to date on any changes to the original plans for gateway and EPA

- take into account and plan around factors that might reduce the apprentice's EPA window, for example annual leave, so that the apprentice is not disadvantaged and passes through gateway at an appropriate time
- ensure apprentices are supported in practical terms through EPA, for example providing access to sites where their EPA will take place

At gateway

When an apprentice reaches the planned gateway date, their employer should hold a final meeting with their training provider to discuss if the apprentice is ready to sit their EPA.

Who is responsible for passing an apprentice through gateway?

Employers have the final say on whether an apprentice should be put forward for EPA based on whether they feel that the apprentice:

- displays occupational competence
- meets the gateway criteria
- is ready to complete their assessment

However, both the employer and training provider have a shared responsibility to decide whether the apprentice has demonstrated the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be competent in their job role.

It is important to refer back to the assessment plan when approaching gateway to check that the apprentice is able to demonstrate all of the required knowledge, skills and behaviours and can do so in a live EPA.

To minimise the risk of needing to resit, it is important that the apprentice has passed all of the criteria listed in the assessment plan before they are put through for EPA.

Once the employer and training provider have discussed the relevant evidence and have agreed that the apprentice is ready to be assessed, the employer can pass them through gateway. Employers

should give final confirmation to their chosen EPAO that the apprentice is ready to take their EPA.

Where there is a disagreement about whether the apprentice is ready to take their EPA, the employer and training provider should discuss whether additional training is appropriate and, if agreed, put this in place.

To provide an apprentice with the best chance of success, it is important that they do not pass through gateway until all parties agree that they are ready to take their EPA. By ensuring that apprentices are only passed through gateway when they are ready, employers will be less likely to incur resit costs.