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Guidance

# End-point assessment guide for apprentices

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**Applies to England**

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## **Introduction**

This guide is for apprentices. It will help you find out about what to expect from your end-point assessment (EPA). EPA is an independent assessment at the final stage of your apprenticeship. It tests the knowledge, skills and behaviours that you have gained during your apprenticeship programme. You will not be able to achieve your apprenticeship without passing your EPA.

Your EPA is a regulated qualification. This means you can expect timely, fair and consistent assessment at the end of your training, and protection if things go wrong. Regulated qualifications include GCSEs, A levels and vocational and technical qualifications including Functional Skills Qualifications and EPA.

## Roles and responsibilities

In this guide, we talk about awarding organisations (sometimes called EPAOs, exam boards or awarding bodies). Organisations that offer regulated qualifications are awarding organisations, including those offering EPA. The awarding organisation is responsible for managing and quality assuring the EPA process, from processing your registration and running the assessment to providing results and claiming the certificate that is awarded to you when you have successfully completed your apprenticeship.

We call the organisation that supplies the off-the-job training element of your apprenticeship a training provider in this guide. The training provider is jointly responsible with the employer for keeping you on track with your apprenticeship. The training provider is also responsible for registering you with the awarding organisation and booking the EPA.

## **Who does what?**

Each of the organisations listed below has a part to play in protecting quality in apprenticeships. This ensures every apprentice has the best experience and the opportunity to reach their potential.

### **Department for Education (DfE)**

- manages the apprenticeship funding system
- has overall responsibility for the quality of apprenticeships

### **Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE)**

- works with employers (trailblazers) to approve, develop and review the content of apprenticeships
- has responsibility for the quality assurance of EPA

### **Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)**

- inspects the quality of apprenticeship training provision
- publishes the findings from these inspections

### **Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)**

- regulates qualifications (for example, GCSEs, A levels and vocational and technical qualifications including Functional Skills Qualifications and EPA) in England

- maintains standards and confidence in regulated qualifications

## Office for Students (OfS)

- monitors quality and standards of higher education providers
- ensures that EPA for integrated degree apprenticeships meets high standards

# Preparing for your EPA

Once you have enrolled on your apprenticeship, you will have an [induction](#). During your induction, you should discuss your EPA as part of an overview of the apprenticeship. The EPA is different for each apprenticeship. At your induction, you should be given the EPA plan for your apprenticeship and approximate timescales for completion. This helps you to know what to expect from the start so that you begin with the goal of achieving the best grade possible.

To ensure you receive the appropriate support and training during your apprenticeship, you, your training provider and your employer will sign a commitment statement. If you did not do this at enrolment, you will sign it at your induction meeting.

Apprenticeships are based on occupations recognised by employers. [IfATE](#) works with employers to make sure apprenticeships are of the highest quality, so that you have the skills you need to succeed.

Each apprenticeship has an [occupational standard](#). You can view occupational standards for a particular route via the [occupational maps](#).

The occupational standard describes what someone in the occupation does. It includes the expected knowledge, skills and behaviours that you should have achieved by the end of your learning period. The occupational standard is developed by employers and is used by them to design and deliver [on- and off-the-job training](#). Awarding organisations use assessment plans based on occupational standards to develop EPA.

The occupational maps illustrate progression routes and how occupations at different levels link together.

## Some tips to help you prepare for your EPA

- 1 Read the occupational standard and assessment plan for your apprenticeship
- 2 Make sure you understand the knowledge, skills and behaviours you need to learn
- 3 Familiarise yourself with the EPA requirements before, during and as you finish your learning period
- 4 Stay up to date with logging your off-the job time for any activities you want to use as part of your evidence for EPA (record the type of activity, the time and the date it took place)
- 5 Ask your training provider and employer about the resit or retake policy

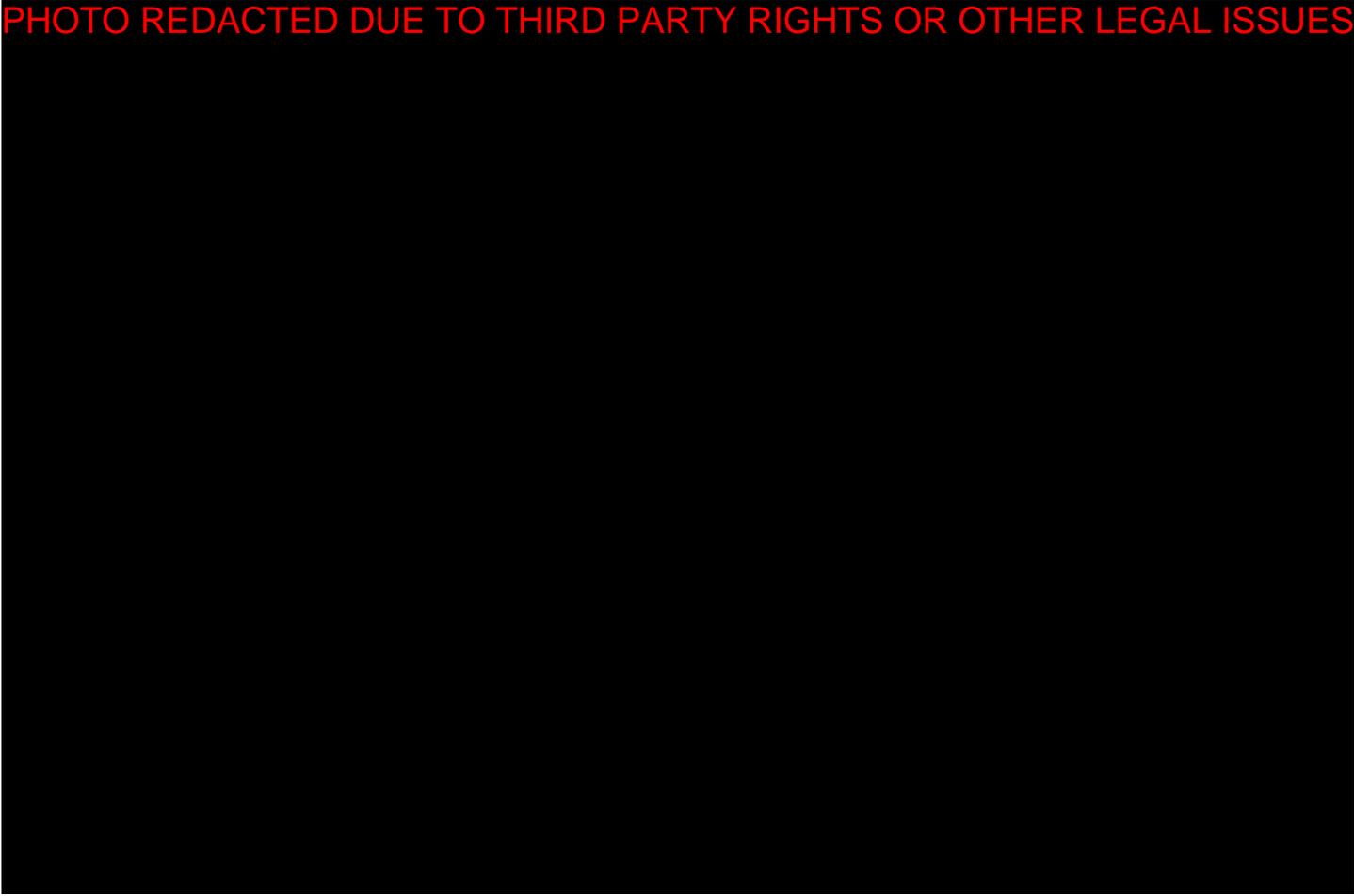
Before you take your EPA, you will complete the on-programme stage of your apprenticeship. This will involve you completing a series of activities and tasks with your employer and training provider to help you practise skills, knowledge and behaviours set out in the occupational standard. During the on-programme stage, you should be given time to practise all the required skills and tasks, including through mock assessments, so that you feel confident in showing what you know and can do when you take your EPA.

Your employer should help you prepare for your EPA during review meetings, setting targets that are clearly linked to the assessment requirements and giving you study leave for, and feedback on, your assignments.

The awarding organisation may provide resources to support you as you prepare for your EPA. For example, a 'how to' guide for video conference software, if it is used during part of your EPA. This may include a link to check you can access the software ahead of your assessment.

# What to expect from your EPA

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You, your employer and your training provider will make a joint decision about when you are ready to progress to your EPA. This stage is called the 'gateway'. Gateway takes place before an EPA can start. Each assessment plan clearly states the requirements you must meet at the point of gateway.

Talk to your employer and training provider so that you are clear about what you will be doing for each part of your EPA and whether you need to receive results for any part of your EPA before progressing to another part of the assessment.

EPAs are set and run by awarding organisations. The awarding organisation ensures the gateway requirements have been met before they accept you into EPA.

The assessment plan for your apprenticeship details how you will be assessed against the appropriate criteria. For example, you may complete some or all of these as part of your EPA:

- a practical assessment
- an interview
- a project

- written and/or multiple choice tests
- a presentation

This four-minute film explains different types of assessment methods for EPAs:

[This four-minute film](#) explains different types of assessment methods for EPAs.

In addition to taking your EPA, you may need to complete or pass other assessments and/or qualifications to gain your apprenticeship, for example, English and maths qualifications or licensing qualifications. You will discuss this at your induction.

Talk to your employer and training provider at the gateway meeting so that you know when you can expect to take your assessments and what will happen if any part of your assessment is delayed or rescheduled.

If you have concerns about the quality of your EPA and how it is run, you can talk to your employer and training provider. You can also check the awarding organisation's complaints procedure, which should be published on its website, and get in touch to tell it where things have not met your expectations.

## Additional support

### Reasonable adjustments

If you have a particular disability, such as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, you may need support when you take your EPA. Reasonable adjustments are adjustments made to an assessment so that you can demonstrate your knowledge, skills and understanding to the level required by the assessment plan.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- flexibility of time of assessment or extra time allowance

- timed rest breaks
- someone to write your dictated answers
- someone to read the questions for you
- a personal support worker in attendance during your assessment

Tell your training provider as soon as possible if you think you need to apply for reasonable adjustments. It is likely you will be using the reasonable adjustment as part of your training. Awarding organisations must have arrangements in place for reasonable adjustments and will review the request in line with their arrangements.

## Special consideration

Sometimes something happens that is beyond your control. Special consideration can be applied if something happens that temporarily affects your ability to take or show what you can do in your EPA, or your ability to demonstrate occupational competence.

Special consideration is only given for something that happens immediately before or during the EPA. It is given if there is a significant effect on your ability to take the assessment, or on how you performed. For example, if you have temporarily experienced a serious illness or injury or some other event outside your control.

To qualify for special consideration, you must have covered the requirements of the assessment plan.

Tell your training provider as soon as possible if you think you need to apply for special consideration. Awarding organisations must have arrangements in place to consider requests for special consideration and will review the request in line with their arrangements.

IfATE has published [guidance on reasonable adjustments and special consideration](#).

# Malpractice

Malpractice often involves cheating, or some other form of wrongdoing. Examples include:

- sharing answers with others taking the assessment
- not following the rules of the assessment
- getting someone to take your assessment for you
- leaking assessment materials or using leaked materials
- copying or rephrasing information from another source, including artificial intelligence (AI) tools, for example ChatGPT or Google Bard

When you take your EPA, the work you submit must be your own. If you commit malpractice you could face serious sanctions, including being disqualified from the EPA. Your training provider and awarding organisation will have further information on malpractice.

## How to report suspected malpractice

Everyone involved in delivering and taking EPA has a role to play in preventing and reporting malpractice, including you. This is to make sure that assessments are fair for everyone.

If you see or suspect malpractice, we encourage you to report it to your training provider or the awarding organisation, as appropriate.

Awarding organisations must have arrangements in place to deal with malpractice and will investigate in line with their arrangements. All allegations of malpractice are taken extremely seriously.

[You can also contact Ofqual.](#)

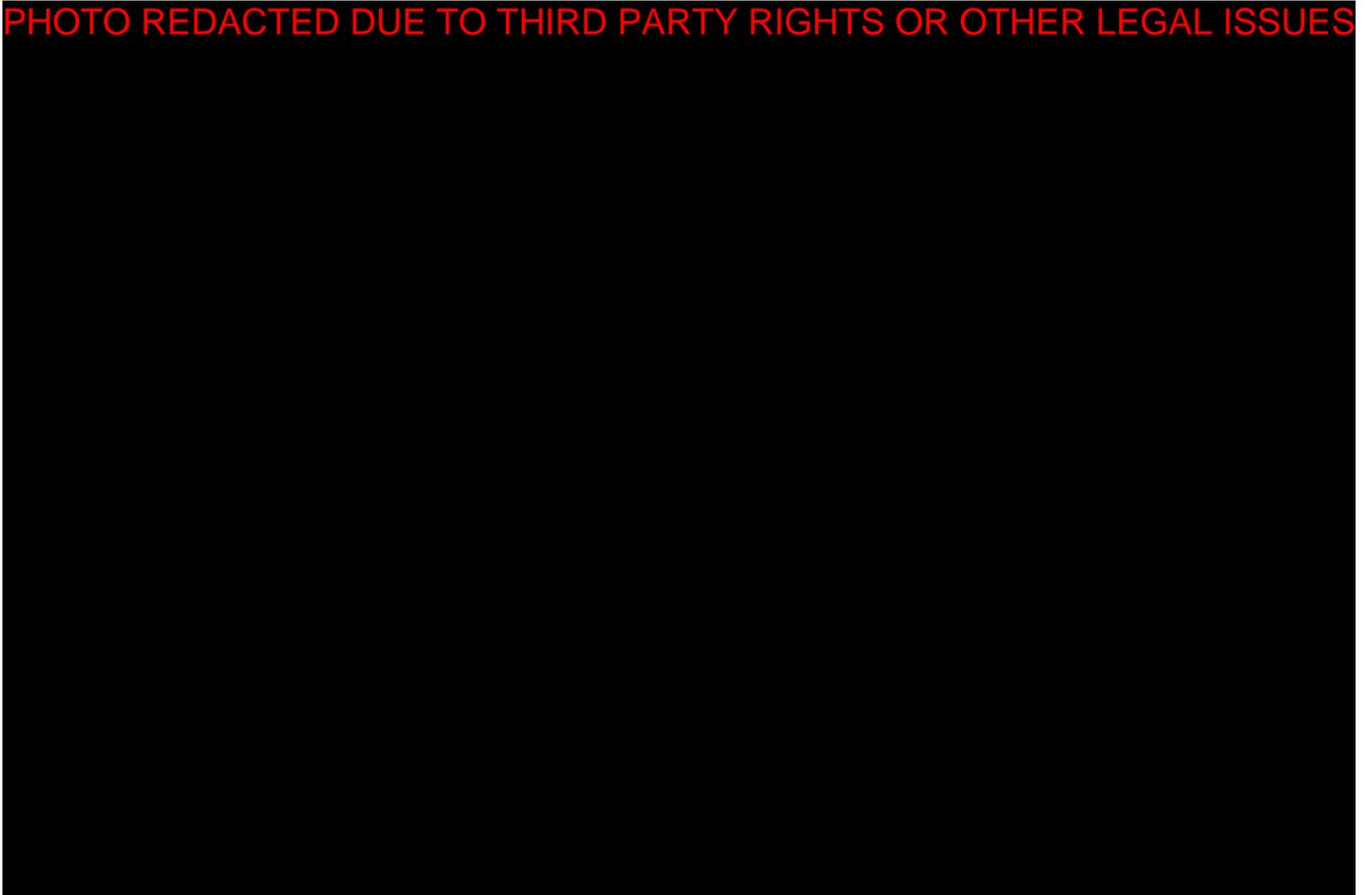
## What happens after you have taken your

# EPA?

After you have taken all the parts of your EPA, the awarding organisation will mark or assess your work and send the results to your training provider.

## Getting your results

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You will be awarded with a certificate if you:

- pass your EPA
- complete or pass any requirements in English and maths set out in the assessment plan
- complete or pass any other required qualifications
- successfully complete your apprenticeship

If you want further information about taking the next steps in your career, you can speak to your employer or training provider. You can also visit the [National Careers Service website](#), which offers advice and support.

# Resits and retakes

If you fail one or more parts of the EPA, talk to your employer and training provider about the opportunity to resit or retake it.

If you fail one or more of the assessments, you, your training provider and your employer can discuss the feedback provided by the assessor. You can then draw up an action plan to help you prepare for a resit or a retake.

A resit usually involves you resitting one or more of your assessments without further training.

A retake usually involves you doing further training before you do the assessment again.

You cannot resit or retake a particular part of the assessment to try to get a better grade if you have already passed that part of the assessment.

## If you have concerns about your results

If you have concerns about your results or want to appeal against your grade, speak to your employer or training provider, who will be able to help you.

You can also check the awarding organisation's complaints and appeals procedure, published on its website, and get in touch to tell it about your concerns.

## Mental health support

Always make sure you speak to somebody you trust if you are feeling anxious or struggling with your mental health.

You may find it helpful to read IfATE's guide, [Welfare and wellbeing in the apprenticeship](#)

You can also contact:

- [NHS England support for apprentices: I'm a current apprentice; what support is](#)

[available for me?](#)

- [Mind](#)
- [Young Minds](#)
- [NHS 111 online](#)

## Equalities: Equality Advisory and Support Services (EASS)

You can contact the [Equality Advisory and Support Service \(EASS\)](#) for advice on discrimination concerns. EASS advises and assists individuals on issues relating to equality and human rights, across England, Scotland and Wales.

Telephone: 0808 800 0082

Textphone: 0808 800 0084

## Useful contacts

The Department for Education (DfE) provides information on [finding an apprenticeship](#), including [higher and degree apprenticeships](#) and a [glossary of terms](#) for explanations of words or phrases that you may come across during your apprenticeship. The [apprentice guide to assessment](#) is a best practice guide with information about how you will be assessed during your EPA. You can also read these overviews about [understanding EPA](#) and [preparing for EPA](#).

DfE also provides information on [redundancy support for apprentices](#).

Make sure you know about [your rights as an apprentice and where to get support](#).

DfE [contact form for general enquiries](#)

Telephone: 0370 000 2288

Opening times: Monday to Friday 9:30am to 5pm, (excluding bank holidays)

You may get a quicker answer by calling between 9:30am and 10am, or between

4pm and 5pm.

**The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE)** publishes [standards approved for delivery, including approved assessment plans](#).

You can search apprenticeships using the [Apprenticeship Search](#).

You can find explanations of words, phrases or abbreviations used in apprenticeships in the [glossary of terms](#).

**The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)**

You can read this blog about [how Ofqual acts in the interests of apprentices](#).

Ofqual sets out its regulation of apprenticeship end-point assessment in this [guide for awarding organisations](#).

The [Ofqual Student Guide](#) is updated every year and provides information about arrangements for qualifications regulated by Ofqual, for example GCSEs, AS or A levels, Technical Qualifications within a T Level and Vocational and Technical Qualifications taken alongside GCSEs and A levels in subjects such as engineering, health & social care and digital media. It also explains what support is in place when taking exams and assessments.

**The Office for Students (OfS)** is the independent regulator of higher education in England. If you are doing an integrated degree apprenticeship, you can read the [OfS degree apprenticeships – guide for apprentices](#).

[Amazing Apprenticeships](#) provides information and resources, network and support for apprentices. [This Rapid Read](#) is a bite-sized overview of EPA.

[Association of Apprentices](#) provides apprentices (past and present) with opportunities to support each other.

[Youth Employment UK](#) provides information on careers, employers and free skills training. You can read about [how to handle apprenticeship transfers, restarts, and breaks in learning](#). You can also find out about [preparing a portfolio of evidence for your EPA](#).

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