



End Point Assessment Policy

Ref: PL.056-v003

Brief Description & Purpose:	<p>This document sets out the policy and procedures governing apprenticeship end-point assessments (EPA) delivered as part of our apprenticeship programmes. Every apprentice must undertake an independent, objective assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours as set out in the relevant apprenticeship Standard. As a registered End-Point Assessment Organisation, we must meet the conditions of acceptance on the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR), Apprenticeship Funding Rules, Skills England, and Office for Students requirements, including the B3 and B4 Office for Students conditions of registration.</p> <p>The aim of this policy is to ensure the University has a defined approach for managing and assuring the quality of the EPA for its Higher and Degree Apprenticeships.</p>		
Applicable to (list cohorts):	Staff: All staff	Students: All students	Third Parties: All who are in a formal relationship with the University
Effective From:	September 2022	Last Review Date:	January 2026
Approval Authority:	Academic Board	Approved:	11 th March 2026
Executive Owner:	Executive Director of Student, Library and Academic Services	Business Owner:	Registrar (Apprenticeships)
Next Review Date:	January 2029	Publication External Y/N	Y



Contents

Section	Page
1. Introduction	Page 3
2. Background	Page 3
3. Registration as an EPAO	Page 4
4. Delivering End Point Assessment	Page 5
4.1 Integrated EPA	Page 5
4.2 Non-integrated EPA	Page 6
5. Independent Assessors	Page 7
5.1 Appointment of IA	Page 7
6. Consistency and Comparability	Page 8
7. Conflict of Interest	Page 8
7.1 Scope of Conflict of Interest Policy	Page 8
7.2 Definition of Conflict of Interest	Page 9
7.3 Responsibilities under Conflict of Interest Policy	Page 9
8. Applying for Completion Certificates	Page 11
9. EPA Appeals and Complaints	Page 11
10. Annex A – Standardisation Guidance	Page 12

1. Introduction

This document sets out the policy and procedures governing apprenticeship end point assessments (EPA) delivered as part of our apprenticeship programmes.

For integrated standards, the University as End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) are required to deliver an independent, objective assessment of the knowledge skills and behaviour as set out in the relevant apprenticeship standard for every apprentice to ensure occupational competence. As a registered End Point Assessment Organisation, we must also meet the conditions of acceptance of the Apprenticeship Provider Assessment Register, Apprenticeship Funding Rules, Skills England and Office for Students requirements including the B4 OfS Condition of Registration.

For non-integrated standards the University as a provider is required to meet the requirements of the Apprenticeship Funding Rules and to prepare apprentices and employers for End Point Assessment.

The aim of this policy is to ensure the University has a defined approach for managing and assuring the quality of the EPA for its Higher and Degree Apprenticeships.

End Point Assessment is currently undergoing changes in line with the Apprenticeship Assessment Principles published in February 2025 - therefore this policy is subject to change and as is written reflects the current arrangements for End Point Assessment as outlined in the Apprenticeship Funding Rules - End Point Assessments (114-129). As changes are made and terminology updated this policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

2. Background

2.1 This policy provides detail on End Point Assessment (EPA). This policy will set out the roles and responsibilities for both integrated and non-integrated EPAs. Existing University policies and regulations govern any academic award made as part of an apprenticeship programme however, proposing teams and approval panels should be cognisant of the requirements of EPA at the time of approval, including any requirements to adjust how the University would typically deliver its academic awards.

2.2 This policy adheres to the policy principles of the Apprenticeship Funding Rules, Skills England requirements, and the Office for Students 'External Quality Assurance of Apprenticeship End Point Assessment for integrated and degree apprenticeships'.

2.3 All apprenticeship standards will have an accompanying EPA Assessment Plan. This determines if the apprentice has met the requirement of the apprenticeship standard: that is, they are able to demonstrate the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSB) and are occupationally competent.

2.4 Prior to being eligible for the EPA the apprentice will need to successfully meet the 'Gateway' requirements as determined by the standard. The Employer's permission is required to proceed to EPA.

2.5 The detail of the EPA is described in the Assessment Plan associated with the standard. The EPA may be fully integrated, statutory integrated, integrated or non-integrated and this is pre-determined:

2.5.1 Statutory Integrated/Fully Integrated

- Statutory regulators prescribe how new entrants to the occupation should be assessed, and set out the level of competence.
- The assessment prescribed by a statutory regulator can constitute the apprentice's EPA. Therefore, achieving the apprenticeship leads to attainment of the regulator's requirements. The AAB (Apprenticeship Assessment Board) will confirm achievement of the apprenticeship.
- For Statutory/Fully Integrated standard, the apprentices must still pass EPA to complete their apprenticeship and be fully occupationally competent.
- The standard will confirm that there is an assessment in place that meets the apprenticeship requirements. Skills England determine that no extra EPA method or methods are needed (e.g. Registered Nurse, Operating Department Practitioner).

2.5.2 Integrated

- EPA is an integral component of the University programme. The University will normally provide all the scheduled on-programme learning and deliver the EPA. The End Point Assessment will be credit bearing.

2.5.3 Non-integrated

- The University will normally provide the scheduled on-programme learning and confirms either the University award and/or that Gateway criteria is met. The EPA is then conducted independently by an external EPAO who confirm the apprenticeship award.

2.6 For University integrated apprenticeships delivered by QA the University acts as the degree awarding body and the EPAO. QA is the Main Provider.

2.7 In all cases, the EPA is mandatory and the apprenticeship programme has not been completed until EPA is attempted.

3. Registration as an EPAO

3.1 The University is required to maintain their status on the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR).

3.2 For new integrated/fully integrated/statutory integrated standards where the University is both the main provider and EPAO, the University will automatically be added as the EPAO when they submit their first Individualised Learner Record (ILR) for that standard.

3.3 For new integrated/fully integrated standards where the University is the EPAO but not the main provider, the Academic Registry Governance & Compliance Team will liaise with the Department for Education to ensure that the University is listed as EPAO on the Apprenticeship Assessment service for these standards.

3.4 The Apprenticeships Academic Support Team/Educational Partnerships will be the main point of contact with Department for Education regarding the delivery and outcomes of Integrated EPA.

4. Delivering End Point Assessment

4.1 Integrated EPA (including Fully and Statutory Integrated EPA)

4.1.1 The Assessment Plan will indicate that the EPA is integrated or non-integrated. In the case of integrated, the EPA is part of the academic award and is normally the final project/module.

4.1.2 In the delivery of integrated EPA the University will apply the following principles:

- The University, as the EPAO, will ensure the assessment fulfils the requirements of the EPA for the Apprenticeship Standard and Assessment Plan and in line with the University's quality standards, frameworks and policies
- The programme team with input from employers, will be responsible for developing End Point Assessment in line with the assessment plan requirements, and University assessment policy and procedures
- EPA will be delivered in line with the assessment plan requirements
- Protocols demonstrating how the EPA will be delivered should be developed by the programme team including specific determination of the employer involvement where applicable
- The independent nature of the EPA must be assured. Each assessment must include an Independent Assessor as outlined in the Assessment Plan, who is professionally competent in the area and have the necessary skills, experience, occupational competence and qualifications required to facilitate the assessment (see 'Managing Conflict of Interest' below)
- If the apprenticeship includes PSRB recognition, the Assessment Plan may require that the assessment is conducted by Independent Assessor who holds a specified professional status and the programme team will need to comply with this
- Independent assessors are approved via School management teams with support from Human Resources, once competency is established and any conflict of interests addressed. The Governance and Compliance Team in conjunction with Human Resources team will keep a register of all End Point Assessors. Assessors will normally be appointed with a tenure of no longer than 4 years
- IA qualifications, CPD and any professional registration/qualification as determined by the standard, will be required to be reviewed annually by the School. An updated CV will be requested by the EPA lead/the academic member of staff with responsibility for delivering EPA, for review
- Further details of this process and timelines are outlined in the 'IA Contracts and CV Checks guidance'
- Independent Assessor training will be co-ordinated and conducted by academic Schools with input from the Apprenticeship Academic Support Team/Educational Partnerships Academic Support Team and the Governance & Compliance Team. Evidence of this training must be documented and retained by the programme team and the relevant Academic Support Team
- Independent Assessor training requirements will normally be outlined in the Internal Quality and/or Roles and Responsibilities section of the assessment plan
- Reasonable adjustments will be made for any apprentices with a Student Accessibility Plan
- Gateway, and progression to EPA is confirmed by the Apprentice Assessment Board (AAB)
- EPA Gateway confirmation will be co-ordinated by the Apprenticeship Academic Support Team/Educational Partnerships Academic Support Team including communication with the employer to secure sign off of readiness of the apprentice for EPA
- Where interviews, presentations and professional discussions are presented to a single assessor, they should be recorded and stored for quality assurance purposes in line with University data retention policies
- Resits/Retakes of End Point Assessment will be undertaken in line with University regulations except where the Assessment Plan sets out specific procedures in which case the assessment plan takes precedence

- The Apprenticeship Academic Support Team/Educational Partnerships Academic Support Team will request Apprentice certificates from the Department of Education in line with Apprenticeship Funding Rule requirements
- The Apprenticeship Academic Support Team/Educational Partnerships Academic Support Team will work with Finance and Strategic Planning to ensure apprentice records are updated when apprentices complete EPA. The ILR will then be updated in line with Funding Regulation requirements

4.1.3 Standardisation

As EPAO we must ensure parity of standards across assessments. This is achieved by:

- IA attendance at annual assessor training (or at a frequency as determined by the Skills England standard if this is required more often)
- Standardisation of assessment approach and criteria prior to EPA taking place
- Standardisation of outcomes following EPA
- Establishment of Standardisation Meetings, where Independent Assessors appointed to assess integrated apprenticeship End Point Assessment ensure EPA assessment is undertaken robustly, fairly and consistently in line with the relevant Skills England apprenticeship assessment plan. The meeting will be chaired by an appropriate member of University staff. The member of staff will be independent of the School and/or Faculty that delivers the apprenticeship programme
- Completed Standardisation templates will be stored by the relevant Academic Support Team, and reported into the corresponding Apprenticeship Assessment Board/Programme Assessment Board
- Standardisation guidance and note templates are appended in Annex A

4.1.4 Standardisation of Assessment (prior to EPA)

- Members consider a small sample of completed End Point Assessments in detail, where available, and discuss points of merit and weakness to establish common principles of assessment
- Where no samples or previous work is available the assessment plan, KSBs and scenarios are discussed to develop a common understanding of standards
- Discussions are informed by the grading criteria which is set out in the relevant apprenticeship assessment plan and should include:
 - How these principles are used to ensure comparable standards are being applied
 - What topics and questions would be raised in the professional discussion
 - What feedback would be provided to the learner
- Notes of the discussion are recorded, shared with the group prior to EPA and retained by the relevant Academic Support Team for audit purposes

4.1.5 Standardisation of Grading (post EPA)

The standardisation meeting will review and confirm that the grading criteria has been applied consistently and fairly prior to results being released.

4.2 Non-integrated EPA

4.2.1 When the EPA is non-integrated, the EPA is carried out by an external End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO). Normally, successful completion and ratification of the final academic award is required before the EPA can be attempted. The Apprenticeship Funding Rules stipulate that it is the main provider who will engage with the EPAO (unless the employer has chosen to undertake this role). This can take place at any time during the apprenticeship, but must be in place at least 6 months before the apprentice reaches gateway.

4.2.2 The provider must contract with the EPAO and lead the relationship with them.

4.2.3 In the delivery of non-Integrated EPA the University will apply the following principles:

- Liaison with employers and engagement of EPAOs is co-ordinated by the Apprenticeship Academic Support Team
- The Apprenticeship Academic Support Team will ensure contracts for EPA delivery are signed in a timely manner and in accordance with the University's standard financial practice
- The Finance and Strategic Planning team has responsibility for paying the EPAO from the fees it receives from delivering the apprenticeship training. The maximum percentage cost that can be spent on the EPA is established by Skills England and is published on the apprenticeship standard
- Gateway requirements are clear and communicated to both learner and employers including how this will be assessed, evidenced and verified
- Where apprentices do not have level 2 qualification in Maths and English, and are required to hold these qualifications in line with the Apprenticeship Funding Rules, this must be remediated before they enter the Gateway. The EPAO will require verification of these qualifications
- Gateway, and progression to EPA is confirmed by the Apprentice Assessment Board (AAB)
- The apprentice will have the appropriate learner status within the University during their Gateway and EPA period
- Where it is identified that the learner is not ready to proceed with EPA, the Apprenticeship Academic Support Team will establish appropriate actions in liaison with the employer so the EPA can be taken within a specified timeframe
- Resits and retakes are defined by the Skills England assessment plan as:
 - A retake requires a period of further learning before the learner can attempt the EPA again
 - A resit does not require further learning before attempting reassessment of the EPA or the failed component of the EPA
- The cost of retakes will be detailed in the contract with the EPAO
- The Assessment Plan details the requirements and rules for resits and retakes

5. Independent Assessors

5.1 Appointment of IAs

The University is responsible for appointing Independent Assessors (IAs) to conduct EPAs on all integrated standards. IAs must have not been involved in the delivery of the apprenticeship or support of apprentices (see Conflict of Interest Below).

After acceptance, IAs are appointed in line with the NU Contractual Framework (<https://livenorthumbriaac.sharepoint.com/sites/people/NUcontractualframework/SitePages/Home.aspx>) and invited to join a pool to be allocated work when required. Appointments are made in adherence with the following principles:

- The standard role description should be used and tailored by the School delivering the apprenticeship according to subject specific requirements and the requirements of the Standard and the assessment plan
- Candidate selection is undertaken by the School in accordance with the criteria on the IA Appointment form
- An IA Appointment form is completed by the School for suitable candidates and forwarded to Educational Partnerships



- The Governance & Compliance Team maintains a central pool of IAs
- The School meets the cost of IAs
- The School will appoint IAs in line with the guidance from HR (<https://livenorthumbriaac.sharepoint.com/sites/people/NUcontractualframework/SitePages/Home.aspx>)
- The School Management Team will be responsible for ensuring that there are a sufficient number of IAs to cover the planned EPAs and that IAs are recruited following programme approval to ensure there is adequate time for training and shadowing
- For Fully integrated/Statutory integrated standards, the standard may stipulate that there is one individual who holds the role of External Examiner/Independent Assessor. In these instances the School will liaise with the Quality Review Team around the appointment of this role

6. Consistency and comparability

6.1 The University will ensure consistency in EPA in the following ways:

- Providing guidance on the EPA to learners and employers in relation to the delivery of the EPA (practical and technical activities, marking guidance for EPA activity)
- Consulting with industry/technical experts and External Examiners (in the case of integrated EPA) when developing relevant assessments to ensure there is comparability and consistency in terms of breadth and depth of assessment across the provision where the standard is being delivered to ensure the assessment is reliable, valid and fair to all learners
- Through recruitment, preparation and on-going training of appropriate Independent Assessors
- Developing protocols to determine how the assessment process will be carried out
- Holding regular standardisation meeting to ensure consistency of assessment and marking practice
- Through recording (where applicable) and retention of any practical components of assessment for moderation and quality assurance processes
- Through internal and external moderation of End Point Assessment in line with the requirements of the assessment plan and the University's moderation policy
- Monitoring outcomes from Apprenticeship Assessment Boards
- Using the Continuous Programme Performance Review and evaluation process to review outcomes and enhance practice

7. Conflict of Interest

7.1 Scope of Conflict-of-Interest Policy

- This policy covers the delivery of all apprenticeship End-point Assessments undertaken as part of our Apprenticeship programmes
- The University, as the organisation accountable and responsible for EPA, and the individual assessors and invigilators that we use, must be free from any conflicts of interest that could adversely affect their judgement or objectivity in administering and undertaking a robust and consistent EPA. We must ensure that none of the individuals undertaking the EPA are involved in or are responsible for any on-programme delivery, line-management or on-programme assessment of the same apprentice
- This guidance applies to all staff, consultants and partner institutions/organisations taking part in or supporting an End-point Assessment as defined above. This includes individuals involved with any aspect of the delivery of an End-point Assessment, and also in the creation, marketing,

sales, distribution, marking or any other activity connected with tests and assessments, resources or services used within the End-point Assessment

- Explicitly included in scope for this guidance are all employees, contractors, agency, or associate staff, including assessment associates, verifiers/examiners and other support roles. This list is not exhaustive. Every individual must complete a Conflict-of-Interest form (set out at Annex A) when asked to do so, and we will assess the risk and impact based on each set of circumstances
- Where mitigating action is needed as a result of a declaration on an Col form, this may mean that an individual will not be able to take part in a specific EPA, or they may be moved to different duties. The academic member of staff responsible for the delivery of end point assessment will, working with the Registrar Governance & Compliance or the Registrar Educational Partnerships, consider whatever action is needed to protect the objectivity and integrity of the End-point Assessment

7.2 Definition of Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual, or organisation, has competing interests or loyalties which could compromise, or appear to compromise, the outcome of an End-point Assessment if it is not properly managed. The possible scenarios where a conflict of interest may occur includes:

- The University is involved in both the EPA and the training delivery of a standard
- An individual may be employed by the University and has links with and/or is also employed in the same organisation as the apprentice
- When an individual has a position of authority in one organisation that conflicts with his or her interests in another organisation
- An individual involved in EPA has a prior link with the apprentice or their employer for the standard they are assessing against. For example, they may have friends or relatives working with the apprentice, or who have delivered the teaching elements of the apprenticeship
- When an individual has interests that conflict with his or her professional position where someone works for or carries out work on our behalf
- Where an individual working on the EPA has personal interests - paid or unpaid - in the employer organisation undergoing the EPA
- At both organisational and individual level, the official role of the individual/organisation undertaking the EPA has any other interests that may compromise their assessment decisions
- Where an individual participating has a personal or business gain from the outcome of the assessment
- Where an individual undertaking the end-point assessment of apprentices for an organisation within which they have previously worked, trained, managed or assessed the same apprentice

7.3 Responsibilities under Conflict of Interest Policy

EPA Leads/Academic Member of Staff Responsible for Delivery of End Point Assessment

- The member of academic staff responsible for the delivery of end point assessment is responsible for early identification of, and planning for Col as part of their department responsibilities and the planning for every individual EPA
- EPA Leads/member of academic staff responsible for the delivery of end point assessment are responsible for ensuring that all individuals contributing to an EPA are clear on the impact of the Policy on their roles and for full implementation of this policy
- EPA Leads/member of academic staff responsible for the delivery of end point assessment must ensure that all those in scope complete Declaration of Interest (DoI) forms prior to each EPA. Where needed the relevant academic member of staff must implement mitigating actions, agreed with the Registrar Apprenticeships/Governance & Compliance or the Registrar

Educational Partnerships before the EPA commences. (See Appendix A for Declaration of Interest Form)

- Where an EPA is to be hosted at the employer or training provider premises the EPA Lead/member of academic staff responsible for the delivery of end point assessment must, as part of the planning process, review any Col risks and, where identified, set out the actions required to avoid potential conflicts of interest in the EPA Plan. This must be documented and evidence that this has been implemented must be included in the EPA record
- Individual DoI forms must be stored with the Apprenticeships/Educational Partnerships Academic Support team and available as part of internal and external audits
- EPA leads/member of academic staff responsible for the delivery of end point assessment are accountable for briefing any contractors, consultants, agencies or other workers not employed by the University and for collation of EPA DoI Forms
- They must ensure that, where third parties are engaged to conduct EPA, only the agreed contract template is used between both organisations, or individuals and this organisation. All contracts and Col forms must be in place before the start of the EPA
- EPA Leads/member of academic staff responsible for the delivery of end point assessment are responsible for ensuring that all new staff receive conflict of interest briefing. No individual may take part in the EPA process until this training has taken place
- EPA Leads/member of academic staff responsible for the delivery of end point assessment are responsible for escalating reports of actual or potential conflicts of interest identified by the EPA Lead, or other routes set out in this policy, to the Registrar Apprenticeships/Governance & Compliance or the Registrar Educational Partnerships
- The Registrar Apprenticeships/Governance & Compliance or the Registrar Educational Partnerships is responsible for maintaining records of Declaration of Interest forms and making available for scrutiny and audit. They are responsible for authorising the outcome of DoI submissions and advising on appropriate mitigating actions where appropriate

Staff Engaged in EPA Activity

- Every individual in scope as described above, is responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with this policy before undertaking work on an EPA
- DoI forms should be completed and submitted to the Apprenticeship Academic Support Team/Educational Partnerships Academic Support Team for every member of staff at least 2 weeks before the EPA activity is scheduled to take place
- Individuals must also notify if, at any point, a conflict of interest arises which is not reflected in their COI form, or for where a Col has not previously been registered. It is the responsibility of all staff, consultants, partner institutions and organisations to protect the independence of the apprenticeship assessment process, and both comply and support others to comply with these guidelines
- Individuals must not begin work on any aspect of an EPA as outlined above where they have not submitted a DoI form or where a conflict of interest has been declared and authorisation has not been granted by the Registrar Apprenticeships/Governance & Compliance or Registrar Educational Partnerships
- Every individual is accountable for upholding this policy, and for escalating to EPA leads/member of academic staff responsible for the delivery of end point assessment or Managers, where colleagues, contactors, or other staff involved in the EPA take action, or fail to act in accordance with this policy. Any individual may raise this with the EPA Lead/member of academic staff responsible for the delivery of end point assessment or with the Registrar (Apprenticeships/Governance & Compliance or the Registrar Educational Partnerships). Individuals can also raise concerns anonymously, by following the process set out in the Whistleblowing Policy: [University Public Interest Policy and Procedure](#)

8. Applying for Completion Certificates

8.1 Where the EPA is integrated, the Apprenticeship Academic Support/Educational Partnerships Academic Support Team will be responsible for claiming the Apprenticeship Completion Certificate from the Apprenticeship Assessment Service.

8.2 Where the EPA is non-integrated, it is the responsibility of the EPAO to apply for the Apprenticeship Completion Certificate on behalf of the learner. If the learner fails to successfully complete the EPA they may still receive the relevant University award where applicable. They will not receive the Apprenticeship Completion Certificate.

9. EPA Appeals and complaints

9.1 When the EPA has been carried out by the University it is subject to the normal appeals and complaints procedures. If the issues cannot be resolved it may be escalated to the External Quality Assurance provider.

9.2 For non-integrated EPAs the apprentice must follow the complaints process of the EPAO.

ANNEX A

STANDARDISATION AND END POINT ASSESSMENT (EPA) - GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

CONTEXT

An important aspect of apprenticeships is the end-point assessment (EPA). The purpose of the EPA is to test that an apprentice is fully capable of doing their job before they receive their apprenticeship certificate. It also helps to demonstrate that what an apprentice has learned, can be applied in the real world, and that they are occupationally competent. For integrated apprenticeships the EPA is undertaken by an independent end-point assessor (IA). IAs are responsible for administering, marking and grading assessments. It is important to ensure that apprentices are assessed consistently and fairly. For an integrated apprenticeship Northumbria University are responsible for the policies, procedures, and systems for controlling the quality of our assessments. This involves ensuring that assessors are qualified and trained, that grading is applied consistently and that assessment instruments such as test questions or practical tasks are robust.

A function of Northumbria University Internal Quality assurance process is to ensure standardisation becomes a natural occurrence with all new IAs. This is achieved by compulsory attendance at assessor training/standardisation prior to any EPAs taking place. Standardisation of assessment practices and outcomes will be observed and monitored over a given period to make sure they are consistent and look for improvements to be made. The IA must ensure that:

- Consistency and reliability of assessment is maintained
- Records of standardisation meetings/exercises are kept
- Feedback is provided to Assessor/Trainers
- Problems encountered with individual learners are discussed and appropriate action taken

We aim to ensure valid, reliable, manageable, comparable EPAs for apprentices, which have robust processes to combat bias. The success of this aim relies significantly on the competency of our IAs.

STANDARDISATION - PRE EPA

Where EPA involves specific assessed elements, standardisation is an important part of the IA duties. While team meetings may be held, these will often focus on relaying information and tracking learner progress. These are clearly important elements of internal quality assurance, but it is also crucial that standardisation activities are undertaken with all team members on a regular basis, particularly where several dispersed, peripatetic, part time, contracted assessors are used.

The simplest means of completing a standardisation activity uses sample pieces of learner(s) work or evidence and asks all assessors to make an independent assessment decision for this work. It is also helpful to ask them to record what actions they would give the learner resulting from this assessment. Consideration would then be given as to how these principles are used to ensure comparable standards are being applied. This type of standardisation activity would ordinarily happen prior to EPA. In addition, it is helpful to ask IAs to record what feedback they would give the learner if they were the actual assessor of the work. This enables the University to ensure that assessors are:

- Asking the right questions
- Making accurate assessment decisions
- Providing suitably detailed and specific feedback
- Fully recording the outcome of the assessment process

Where no samples or previous work is available the assessment plan, KSBs and scenarios are discussed to develop a common understanding of standards.

Discussions are informed by the grading criteria which is set out in the relevant apprenticeship assessment plan and should include:

- How these principles are used to ensure comparable standards are being applied
- What topics and questions would be raised in the professional discussion
- What feedback would be provided to the learner

Notes of the discussion are recorded, shared with the group prior to EPA and retained by the relevant Academic Support Team for audit purposes.

In addition, the IA could organise standardisation activities which may include assessing each other's candidates, judging evidence together, working through the requirements of the standards together and agreeing on assessment decisions. The frequency and type of standardisation activity will depend on a range of considerations such as any new requirements in the qualifications, changes within the qualification delivery team, previous standardisation activities and findings, the need for continuous improvement, and the outcomes of external audits. All assessors are subject to formal observations to monitor their practice to support continuous quality improvement and safeguard assessment practice.

STANDARDISATION MEETING TO DISCUSS THE EPA - POST EPA

The standardisation meeting between IAs following the EPA for integrated assessments should include the following as a minimum. All meetings should be recorded; with detailed notes outlining attendees, the nature of the discussions, any decisions and follow up activity required. A copy of these notes should be shared with the Academic Support/Educational Partnerships Support Team and should be kept for quality assurance/audit purposes.

Review of the quality and robustness of the assessment: All the methods of assessment used within the EPA involve some form of evidence gathering. This shows that the learner has met the standards required. It demonstrates that they not only have the knowledge required to pass the apprenticeship; but they are able to apply this too. The standardisation meeting should confirm that there is comparability in the quality, level and quantity of information provided across the apprentices being assessed, and that this aligns to apprentice standard.

Grading Criteria: Each method of assessment will have their own grading criteria. The grading criteria will be set out within the assessment plan specific to the apprenticeship. It is important that ALL EPA assessment components must be passed for the EPA to be passed overall. The standardisation meeting will review and confirm that the grading criteria has been applied consistently and fairly and in line with the assessment plan.

Standardisation is the process of checking that all assessors are working to the current Skills England apprenticeship assessment plan and are assessing to the same principles and standards. The requirements for each qualification should be strictly followed and consistently met for each apprentice.

Independence of an apprentice's work: standardisation meetings should also carefully consider whether there are any issues of authenticity or integrity of an apprentice's work. The IA should be able to clearly identify that this is an independent piece of work, distinctive (including in relation to the evidenced submitted to the portfolio) from any other apprentice, and that it is all the apprentice's own work.

Borderline Marks/clarification: in some cases, the standardisation meeting may be used to review the grading of an EPA where there are borderline marks, or concerns raised by an IA.

THE STANDARDISATION MEETING WILL ALSO CONFIRM THAT:

- All apprentices have undertaken an assessment that has been developed and verified as valid and appropriate for the apprenticeship standard
- That where an apprentice has a Student Accessibility Plan (SAP) and requires a reasonable adjustment, that the appropriate assessment arrangements have been made
- That all apprentices receive clear, consistent, and timely guidance ahead of the EPA
- That any technical extenuating circumstances that may have affected an EPA are recorded and the Apprenticeships Academic Support Team notified
- That all apprentices and employers have been given the opportunity to feedback on the EPA process
- That all IAs have completed a detailed and timely report outlining the apprentice's performance against the KSBs in the apprentice standard for each component of the EPA
- That all EPA information is stored appropriately (in line with the University guidance), and in line with GDPR guidance

PRINCIPLES TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE STANDARDISATION

Departments must ensure that:

- All IAs must attend at least 2 meetings per calendar year or more frequently if prescribed in the Skills England assessment plan
- All new IAs must complete any compulsory IA training or briefings depending on the requirements of the Standard
- All IAs must hold the 'essential' qualifications and skills as outlined in the End-point Assessor job description
- All new IAs must shadow delivery of at least one in-person EPA
- All IAs must be shadowed delivering an in-person EPA at least once every 6 months
- All IAs must complete and evidence relevant CPD on an annual basis
- IAs ability to assess in line with required standards to be reviewed by the Faculty/School Head of Apprenticeships or Associate Head of School (International & Educational Partnerships)
- All IAs must complete a conflict-of-interest check for each EPA they undertake

STANDARDISATION MEETING TERMS OF REFERENCE

End-point Assessment Standardisation Group

1. PURPOSE

The Standardisation Group is a meeting of Independent Assessors appointed to assess integrated apprenticeships End Point Assessment in order to fulfil internal quality assurance requirements and ensure EPA assessment gradings are applied robustly, fairly and consistently in line with the relevant Skills England apprenticeship assessment plan.

2. BUSINESS

2.1 Standardisation of Assessment (prior to EPA)

Members consider a small sample of completed portfolios in detail, where available, and discuss points of merit and weakness to establish common principles of assessment.

Where no samples or previous work is available the assessment plan, KSBs and scenarios are discussed to develop a common understanding of standards.

Discussions are informed by the grading criteria which is set out in the relevant apprenticeship assessment plan and should include:

- How these principles are used to ensure comparable standards are being applied
- What topics and questions would be raised in the professional discussion
- What feedback would be provided to the learner

Notes of the discussion are recorded, shared with the group prior to EPA and kept for audit purposes.

2.2 Standardisation of Grading (post EPA)

The standardisation meeting will review and confirm that the grading criteria has been applied consistently and fairly prior to results being released.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Chair: Senior independent internal member of staff Independent Assessors

4. FORMAT, FREQUENCY, OPERATIONS

Frequency: A minimum of annually or after the final assessment for each cohort

Reporting: Records of discussion to be captured using a standard template and forwarded to Educational Partnerships who will retain for audit purposes.



NOTES OF STANDARDISATION MEETINGS - PRE-EPA

To support the University's internal quality assurance processes, the purpose of Standardisation Meetings is to ensure EPA assessment is undertaken robustly, fairly and consistently in line with the relevant Skills England apprenticeship assessment plan and University guidance and policy.

Pre-EPA Standardisation Meeting

Apprenticeship Standard	
Meeting Time and Date:	
Chair:	
Attendees:	
Form of Assessment e.g., professional discussion, panel presentation:	
<p>Notes of Discussion</p> <p>Please ensure the following are covered in the meeting and a record is made of discussions and agreed outcomes below.</p>	
The application of grading criteria with reference to the Apprenticeship Assessment Plan and the KSBs required by the Apprenticeship Standard.	
The application of criteria to ensure comparability and consistency of grades, with examples.	
The agreement of what is considered suitably detailed and specific feedback, with examples	
Questions to be used in any element of EPA, e.g., Professional Discussion, if applicable.	
Actions to be taken and recommendations for improvements:	



Completed by (Chair):	
-----------------------	--

Please complete this template in line with the ‘Standardisation Meetings Guidance’ document. On completion, these notes should be forwarded to the EPA or Apprenticeship lead in your School and a copy sent via e-mail to the Apprenticeships Educational Partnerships team, rq.da.academic.support@northumbria.ac.uk or the Educational Partnerships Academic Support team as.qada.end.point.assessment@northumbria.ac.uk

Notes of Standardisation Meetings

To support the University's internal quality assurance processes, the purpose of Standardisation Meetings is to ensure EPA assessment is undertaken robustly, fairly and consistently in line with the relevant Skills England apprenticeship assessment plan and University guidance and policy,

Post-EPA Standardisation Meeting

Apprenticeship Standard:	
Meeting Time and Date:	
Cohort (month and year this group of apprentices began their apprenticeship):	
Attendees:	
Form of assessment e.g. professional discussion, panel presentation:	
Notes of Discussion	
Please ensure the following are covered in the meeting and a record is made of discussions and agreed outcomes below.	
Review of the quality and robustness of the portfolio of evidence.	
The application of consistent and fair grading criteria with reference to the Apprenticeship Assessment Plan and the KSBs required by the Apprenticeship Standard.	



Individual grades, noting points of contention e.g., borderline marks, and resolution.	
The suitability of questions used in any element of EPA e.g., Professional Discussion, if applicable.	
Any other points of note as outlined in Standardisation Guidance, e.g. independence of apprentice's work, Technical Extenuating Circumstances (TEC), reasonable adjustments in place etc.	
Actions and recommendations arising:	
Completed by (Chair):	

Please complete this template in line with the 'Standardisation Meetings Guidance' document. On completion, these notes should be forwarded to the EPA or Apprentice lead in your Department and a copy sent via e-mail to the Apprenticeships Educational Partnerships team, rg.da.academic.support@northumbria.ac.uk or Educational Partnerships Academic Support team as.gada.end.point.assessment@northumbria.ac.uk

Version Control

Version	Reviewer	Date	Changes
v001			Original Version
V002	Governance and Enhancement Administrator	30/08/2024	Administrative changes to include updated cover sheet to be in line with Policy guidance and include a change log
V003	Governance & Compliance Manager	05/01/2026	Updates to: Registration process; Updates to include Fully/Statutory integrated standards; Acknowledgement of forthcoming changes to EPA; Updates to IA Tenure and recruitment process