

Suffolk County Council Quality Assurance Policy 2020

SCOPE

This policy applies to the End Point Assessment provision offered by the Local Authority where all or part of the programme is formally assessed and managed by Suffolk County Council's Directorate for Children and Young People (CYP) Skills Team.

INTRODUCTION

End Point Assessment is the process by which an apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviours are reviewed in order to evaluate what they have learnt or how they are performing against the competencies required by the Assessment Plan for the standard, as approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education. Assessment will ensure that apprentices are fairly, accurately and equitably assessed in a consistent manner and in line with the mandated assessment methods and criteria

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

All assessment in Suffolk County Council's Directorate for Children and Young People follows the five principles below:

- **Authenticity:** Whilst on programme the provider will be responsible for ensuring that all evidence is confirmed as the learner's own work. As the End Point Assessment Organisation, Suffolk County Council must ensure authenticity of the learner and their uploaded evidence prior to conducting the EPA
- **Validity:** Assessments should be conducted in line with the methods as prescribed within the End Point Assessment Plan
- **Reliability and consistency:** The assessment results should be standardised across levels and provision. Moderation and standardisation must follow the Local Authority's and Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical Education procedures.
- **Fitness for purpose:** The assessment strategy as outlined in the relevant standards Assessment Plan must be clearly followed. The criteria and methods which are being used to judge the work must be made clear to the apprentice, employer, provider and meet and exceed the requirements of the Standard.
- **Inclusiveness:** Assessment should be adapted where necessary based on apprentices needs. It must allow all apprentices to demonstrate their achievements regardless of individual circumstances. It must comply with the Equality and Fair Access policy of the Local Authority, External Quality Assurer and Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

Assessments will be reviewed along with, procedures and processes regularly to ensure that they are current and valid. The Suffolk County Council Skills Team Centre Manager will update the Assessment Strategy to reflect any changes and this will feed into the overall SCC Quality Assurance in Assessment Policy.

All apprentices will be informed at the point of Gateway about the overall approach to the end point assessment.

This will specify where relevant:

- The mandatory assessment methods of the standard
- Who will be carrying out the end point assessment
- Arrangements for uploading assessment evidence
- Timing of each assessment including any mandatory gaps
- Consequences of non-submission or late submission.
- Plagiarism policy
- Arrangements for the secure retention of assessment evidence which may be required for internal and external moderation
- Nature of the moderation process demonstrating that assessment decisions are to national standards and that internal and external moderation/verification is in place to ensure that all assessments are applied consistently for all learners/apprentices and that the final assessment mark/decision is accurate, reliable and recorded
- Results for assessments are final only after internal moderation
- Written and oral feedback is given to the apprentices as soon as possible after assessment (normally within 2 weeks and not more than 3 weeks.)
- It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that adequate arrangements and appropriate technology are made for the assessment activity
- Application for alternative arrangements for apprentices who require special considerations for undertaking assessment will need to be made prior to the end point assessment being carried out
- Awarding Body and Institute of Apprenticeships & Technical Education requirements/ regulations
- Complaints and Appeals Policy

The assessment strategy enables apprentices to know that:

- Open and transparent methods are used to assess in line with the Standard Assessment Plan
- Each assessment within the EPA has designated amount of time for completion

- There is feedback on the results of assessment in line with the Standard Assessment Plan
- Apprentices have the opportunity to demonstrate that they have achieved the outcomes of their programme of learning through summative EPA
- In the event of an EPA fail, Apprentices are allowed to re-sit or re-take EPA under appropriate and agreed assessment regulations in line with the Standard Assessment Plan. These regulations will also determine how many opportunities an apprentice can have to re-take or re-sit and any mandatory duration that needs to be considered.
- End Point Assessment is relevant and integrated into the learning process through the development of knowledge, skills and behaviours
- EPA is considered a summative assessment and can only be re-attempted in line with the Standard Assessment Plan conditions
- Apprentices have the right to appeal against assessment decisions if they feel there are just grounds such as error, inconsistent judgement, misinterpretation or unfairness (See: Suffolk County Council Complaints and Appeals Policy)

Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are not tolerated (see Plagiarism policy)

FORMS OF ASSESSMENT

End Point Assessment is considered to be a Summative assessment which takes place at the end of period of learning to be agreed by the employer and apprentice. It is used to assess whether learning has taken place and is a judgement on whether the apprentice has demonstrated the required knowledge, skills and behaviours.

END POINT ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL

End point assessment activities will be carried out in line with the requirements of the Standard Assessment Plan and include:

- Professional Discussion underpinned by a portfolio
- Project - Written Assignment

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

1. Assessment records form a vital component of evidence for the following purposes:
 - to demonstrate the learner's progress towards the achievement of learning outcomes
 - evaluating the learner's progress
 - presentation to internal and external quality assurance as evidence of achievement
2. Assessment records map evidence of progress through the programme. It is the Independent End Point Assessor's (IEPA) responsibility to record assessed achievement and to track this against the learning outcomes and KSBs. Apprentices must be fully advised and aware of any

assessment requirements or regulations, including the opportunities to resubmit and of the appeals procedure.

3. The assessment record must be available to learners/apprentices and staff for review throughout the duration of the course/programme
4. Evidence can be recorded in a number of ways but must be
 - Tracked against the individual learner and achievement of the relevant outcomes
 - Clearly structured
 - Available for internal and external moderators at any point throughout the year

SAMPLING

The Lead Independent End Point Assessor (LIEPA) normally asks for a sample of assessed work on each occasion that an assignment or a written or practical activity is marked. The LIEPA then checks and confirms the grading/assessment decision and feedbacks on the fairness and consistency of the marking. The apprentices must be informed that their grade is provisional before the feedback has been received and actioned. The final grade may or not may not be dependent on the External Quality Assurer and the type of qualification being offered. Normally the sampling of apprentices' work should be 10% of the cohort or 5 apprentices, whichever is the greater, or as required by the Awarding Body and Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical Education. Samples should range across all apprentices, all IEPAs and a range of assessment methods. Sampling may be more rigorous where there are new IPEAs to the centre, new methods of assessment or new qualifications to the centre. A sampling plan will be created by each LIEPA to ensure they see a wide range of work. Sampling will take place on a summative and formative basis.

STANDARDISATION MEETINGS

In addition to the sampling process there will be standardisation meetings during which a group of IEPAs will, individually, assess samples of apprentices' work and compare their decisions. LIEPAs and IEPAs will consider a range of work - for example, work they consider of a high standard, average and borderline. They will look at the full range of assessment methods and consider how apprentices from different sectors address similar areas of practice. IEPAs will be asked to mark work independently and then marks/assessment feedback will be discussed with the support of the LIEPA. Such comparisons are an invaluable means of achieving a more consistent approach to the grading of learner/apprentice work. This may be done remotely via email or telephone.

RETENTION OF ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE

1. All portfolios, records of professional discussions and projects will be retained for a minimum of 7 years. Ideally these should be electronic copies and not the original work.
2. The work should be representative of the sampling and standardisation process used for internal and external quality assurance

3. Where retention of the assessed sample is impractical suitable photographic or equivalent records should be retained.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASSESSMENT & QUALITY

1. Independent End Point Assessors (IEPA) are responsible for:
 - Planning the assessments in accordance with the Standard and Institute of Apprenticeships guidelines and ensuring that it complies with the SCC CYP assessment strategy
 - Notifying apprentices of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria before the assignment is undertaken
 - Giving guidance to the apprentice when there are choices regarding EPA.
 - Ensuring the EPA briefs have been internally quality assured before they are given to the learner
 - Using the criteria equitably and fairly
 - Returning marked assessments in a timely manner in line with the SCC CYP strategy and the Standard guidelines.
 - Retaining coursework in accordance with Institute of Apprenticeships guidelines and Suffolk County Council's Data Protection Policy.
 - Participating in the internal quality assurance process by keeping all the necessary records, attending standardisation meetings and submitting marked learner assessments as requested
 - Ensuring the final assessment decisions are internally verified before they are confirmed with the apprentice and explaining to the apprentices that they may change after external quality assurance
 - Keeping all assessment records secure
 - Giving constructive feedback that sets out very clearly what apprentices have to do to improve
 - Ensuring that all apprentices have equal opportunities for their achievements to be assessed
 - Ensuring that Plagiarism and cheating are detected (see Suffolk County Council Plagiarism Policy)
 - Ensure own Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and awareness of changes in regulations that may affect practice.
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2. Lead Independent End Point Assessors (LIEPA) are responsible for:
 - Agreeing EPA plans with IEPAs prior to delivery of the assessments
 - Developing a plan of quality assurance for the standard in line with CAMERA principles (Candidates, Assessors, Methods of Assessment, Elements, Records, Assessment Location)
 - Carrying out ongoing and summative sampling of portfolios and feed back to the IEPA.
 - Carrying out observations of IEPAs
 - Gaining feedback from apprentices
 - Supporting and guiding IEPAs and identifying any appropriate CPD

- Ensure that National Standards , Awarding Body and Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical requirements are met
 - Ensuring fair, reliable and consistent assessments
 - Dealing with Complaints and Appeals in accordance with and under the direction of the Centre Manager
 - Attending and contributing to Standardisation Meetings
 - Maintaining Centre records as required. (e.g. LIEPA Reports, Internal Quality Assurance Summary Sheets and Reports on Observations of IEPAs
 - Attending meetings with the External Quality Assessor, when requested by the Centre Manager
 - Passing on any concerns regarding quality of assessment or teaching and learning to the Centre Manager
3. Centre Manager is responsible for:
- Developing a plan for internally assuring the quality of assessment for the centre.
 - Ensuring IEPAs and LIEPA have appropriate level of subject expertise to assess or internally quality assure.
 - Managing Complaints and Appeals
4. External Quality Assurer is responsible for: -
- Ensure assessments across Centres are consistent with National Standards
 - Ensure that course team comply with requirements of Awarding Bodies and Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical Education.

SUMMARY: GOOD PRACTICE IN ASSESSMENT

- Assessment is not carried out exclusively for accreditation purposes – it is used to measure progress, build up self-confidence and review the success of the course.
- Assessment has to consider the learning needs of the individuals and target groups.
- Assessment tasks are internally quality assured before use.
- Assessment documentation includes the requirement that apprentices state the authenticity of their own work.
- Assessment procedures are explicit and public.
- Whilst assessment criteria are fixed for different standards, assessment procedures are varied, flexible and may be negotiable.
- Assessment procedures allow apprentices to work at and be assessed at the correct level.
- Assessment builds the self-esteem of the apprentice
- Assessment encourages self-assessment by apprentices to promote independence.
- Apprentices are encouraged to evaluate the assessment procedures to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.

Quality Assurance Cycle for Apprenticeship End Point Assessment

Identify Apprenticeship standard and apply for permission to be an EPAO

IEPA and LIEPA: inductions, training, standardisation & IQA process in place

Design EPA assessments (Professional Discussion PD and project guidelines) following approved standard guidelines

Submit plan for approval to relevant EQA

EPA starts once confirmation that learner has passed through Gateway (*6 month window*)

Receive portfolio from apprentice two weeks from passing through the Gateway

Within one week advise apprentice and employer re specification for project and agree title. Date for submission to be agreed and submitted within 15 weeks of Gateway.

Examine portfolio; finalise details for Professional Discussion; conduct PD

Mark written assignment for project within 3 weeks of submission

Standardisation, internal & external quality assurance

Inform apprentice of the outcome of Professional Discussion (3 week timeline)

Appeals, re-sits or re-takes if necessary within 6 month Gateway window

Apply for certificates from Institute of Apprenticeships