

Pearson Level 5 End-point Assessment for Early Years Lead Practitioner

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1 The Early Years Lead Practitioner Apprenticeship

What are Pearson end-point assessments?

End-point assessment (EPA) takes place at the end of the apprenticeship programme when the apprentice has passed through the gateway and been signed off as ready for the assessment by their employer. It is a synoptic assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the apprenticeship standard learned throughout the apprenticeship programme.

Purpose

The purpose of the EPA is to confirm that the apprentice has met the required level of knowledge, skills and behavioural standards set by employers and that they are competent in their role as Early Years Lead Practitioner.

This occupation is found in a range of settings which can include day nurseries, playgroups, nursery schools, pre-schools, kindergartens, primary schools, hospitals, social care settings, out-of-school environments and local authority provision.

The broad purpose of the occupation is to be a proactive and influential practitioner, working directly with children, skilfully leading day-to-day practice at an operational level. As active practitioners they are effective role models of play-based learning, supporting others to develop their own practice. They are highly skilled professionals who take an operational lead for the care, learning and development of all young children within their care, adapting to individual needs and providing inclusive and holistic provision. They engage with sector developments both locally and nationally, with a commitment to developing their own professional and educational competencies.

In their daily work, an employee in this occupation interacts with children from birth to eight years, families, practitioners, other professionals and appropriate agencies. An employee in this occupation will be responsible for supporting the quality of learning and development in their setting. They lead on the operational aspects of this provision and are typically responsible for leading other practitioners in an aspect or environment such as Communication and Language, Planning and Assessment, Forest School, Physical Activity and Nutrition. They usually report directly to the head of the setting (The Manager, The Leader, The Director).

Typical job titles include:

- Room leader, Deputy manager, Assistant manager, Senior practitioner, Lead practitioner, Pre-school leader, Early years coordinator

- Early years practitioner, Nursery officer, Early years officer, Key worker, Senior key worker, Baby room leader, Lead baby room practitioner, Play leader
- Early years support worker, Higher level teaching and learning assistant, Early years foundation Stage lead or coordinator
- Pastoral care manager, Pastoral assistant, Education welfare officer
- Specialist practitioner in child development (health), Community nursery nurse, Health play specialist, Hospital play worker.

This apprenticeship covers the Department for Education criteria for Level 3 Early Years qualifications (Early Years Educator) and is designed to prepare the successful apprentice to meet the requirements for registration as a Level 5 Early Years Lead Practitioner.

Industry support and recognition

Pearson has worked in close collaboration with employers, other assessment organisations and experts from professional bodies and training providers in developing the assessment tools for this EPA. We are grateful to all who have generously shared their time and expertise to help us in the development process.

Employers, assessment organisations, professional bodies and further education providers that have worked with us include:

- Hawk Management (UK) Limited
- MBKB Limited

2 Summary of end-point assessment

EPA title	Pearson Level 5 End-point Assessment for Early Years Lead Practitioner
Qualification number (QN)	610/0855/2
Regulation start date	03 May 2022
First Pearson assessment	01 September 2022
Assessment methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation with questions• Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence• Case study with report and presentation and questioning <p><i>Refer to Section 5 for detailed information about each assessment method.</i></p>
Grading	Pass/Merit/Distinction <i>Refer to Section 3 for detailed information.</i>
Duration of apprenticeship programme	The typical duration for this apprenticeship is 24 months but this will depend on the individual apprentice's previous experience and access to opportunities to gain the full range of competencies.
*Gateway requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employer confident that the apprentice is ready• Maths and English requirements• Portfolio of evidence (to underpin professional discussion)• Agreement of case study title and scope with end-point assessment organisation (EPAO)
Time period for completion of EPA	The EPA must be completed within an EPA period lasting typically five months after the EPA gateway.

EPA title	Pearson Level 5 End-point Assessment for Early Years Lead Practitioner
Apprenticeship certification	The certificate for the apprenticeship is awarded by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE), through a process administered by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). As the EPAO, Pearson will claim certificates on behalf of apprentices.

3 EPA structure

End-point assessment for Early Years Lead Practitioner

The EPA for the Early Years Lead Practitioner apprenticeship consists of the following three assessment methods:

- observation with questions
- professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
- case study with report and presentation and questioning.

The table below gives a summary of the structure of the end-point assessment.

End-point assessment methods	Duration	Assessment method grading
Observation with questions	Observation – 60 minutes Questioning – 30 minutes	Fail/Pass/Distinction
Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence	60 minutes	Fail/Pass/Distinction
Case study with report and presentation and questioning	Preparation of case study report – 12 weeks Presentation – 20 minutes Questioning – 20 minutes	Fail/Pass/Distinction

The assessment methods can be delivered in any order. The result of one assessment method does not need to be known before starting the next.

EPA grading

The grading for this EPA is fail/pass/merit/distinction.

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be awarded an overall EPA fail.

To gain an overall EPA pass, apprentices must achieve a pass in all the assessment methods.

The table below shows how the grade from each end-point assessment method is combined to determine the overall end-point assessment grade.

Assessment method 1: Observation with questions	Assessment method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence	Assessment method 3: Case study with report and presentation and questioning	End-point assessment grade
Fail	Any grade	Any grade	Fail
Any grade	Fail	Any grade	Fail
Any grade	Any grade	Fail	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Distinction	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Distinction	Merit
Distinction	Pass	Distinction	Merit
Distinction	Distinction	Pass	Merit
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

Any grade = fail, pass or distinction

4 Assessment

Assessment plan

Pearson's approach to assessing this EPA is set by the assessment plan for the apprenticeship standard. This document is available in *Annexe B*.

Language of assessment

Apprentices must use English only during the assessment of this EPA.

An apprentice taking the EPA may be assessed in British Sign Language for the purpose of reasonable adjustment.

Further information on the use of language in assessment is available in our *Use of languages in qualifications policy*, available on our website.

Gateway

Before progressing to the EPA from on-programme, all apprentices must be signed off by their employer, through the 'gateway'. This gateway sign-off confirms that apprentices have the level of occupational knowledge, skills and behaviours required to achieve the apprenticeship.

The EPA-specific requirements for the gateway are stated in *Section 2: Summary of End-point Assessment* and the assessment plan in *Annexe B*.

Employers must complete a *Gateway Declaration Form* (see *Annexe A*) with the apprentice. The form and the associated gateway evidence to prove apprentices have met the requirements must be supplied to Pearson before the EPA can take place.

While this apprenticeship does not require apprentices to achieve a mandated qualification, the Level 5 BTEC Higher National Diploma in Early Childhood, Education and care has been mapped to the knowledge, skills and understanding covered by the occupational standard. This mapping can be found on our website.

5 End-point assessment methods

Assessment method 1: Observation with questions

Structure

The observation with questions assesses apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) from the apprenticeship standard, in line with the assessment plan requirements. It is assessed by a Pearson independent end-point assessor (IEA).

This allows for a demonstration of the KSBs through naturally occurring evidence. The observation must be of an apprentice completing their usual work and simulation is not permitted.

The independent assessor will ask questions in relation to KSBs that have not been observed although questions on these KSBs should be kept to a minimum.

Observation with questions	
Summary	<p><u>Observation</u></p> <p>The IEA will observe the apprentice undertaking work as part of their normal duties in the workplace. Simulation is not permitted. Apprentices will plan the session being observed in advance.</p> <p>The following activities must be observed during the observation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the apprentice interacting with a group of children through an opportunity or experience for learning based on the session plan.• the apprentice leading/supervising colleagues during this session.• the apprentice communicating with parents/carers/guardians of the children under their supervision. <p>Group work is defined as working with a minimum of three children.</p> <p><u>Questions</u></p> <p>The IEA will ask a minimum of seven questions at the end of the observation.</p> <p>They will use the questions to confirm their understanding of the observation and how it demonstrates the relevant KSBs.</p>

Observation with questions	
	As only naturally occurring work is observed, those KSBs that the apprentice did not have the opportunity to demonstrate can be assessed via questioning.
Duration	<p>Observation: 60 minutes</p> <p>Question and answer session: 30 minutes</p> <p>The IEA has the discretion to increase the time of the observation by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last task or respond to a question. The discretionary additional 10% time can be allocated in any proportion across the observation and questioning.</p>
Grading	<p>Fail/Pass/Distinction</p> <p>To achieve a pass, the apprentice must achieve all pass descriptors mapped to this assessment method.</p> <p>To achieve a distinction, the apprentice must achieve all pass descriptors and all distinction descriptors mapped to this assessment method.</p> <p>The grading descriptors for this assessment method can be found in the assessment plan in <i>Annexe B</i>.</p>
Preparation	<p>Apprentices must use the documents published in the <i>EPA Resource Pack</i> to support their preparation.</p> <p>The details of how the observation will be operated will be agreed at the EPA planning meeting.</p> <p><u>Session plan</u></p> <p>The apprentice must prepare a session plan in advance of the observation which includes details of the opportunities and experiences being supported and area of focus for learning, risk assessments, how the apprentice will support the session, when it will occur and when it will begin.</p> <p>The session plan will not be assessed, but the IEA may use it to provide focus to their questions at the end of the observation. The IEA must ask questions about the planning process in the questioning element.</p> <p>The session plan must be no more than two sides of A4 in size 12 font.</p> <p>Apprentices must send their session plan to the IEA at least 24 hours before the date of the observation to allow the IEA time to familiarise themselves with the content.</p>

Observation with questions

	<u>Observation</u> <p>The apprentice must seek the permission of parents/guardians of all children that are likely to be present during the observation. Evidence that this has been done should be submitted to Pearson at least two weeks before the date of the observation.</p>
Delivery and conduct	<p>The observation will take place within the apprentice's normal work environment to ensure all safety, security and confidentiality permissions are managed appropriately. Simulation is not permitted.</p> <p>The observation must take place in an early years setting, working with children. This can be the employer's premises, a workplace other than that of the employer, or detached and outreach locations.</p> <p>The timing of the observation must allow the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate all of the KSBs mapped to this assessment method, such as engaging with colleagues and with parents and guardians.</p> <p>The IEA will be unobtrusive while conducting the observation, and will take notes.</p> <p>If the IEA does not observe a particular area, then situational 'what if' questions will be asked as part of the question and answer session.</p> <p>The IEA will intervene or stop the observation if they judge that the apprentice or others are at risk.</p> <p>If direct observation is not possible due to restrictions imposed by the setting (e.g. within the secure estate, specific health settings), agreement for a video recording may be approved, subject to confidentiality and GDPR legal requirements. The IEA will view this video submission alongside the apprentice at the apprentice's workplace, to replicate the observation process. The video must not leave the apprentice's workplace. The IEA will ask questions for clarification in the same way as they would after a normal, in-person observation.</p>
Assessment	<p>The IEA will assess the evidence from the observation and the apprentice's responses to questions holistically against the grading descriptors mapped to this assessment method, using the associated assessment guidance (published in the <i>EPA Resource Pack</i>).</p>

Standards assessed

The observation assesses the following KSBs from the apprenticeship standard.

KSBs	Apprenticeship standard outcomes
Knowledge	
K1	Ethical and rights-based approaches to support the child, listening to the child's authentic voice within their social and cultural context enabling advocacy for the child and their individual journey, developing high quality childcare environments that are continuously evaluated.
K4	Current and contemporary schools of thought to enable respectful and nurturing personal care.
K14	Potential effects of transitions and schools of thought on how to successfully support children and their families.
K17	Current and contemporary theoretical perspectives and approaches to leadership and how to support others through leaderful practice.
Skills	
S2	Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
S3	Observe, assess, plan, facilitate and participate in play opportunities which include current curriculum requirements.
S4	Ensure plans fully reflect the individual development needs and circumstances of children and actively participate in the provision of consistent care, responding quickly to the needs of the individual child.
S5	Provide a dynamic, evolving and enabling environment that reflects the current interests, motivations, and play of individual and groups of children.
S6	Encourage all children's participation, ensuring a sensitive, respectful and effective balance within the adult and child dynamic to facilitate play opportunities.
S7	Engage in effective strategies to develop and extend children's learning and thinking, including sustained shared thinking.
S8	Support and promote children's speech, language and communication development and determining and adapting appropriate responses and interventions.
S10	Ensure staff are deployed effectively to suit and enhance the learning environment, prioritising the safety and wellbeing of all children.

KSBs	Apprenticeship standard outcomes
S14	Take responsibility for supporting the key person in articulating children's progress and planning future learning possibilities.
S15	Use current and contemporary knowledge, research, theories and approaches to develop, enhance and articulate their own pedagogical approach and practice.
S17	Plan, carry out and guide appropriate physical care routines for individual children.
S20	Identify and act upon own responsibilities in relation to health and safety, prevention and control of infection, carrying out risk assessments and risk management processes in line with policies and procedures.
S22	Be a leaderful practitioner to support, mentor, coach, train and guide colleagues in a range of settings, providing inspiration and motivation to engage others to develop their practice.
S23	Be confident to identify, action and competently challenge issues and undertake difficult conversations where appropriate.
S24	Advocate for children through their child centred approach, listening to the voice of the child; ensuring children's rights, views and wishes are heard, respected and acted upon at all times. Offer appropriate support and influence decisions in the best interests of the child.
Behaviours	
B2	Leaderful and motivating through consistent modelling of innovative and aspirational practice to other colleagues.
B3	Person centred, friendly and approachable, demonstrating caring, empathetic and respectful qualities.
B4	Authentic and fun, demonstrating playful practice through animated and expressive play and quality interactions with children.
B5	Positive and proactive member of the team, being assertive and exercising diplomacy.
B7	Creative and imaginative, demonstrating curiosity and inquisitiveness in order to be resourceful in all areas, including play and problem solving.
B8	Flexible and adaptable; responding to children's spontaneous activities.

Assessment method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

Structure

The professional discussion assesses apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours from the apprenticeship standard, in line with the assessment plan requirements. It is assessed by a Pearson IEA.

Professional discussion	
Summary	<p>The professional discussion is a structured two-way conversation between the apprentice and the IEA. It is designed to draw out the best of the apprentice's competence and excellence.</p> <p>The discussion is underpinned by a portfolio of evidence that apprentices prepare during the on-programme part of their apprenticeship. The portfolio is not directly assessed or graded, but it supports the professional discussion.</p>
Duration	<p>60 minutes.</p> <p>The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the professional discussion by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer.</p>
Portfolio	<p>Apprentices are required to provide work-based evidence in a portfolio to validate and support their responses in the professional discussion. This portfolio is submitted prior to the professional discussion at the gateway.</p>
Grading	<p>Fail/Pass/Distinction</p> <p>To achieve a pass, the apprentice must achieve all pass descriptors mapped to this assessment method.</p> <p>To achieve a distinction, the apprentice must achieve all pass descriptors and all distinction descriptors mapped to this assessment method.</p> <p>The grading descriptors for this assessment method can be found in the assessment plan in <i>Annexe B</i>.</p>
Preparation	<p>Apprentices must use the documents published in the <i>EPA Resource Pack</i> to support their preparation.</p> <p>Apprentices will be given at least two weeks' notice ahead of the professional discussion.</p>

Professional discussion

Delivery and conduct	<p>The professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence will be conducted face to face or remotely. The apprentice and the independent assessor will have access to their own copies of the portfolio throughout the professional discussion and both can refer to it as needed.</p> <p>The apprentice will lead the discussion. The IEA will ask the apprentice a range of broad questions and apprentices will present their work-based evidence in response.</p> <p>This must take place in a quiet environment away from the apprentice's normal working environment, free from distractions and influence.</p> <p>The IEA will take notes and will audio or video record the professional discussion.</p>
Assessment	<p>The IEA will assess the apprentice's performance and responses to questions holistically against the grading criteria and using assessment guidance published in the <i>EPA Resource Pack</i>.</p>

Standards assessed

The professional discussion assesses the following knowledge, skills and behaviours from the apprenticeship standard.

KSBS	Apprenticeship standard outcomes
Knowledge	
K5	Local and national child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures in practice, identifying when a child is at risk, and how to challenge in order to protect them. This includes understanding the role of the designated lead for safeguarding and assimilating findings of serious case reviews.
K6	Theories of self-regulation, resilience and wellbeing and the impact of adverse early childhood experiences.
K12	Current and contemporary approaches in the development of emergent literacy and numeracy skills such as synthetic phonics.
K16	How to promote inclusion, equality and diversity in the sector and why it is essential.
K18	Principles of reflection in influencing early years practice with a commitment to life-long learning including continual professional development and action research.
K19	How to maintain accurate and coherent records and reports for the purpose of sharing information and communicate effectively in both oral and written English.
K20	The current and relevant policy, statutory guidance and legal requirements as appropriate to the sector within local, national, historical and global contexts.
K21	Strategies to effect collaborative approaches to working with parents, professional bodies and multi agencies.
Skills	
S11	Advocate for the child, cultivating professional partnerships with parents/carers and other professionals, presenting their understanding of the child's journey within multidisciplinary teams to holistically support the child's individual needs.
S16	Use reflection to develop themselves both professionally and personally to enhance their practice.

KSBs	Apprenticeship standard outcomes
S18	Promote, model and support children and families to develop a healthy approach to making choices relating to personal care including eating, sleeping and physical activity.
S19	Develop, model and implement strategies to support the emotional, psychological, physical and cultural needs of all children within the setting.
S21	Ensure the security and confidentiality of data, records and information in line with current legislation.
S25	Competently action and carry out safeguarding procedures, using their professional curiosity, knowledge, insight and understanding.
S26	Explore and understand, challenge and question; knowing when to act to safeguard and protect children.
Behaviours	
B1	Ethical, fair, consistent and impartial, valuing equality and diversity at all times within professional boundaries.
B6	Reflective practitioner.
B9	Receptive and open to challenge and constructive criticism.

Assessment method 3: Case study with report and presentation and questioning

Structure

The case study with report and presentation with questioning assesses apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours from the apprenticeship standard, in line with the assessment plan requirements. It is assessed by a Pearson IEA.

Case study with report and presentation and questioning	
Summary	<p>Apprentices will conduct a series of observations of a child or group of children over a period of typically six weeks.</p> <p>They will produce a case study report about their case study, either paper based or electronically.</p> <p>Apprentices will then prepare and deliver a presentation that summarises and makes reference to the case study report.</p> <p>The independent assessor will ask a minimum of four questions at the end of the presentation.</p>
Duration	<p>12 weeks to write and submit the case study report and the presentation.</p> <p>The case study report will be 4,000 words (+/- 10% at the apprentice's discretion) including tables, graphs, figures, though excluding references and annexes.</p> <p>Presentation – 20 minutes.</p> <p>Questioning – 20 minutes.</p> <p>The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the presentation by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last point.</p>
Grading	<p>Fail/Pass/Distinction</p> <p>To achieve a pass, the apprentice must achieve all pass descriptors mapped to this assessment method.</p> <p>To achieve a distinction, the apprentice must achieve all pass descriptors and all distinction descriptors mapped to this assessment method.</p> <p>The grading descriptors for this assessment method can be found in the assessment plan in <i>Annexe B</i>.</p>

Preparation	<p>Apprentices must use the documents published in the <i>EPA Resource Pack</i> to support their preparation.</p> <p>Before the apprentice begins writing up their case study, Pearson must sign off the case study scope and title to ensure its suitability and that it will sufficiently cover the KSBs mapped to this assessment method. The case study scope and title must be submitted to Pearson at the gateway and should be approved within two weeks of the gateway.</p> <p>The case study scope and title sign-off is carried out in consultation with employers. The process and timelines for this will be discussed with employers ahead of the gateway.</p> <p>Employers will ensure apprentices have sufficient time and the necessary resources within this period to plan and conduct the case study.</p>
Delivery and conduct	<p>Apprentices have a maximum of 12 weeks to complete the case study report and presentation (starting when their case study title and outline is signed off after the gateway). They should typically spend six weeks conducting their case study with the children. While completing the case study, the apprentice should be subject to the workplace's normal supervision arrangements and the employer should ensure the apprentice has sufficient time and the necessary resources to undertake the case study.</p> <p>Apprentices submit the case study report to Pearson together with their supporting presentation.</p> <p>The apprentice delivers the presentation of their report to the IEA at a date/time agreed, either via online video or face to face or. The IEA will also ask questions to ensure full coverage of the mapped KSBs.</p> <p>The presentation and questioning elements will be conducted in a suitable controlled environment, in a quiet room free from distraction and external influences.</p>
Assessment	<p>The IEA will review and assess the case study report, presentations and questions holistically against the grading descriptors mapped to this assessment method, using the associated guidance (published in the <i>EPA Resource Pack</i>).</p>

Standards assessed

The case study report and presentation assess the following knowledge, skills and behaviours from the apprenticeship standard.

Knowledge, skills and behaviours	Apprenticeship standard outcomes
Knowledge	
K2	How individual children learn and develop from conception to 8 years in relation to typical and atypical neurological, cognitive, social, emotional, behavioural, communication and physical development within the social, cultural context and the impact of this on their future.
K3	Factors that have an impact upon health, wellbeing and early learning that can affect children from conception to 8 years.
K7	Current and emerging theories of attachment and how these relate to promoting relationships effectively such as the key person approach.
K8	The importance of the social cultural context on the learning and development of the child and the influence parents, families and carers have within the home learning environment and the complexities of the family situation.
K9	The importance of play and the theoretical perspectives of play and its impact on a child's learning and development.
K10	How to stimulate children's creativity and curiosity and why and how this enables enquiry based active learning.
K11	A wide range of underpinning theories from physiological, neurological, developmental and education and how these can be incorporated to develop own pedagogy.
K13	How planning cycles inform and improve practice and the principles of individual needs-based assessment for effective early intervention for all children responsive to typical and atypical needs and development.
K15	The importance of enabling environments and the impact of opportunities, resources and relationships on learning and development.
Skills	
S1	Analyse and articulate how all children's individual learning can be affected by their current developmental capabilities, characteristics

Knowledge, skills and behaviours	Apprenticeship standard outcomes
	and individual circumstances taking into account all factors contributing to typical and atypical development.
S9	Support children to engage in a range of learning contexts such as individual, small groups and larger groups as appropriate for their play and support confidence within social experiences.
S12	Demonstrate the importance of the home learning environment, developing an effective and collaborative partnership to enhance opportunities for the child.
S13	Make use of formative and summative assessment, tracking children's progress to plan for future learning possibilities including early interventions based on individual developmental needs.

6 Delivery of end-point assessment

End-point assessment planning and scheduling

Employers and/or training providers must have an agreement in place to conduct EPAs with Pearson, and apprentices must be registered on the ACE360 system. Once the gateway evidence has been uploaded to ACE360, this will alert the IEA to review the evidence and start the planning and scheduling process.

The purpose of the EPA planning meeting is to share information with the IEA in order to support the assessment process and to agree a plan for the upcoming assessment activities for the apprentices. The IEA will agree a plan and schedule for each assessment activity. The end-point assessment planning meeting can be conducted remotely using appropriate technology.

All assessment methods of the end-point assessment must be completed within the time period specified in *Section 2: Summary of End-point Assessment*.

Reassessment

Reassessment, including both re-sit and re-take, is permitted in agreement between Pearson and the employer. The timescale will be agreed on a case-by-case basis with Pearson. As part of that agreement, any reassessments must not provide an apprentice with an unfair advantage over others. A re-sit is typically taken within two months of the EPA outcome notification. The timescale for a re-take is dependent on how much re-training is required and is typically taken within four months of the EPA outcome notification.

If the apprentice fails the case study assessment method, they are not required to undertake a new project. Instead, they should submit an amended project report or presentation.

All assessment methods must be taken within a six-month period, otherwise the entire EPA will need to be re-sat/re-taken.

Re-sits and re-takes are not offered to apprentices wishing to move from pass to a higher grade.

Where any assessment method has to be re-sat or re-taken, the apprentice will be awarded a maximum EPA grade of pass unless the EPAO determines there are exceptional circumstances.

For additional EPA-specific requirements, refer to the assessment plan in *Annexe B*.

Booking reassessment

Reassessment is requested using the ACE360 system. Once the request is confirmed, the allocated IEA will liaise with the key contact to start the scheduling process.

Appeals

The *End-point assessment enquiries and appeals policy* is available on the Pearson website and ACE Knowledge Base. This has full information about what will happen if an apprentice or centre wishes to query the result of an assessment.

7 Access to assessment

Access to assessment for apprentices with disabilities or specific needs

Equality and fairness are central to our work. Our *Equality, diversity and inclusion policy* requires all apprentices to have equal opportunity to access our assessments, and that our EPAs are awarded in a way that is fair to every apprentice.

We are committed to making sure that:

- apprentices with a protected characteristic (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) are not, when they are taking one of our assessments, disadvantaged in comparison to apprentices who do not share that characteristic
- all apprentices achieve the recognition they deserve from their EPA and that this achievement can be compared fairly to the achievement of their peers.

For apprentices with disabilities and specific needs, the assessment of their potential to achieve the EPA must identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to them during delivery and assessment.

Centres must deliver the EPA in accordance with current equality legislation. For full details of the Equality Act 2010, please [visit www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)

Reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment relates to an adjustment that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or a physical or mental health condition, which may place the apprentice at a disadvantage compared to others. If an apprentice requires any adjustment to their assessment, this must be recorded within the ACE360 system to support the discussion at the EPA planning meeting.

Pearson will apply the *Reasonable adjustment matrix* published by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE).

8 Malpractice

Dealing with malpractice in assessment

'Malpractice' refers to acts that undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or may damage the authority of those responsible for delivering the assessment and certification.

Pearson does not tolerate actual or attempted actions of malpractice by learners, centre staff or centres in connection with Pearson qualifications. Pearson may impose sanctions on learners, centre staff or centres where malpractice or attempted malpractice has been proven.

Malpractice may occur or be suspected in relation to any unit or type of assessment within a qualification. For further details on malpractice and advice on preventing malpractice by learners, please see Pearson's Centre Guidance: Dealing with Malpractice, available on our website.

Centres are required to take steps to prevent malpractice and to assist with investigating instances of suspected malpractice. Learners must be given information that explains what malpractice is and how suspected incidents will be dealt with by the centre. The Centre Guidance: Dealing with Malpractice document gives full information on the actions we expect you to take.

Pearson may conduct investigations if we believe a centre is failing to conduct assessments according to our policies. The above document gives further information, examples, and details the sanctions that may be imposed.

In the interests of learners and centre staff, centres need to respond effectively and openly to all requests relating to an investigation into an incident of suspected malpractice.

Learner malpractice

The head of centre is required to report incidents of suspected learner malpractice that occur during the delivery of Pearson qualifications. We ask centres to complete JCQ Form M1 (www.jcq.org.uk/malpractice) and email it with any supporting documents

(signed statements from the learner, invigilator, copies of evidence, etc) to the Investigations Processing team at candidatemalpractice@pearson.com. The responsibility for determining any appropriate sanctions on learners lies with Pearson.

Learners must be informed at the earliest opportunity of the specific allegation and the centre's malpractice policy, including the right of appeal. Learners found guilty of

malpractice may be disqualified from the qualification for which they have been entered with Pearson.

Failure to report malpractice constitutes staff or centre malpractice.

Teacher/centre malpractice

The head of centre is required to inform Pearson's Investigations team of any incident of suspected malpractice (which includes maladministration) by centre staff, before any investigation is undertaken. The head of centre should inform the Investigations team by submitting a JCQ M2 Form (downloadable from www.jcq.org.uk/malpractice) with supporting documentation to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com. Where Pearson receives allegations of malpractice from other sources (for example Pearson staff, anonymous informants), the Investigations team will conduct the investigation directly or may ask the head of centre to assist.

Pearson reserves the right in cases of suspected malpractice to withhold the issuing of results/certificates while an investigation is in progress. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, results and/or certificates may not be released or they may be withheld.

You should be aware that Pearson may need to suspend certification when undertaking investigations, audits and quality assurances processes. You will be notified within a reasonable period of time if this occurs.

Sanctions and appeals

Where malpractice is proven, we may impose sanctions such as:

- mark reduction for affected assessments
- disqualification from the qualification
- debarment from registration for Pearson qualifications for a period of time.

If we are concerned about your centre's quality procedures we may impose sanctions such as:

- requiring centres to create an improvement action plan
- requiring staff members to receive further training
- placing temporary suspensions on certification of learners
- placing temporary suspensions on registration of learners
- debarring staff members or the centre from delivering Pearson qualifications
- suspending or withdrawing centre approval status.

The centre will be notified if any of these apply.

Pearson has established procedures for considering appeals against sanctions arising from malpractice. Appeals against a decision made by Pearson will normally be accepted

only from the head of centre (on behalf of learners and/or members or staff) and from individual members (in respect of a decision taken against them personally). Further information on appeals can be found in the JCQ Appeals booklet (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/appeals>).

9 Further information

Edexcel, BTEC and Pearson Work Based Learning contact details:

- <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/contact-us.html>

Books, software and online resources for UK schools and colleges:

- www.pearsonschoolsandfecolleges.co.uk

Documents that further support the information in this specification:

- *EPA Service Guide* (Pearson – this is made available to approved centres).

10 Glossary

Term	Description
Apprenticeship standard	A short document prepared by a Trailblazer group that sets out concisely the requirements to be competent in a job role. All apprenticeship standards are published on www.gov.uk .
Assessment method	The different assessments that form the overarching EPA. Most EPAs will typically have between two and four assessment methods that assess set parts of the overarching standard.
Assessment plan	This document is also prepared by a Trailblazer group and sets out the requirements that end-point assessment organisations must follow when assessing the EPA.
Competence	The minimum knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) required to perform a job role effectively.
Component	Separate assessments falling under one assessment method, for example the case study report and presentation with questions.
End-point assessment	A synoptic assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the apprenticeship standard that have been learned throughout the apprenticeship programme. The apprentice has to pass the EPA to be successful in their apprenticeship programme and demonstrate competence.
Gateway	The point at which the apprentice is identified as being competent by their employer and therefore ready to plan to take their end-point assessment. There are requirements for maths and English to enter the gateway and there may be other requirements, such as mandatory qualifications, that vary depending on the apprenticeship standard.
Independent end-point assessor	The assessor appointed by Pearson to work with the apprentice and employer to plan their EPA during the gateway and then assess the apprentice in the final EPA.
On-programme	The first and main part of the apprenticeship when the apprentice is developing their KSBs towards competence – 20% of on-programme is required to be off-the-job training.
Re-take	An apprentice requires further learning after failing an assessment method before they can be re-entered for it.

Term	Description
Re-sit	An apprentice fails an assessment method but is able to be re-entered immediately without any further learning.
Trailblazer group	A group of employers who have worked together to agree the apprenticeship standard and write the associated assessment plan.
Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE)	A non-departmental public body that oversees the development, approval and publication of apprenticeship standards and assessment plans. In addition, the Institute is responsible for technical education, including T Levels.

Annexe A: Gateway Declaration Form

Apprentice name:		
On-programme start date:		
Gateway date:		
<hr/>		
Evidence	Y/N	Comments (if applicable)
English and maths certificates at Level 2		
Portfolio of evidence		
Case study title and scope		

Employer declaration

I confirm that the apprentice has:

- achieved the occupational knowledge, skills and behaviours required to achieve the apprenticeship
- produced their evidence portfolio to the specified criteria
- achieved the prerequisites listed above and is ready for their end-point assessment.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Apprentice declaration

I confirm the gateway evidence is my own and I agree to be put forward for my EPA.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Annexe B: Assessment plan



End-point assessment plan for Early Years Lead Practitioner apprenticeship standard

Apprenticeship standard reference number	Apprenticeship standard level	Integrated end-point assessment
ST0770	4	No

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Introduction and overview

This document sets out the requirements for end-point assessment (EPA) for the Early Years Lead Practitioner apprenticeship standard. It is for end-point assessment organisations (EPAOs) who need to know how EPA for this apprenticeship must operate. It will also be of interest to early years lead practitioner apprentices, their employers and training providers.

Full-time apprentices will typically spend 24 months on-programme (before the gateway) working towards the occupational standard, with a minimum of 20% off-the-job training. All apprentices must spend a minimum of 12 months on-programme.

The EPA period should only start, and the EPA be arranged, once the employer is satisfied that the apprentice is deemed to be consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard, all of the pre-requisite gateway requirements for EPA have been met and can be evidenced to an EPAO.

For Level 3 apprenticeships and above, apprentices without English and mathematics at Level 2 must achieve Level 2 prior to taking their EPA.

The EPA must be completed within an EPA period lasting typically five months after the EPA gateway.

This EPA consists of three discrete assessment methods.

It will be possible to achieve the following grades in each end-point assessment method:

Assessment method 1: Observation with questions

- fail
- pass
- distinction

Assessment method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

- fail
- pass
- distinction

Assessment method 3: Case study with report and presentation and questioning

- fail
- pass
- distinction

Performance in the EPA will determine the overall apprenticeship standard grade of:

- fail
- pass
- merit
- distinction

EPA summary table

On-programme (typically 24 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training to develop the occupation standard's knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs). Training towards English and mathematics Level 2, if required. Compiling a portfolio of evidence.
End-point assessment gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The employer is satisfied the apprentice is consistently working at, or above, the level of the occupational standard. Apprentices must have achieved English and mathematics Level 2. Apprentices must submit a portfolio of evidence to underpin the professional discussion. The case study title and scope will be agreed between the apprentice, the employer and the EPAO at the gateway.
End-point assessment (which will typically take five months)	<p>Assessment method 1: Observation with questions</p> <p>With the following grades:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fail pass distinction <p>Assessment method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p> <p>With the following grades:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fail pass distinction <p>Assessment method 3: Case study with report and presentation and questioning</p> <p>With the following grades:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fail pass distinction <p>Overall EPA/apprenticeship graded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fail pass merit distinction
Professional recognition	<p>Aligns with recognition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the apprenticeship standard has been developed to cover the Department for Education criteria for Level 3 Early Years qualifications (Early Years Educator).

Length of end-point assessment period

The EPA will be completed within an EPA period lasting typically for five months, starting when the EPAO has confirmed that all gateway requirements have been met.

Order of end-point assessment methods

The assessment methods can be delivered in any order. The result of one assessment method does not need to be known before starting the next. The apprentice will be assessed against the KSBs assigned to the assessment methods outlined below, as shown in the mapping section of this EPA plan.

EPA gateway

The apprentice should only enter the gateway once the employer is content that the apprentice is working at or above the level of the occupational standard. In making this decision, the employer may take advice from the apprentice's training provider(s), but the decision must ultimately be made solely by the employer.

The EPAO determines when all other gateway requirements have been met, and the EPA period will only start once the EPAO has confirmed this.

In addition to the employer's confirmation that the apprentice is working at or above the level of the occupational standard, the apprentice must have completed the following gateway requirements prior to starting the EPA:

- achieved English and mathematics at Level 2.

For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the apprenticeship's English and mathematics minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. British Sign Language (BSL) qualifications are an alternative to English qualifications for those who have BSL as their primary language.

For professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence, the apprentice will be required to submit:

- a completed portfolio of evidence.

The portfolio of evidence requirements are as follows:

- Apprentices must compile a portfolio of evidence during the on-programme period of the apprenticeship.
- It must contain evidence related to the KSBs that will be assessed by the professional discussion.
- The portfolio of evidence will typically contain 20 discrete pieces of evidence.
- Evidence should be mapped by the apprentice against the KSBs assessed by the professional discussion.
- Evidence may be used to demonstrate more than one KSB; a qualitative as opposed to quantitative approach is suggested.
- Evidence sources may include:
 - workplace documentation/records, for example workplace policies/procedures, records
 - witness statements
 - annotated photographs
 - video clips (maximum total duration 20 minutes); the apprentice must be in view and identifiable. At least two observations of practice, maximum 20 minutes in total duration,

which should be video recorded where possible except where there are safeguarding concerns, in which case a written account is acceptable. Video-recorded observations must not be sent to the EPAO as part of the portfolio. Video recordings must not leave the employer's premises and can only be viewed on site.

This is not a definitive list; other evidence sources are possible.

- It should not include reflective accounts or any methods of self-assessment except for evidence for S16 and B6.
- Any employer contributions should focus on direct observation of performance (for example, witness statements) rather than opinions.
- The evidence provided must be valid and attributable to the apprentice; the portfolio of evidence must contain a statement from the employer and apprentice confirming this.
- The portfolio of evidence must be submitted to the EPAO at the gateway.

The portfolio is not directly assessed. It underpins the professional discussion and therefore should not be marked by the EPAO. EPAOs should review the portfolio of evidence in preparation for the professional discussion but are not required to provide feedback after this review of the portfolio.

For the case study with report and presentation with questioning:

- the title and scope of the case study will be agreed between the apprentice, the employer and the EPAO at the gateway
- the apprentice will scope out and provide a brief summary of what the project will cover and will submit this to the EPAO at the gateway. This should demonstrate that the work-based project will provide sufficient opportunity for the KSBs to be met
- the brief summary is not assessed and will typically be no longer than 500 words
- the brief summary needs to outline the project plan, research requirements and an overview of time frames, taking into account the deadlines stipulated within this end-point assessment plan
- the EPAO will sign off the project title in consultation with the employer within two weeks of the gateway.

Assessment methods

End-point assessment method 1: Observation with questions

Overview

This assessment method has one component.

An observation with questions involves an independent assessor observing and questioning an apprentice undertaking work, as part of their normal duties, in the workplace. This allows for a demonstration of the KSBs through naturally occurring evidence. The observation must be of an apprentice completing their usual work – simulation is not permitted.

The independent assessor will ask questions in relation to KSBs that have not been observed, although these should be kept to a minimum.

The rationale for this assessment method is:

- this is a practical role, best demonstrated through completing tasks in a real work setting
- observation makes use of employer resources and equipment, which will be familiar to the apprentice and thus will allow them to perform at their best
- tasks completed during the observation should contribute to workplace productivity and must be valid

- it is a holistic assessment method.

Delivery

The EPAO will arrange for the observation to take place, in consultation with the employer.

The apprentice must prepare a session plan, including relevant risk assessments, prior to the observation outlining the following:

- ‘what’ opportunities and experiences will be supported (outline of learning focus)
- ‘who’ is involved (i.e. number of children/children’s profiles/parents/guardians/colleagues)
- ‘why’ these areas of focus for learning have been selected (i.e. how it provides the apprentice the opportunity to provide coverage of the KSBs)
- ‘when’ it will occur (i.e. scheduled date/time)
- ‘how’ the session will be supported (i.e. the probable skills and approaches that the apprentice will use to support and extend the children’s learning)
- ‘where’ it will begin (i.e. indoors/outdoors).

The session plan must be no more than two sides of A4 in size 12 font. The apprentice must ensure the independent assessor receives a copy of the session plan at least one hour before the observation begins. The session plan itself is not marked but may be used as a basis for questions at the end of the observation.

The location of the observation must take place within the normal work environment to ensure all safety, security and confidentiality permissions are managed appropriately.

- The timing of the observation must allow the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate all of the KSBs mapped to this assessment method, such as engaging with colleagues and with parents and guardians.
- The apprentice must have sought the permission of parents/guardians of all children that are likely to be present during the observation.
- The apprentice should provide clear information to the children, parents or guardians on the purposes of the observation and where any notes related to the observation will be stored.
- The apprentice should explain to all parents or guardians that there will be no recorded information that would enable identification of any participants with the exception of the apprentice.
- Children must be given the opportunity to withdraw from a session of assessed practice without prejudice. In this occupation it would be considered poor practice to force a child to participate in an opportunity of experience against their will. If all children withdraw from the observation, the apprentice will be expected to encourage the children to engage in an alternative opportunity or experience. If this requires the session to be rearranged, this opportunity will not be viewed as a re-sit/re-take.

Evidence of the above should be presented to the EPAO two weeks before the date of the observation.

The total time for the assessment on the day is 90 minutes.

This will include:

- observation of the opportunities and experiences outlined in the session plan (60 minutes)
- questioning, to allow the independent assessor to understand the reasons behind the apprentice’s actions and to provide opportunity to draw out further detail regarding the KSBs mapped to the assessment method (30 minutes).

The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the observation by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last task or respond to a question. The discretionary additional 10% time can be allocated in any proportion across the observation and questioning.

If unforeseen circumstances beyond the apprentice's control prevent the apprentice from carrying out the task as planned, for example a safeguarding incident arises and takes priority, then the EPAO's policy around exceptional circumstances applies.

Where breaks occur, they will not count towards the total assessment time.

EPAOs must manage the invigilation of apprentices during breaks in order to maintain security of the assessment in line with their malpractice policy.

One independent assessor may observe only one apprentice at any one time, to ensure quality and rigour.

Apprentices must be provided with information on the format of the observation, including the timescales they will be working to, before the start of the observation. The time taken to give this information is exclusive of the assessment time.

The apprentice must prepare a session plan in advance of the observation. They must present this plan to the independent assessor at least one hour before the observation commences in order to allow the independent assessor time to familiarise themselves with the content. The apprentice must ensure any children who want to take part in the observation have parental/guardian consent prior to the activity taking place. They must submit this to the EPAO two weeks before the observation takes place. The session plan itself does not form part of the assessment, but the independent assessor may use this to provide focus to their questions at the end of the observation. The independent assessor must ask questions about the planning process in the questioning element.

The following activities must be observed during the observation:

- The apprentice interacting with a group of children through an opportunity or experience for learning based on the session plan.
- The apprentice leading/supervising colleagues during this session.
- The apprentice communicating with parents/carers/guardians of the children under their supervision.

Depending on the nature of the setting, the location, number of children and age range vary from employer to employer, but some examples of this could be as follows:

- session in a woodland area
- session working within messy play
- session working with pre-school children.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Please note group work is defined as working with a minimum of three children.

The observation must include the following requirements:

- In an early years setting working with children.
- The independent assessor must be unobtrusive while conducting the observation.

The independent assessor will ask a minimum of seven questions at the end of the observation. The independent assessor will use the questions from a question bank supplied by the EPAO as a guide to tailor their own questions based on the observation and session plan. They will use them to confirm their understanding of the observation and how it demonstrates the relevant KSBs. As only naturally occurring work is observed, those KSBs that the apprentice did not have the opportunity to demonstrate can be assessed via questioning, although these should be kept to a minimum. The independent assessor may ask follow-up questions where clarification is required.

The independent assessor must use the full time available for questioning to allow the apprentice the opportunity to evidence occupational competence.

The performance observed and responses to questions will be assessed holistically.

KSBs observed, and answers to questions, must be recorded by the independent assessor. The independent assessor must use the assessment tools and procedures that are set by the EPAO to record the responses to questions.

The independent assessor will make all grading decisions.

Assessment location

The observation with questions should take place in any of the following:

- employer's premises
- workplace other than that of employer
- detached and outreach locations.

The EPAO must ensure the appropriate identification checks have been carried out to verify the identity of the apprentice and to ensure the apprentice is not being aided.

The children who take part in the assessment will attend the early years setting, so will recognise and have a working relationship with the apprentice.

There may be circumstances where direct observation is not possible due to restrictions imposed by the venue (e.g. within the secure estate, specific health settings). In these circumstances, agreement for a video recording of the post-gateway observation session may be approved, subject to confidentiality and GDPR legal requirements. This video submission should be viewed by the independent assessor alongside the apprentice at the apprentice's workplace, to replicate the observation process. The video must not leave the apprentice's workplace. Questions can then be defined for clarification in the same way as they would be after a normal, in-person observation.

Question and resource development

EPAOs will create and set open questions to assess related underpinning KSBs. They must develop 'question banks' of sufficient size to prevent predictability and review them regularly (at least once a year) to ensure the questions they contain are fit for purpose. Independent assessors must use the question bank as a source for questioning and are expected to use their professional judgement to tailor those questions appropriately. Independent assessors are responsible for generating suitable follow-up questions (where permitted) in line with the EPAO's training and standardisation process. The questions relating to underpinning KSBs must be varied yet allow assessment of the relevant KSBs. The independent assessor must use the assessment tools and procedures that are set by the EPAO to record the questioning.

EPAOs must ensure that apprentices have a different set of questions in the case of re-sits/re-takes.

EPAOs will produce the following material to support this assessment method:

- independent assessor training materials
- assessment specification
- outline of the assessment method's requirements
- grading guidance
- question bank
- assessment recording documentation
- guidance document for employers and apprentices on the process/timescales for the observation as well as a description of the purpose of the observation

- guidance document for independent assessors on how to carry out the assessment.

End-point assessment method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

This assessment method has one component.

Overview

This assessment will take the form of a professional discussion which must be appropriately structured to draw out the best of the apprentice's competence and excellence and cover the KSBs assigned to this assessment method. A professional discussion is a two-way discussion which involves both the independent assessor and the apprentice actively listening and participating in a formal conversation. The apprentice leads the discussion. It gives the apprentice the opportunity to make detailed and proactive contributions to confirm their competency across the KSBs mapped to this method.

The rationale for this assessment method is:

- The professional discussion was selected as a valid way to draw out KSBs, in particular behaviours. It allows for a range of examples to be brought forward during the two-way conversation.
- It allows the apprentice to be assessed against KSBs that may not naturally occur during other assessment methods.
- It enables the apprentice to demonstrate the application of skills and behaviours as well as knowledge.
- It allows scope for the apprentice to demonstrate the depth and breadth of KSBs, allowing for a distinction marking.

Delivery

The independent assessors will conduct and assess the professional discussion.

Apprentices must be given at least two weeks' notice ahead of the professional discussion. The underpinning portfolio will have been submitted in line with EPAO requirements at the gateway and must evidence all of the KSBs mapped to this assessment method. The independent assessor should have a minimum of five days to review the portfolio and can use the contents of the portfolio to identify discussion topics for the professional discussion.

The professional discussion must last 60 minutes. The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the professional discussion by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer. Further time may be granted for apprentices with appropriate needs, in line with the EPAO's Reasonable Adjustments policy.

During this method, the independent assessor must combine questions from the EPAO's question bank and those generated by themselves.

The professional discussion will be conducted as set out here:

- The professional discussion is a structured two-way conversation between the apprentice and an independent assessor.
- The professional discussion must be appropriately structured to draw out the best of the apprentice's competence and excellence.

Independent assessors must use the question bank as a source for questioning and are expected to use their professional judgement to tailor those questions appropriately. Independent assessors will ask a minimum of six questions and may ask follow-up questions for clarification purposes and to allow the apprentice the opportunity to cover the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

The apprentice and the independent assessor will have access to their own copies of the portfolio throughout the professional discussion and both can refer to it as needed.

Independent assessors must be developed and trained in the conduct of professional discussions, how to identify discussion areas from reviewing portfolio content, how to design their own questions from reviewing portfolio content, and in reaching consistent judgement by their EPAO.

The professional discussion should be graded fail, pass or distinction. The portfolio underpins the professional discussion and will not be assessed or graded. Independent assessors must allocate grades using the grading criteria.

The independent assessor must use the assessment tools and procedures that are set by the EPAO to record the professional discussion.

KSBs met and answers to questions must be recorded in writing by the independent assessor.

The independent assessor will make all grading decisions.

Assessment location

The professional discussion should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence.

The professional discussion can take place in any of the following ways:

- on the employer's premises
- remotely with the agreement of the apprentice and the employer
- at a suitable venue selected by the EPAO (for example, a training provider's premises)
- via video conferencing.

The independent assessor must use the assessment tools and procedures that are set by the EPAO to record the response to questions. Video conferencing can also be used to conduct the professional discussion, but the EPAO must have processes in place to verify the identity of the apprentice and ensure the apprentice is not being aided.

Question and resource development

Independent assessors are responsible for generating suitable questions in line with the EPAO's training and standardisation process. A question bank must be developed by EPAOs. Independent assessors must use the question bank as a source for questioning and are expected to use their professional judgement to tailor those questions appropriately. The question bank must be of sufficient size to prevent predictability and the EPAO must review it regularly (at least once a year) to ensure that it and its content are fit for purpose. The questions relating to the underpinning KSBs must be varied yet allow assessment of the relevant KSBs.

EPAOs must ensure that apprentices have a different set of questions in the case of re-sits/re-takes.

EPAOs will produce the following material to support this assessment method:

- outline of the assessment method's requirements
- marking materials
- independent assessor training materials
- grading guidance
- a question bank
- assessment recording documentation.

End-point assessment method 3: Case study with report and presentation and questioning

This assessment method has two components.

Overview

The assessment method is the completion of a case study and the outcome will be a case study report and presentation. The case study report will be based on a case study that the apprentice has done with an individual child or group of children. The case study report should include an analysis of observations the apprentice has made. The presentation will complement the report by allowing the apprentice the opportunity to provide more information about the report and to answer questions on it.

A case study must be based on a real-life workplace situation which involves the apprentice completing a relevant and defined piece of work. The work must have a real benefit to the children or setting the apprentice is working in.

The in-depth analysis of the observations and resulting case study report and presentation must be undertaken after the apprentice has gone through the gateway.

The case study, report and presentation should be designed to allow the relevant KSBs to be assessed for the EPA. The EPAO must refer to the grading descriptors to ensure that case studies are pitched appropriately.

The observations, analysis and preparation of the case study report and presentation will typically take 12 weeks. The case study report and presentation must be submitted 12 weeks after the gateway.

Sufficient time has been allowed to enable the apprentice to observe children over a period of typically six weeks and to allow for situations where children may leave a setting for any reason.

Parental consent for children participating in the case study must be gained prior to starting the case study assessment method.

The rationale for this assessment method is:

- The case study is designed to demonstrate the application of knowledge, skills and behaviours as they would occur in occupational practice. Observing children over a period of time and producing case studies reflects normal practice in an early years workplace, so this assessment method is appropriate.
- It is a significant and relevant piece of work that thoroughly tests both higher- and lower-order knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- The case study should have a real business benefit and is a cost-effective assessment method.

The case study may be based on the following:

- the learning needs of an individual child or group of children over approximately six weeks and how the practitioner has supported, extended and enhanced their opportunities and experiences in response to these needs.

This should include:

- an element of practice that has been observed and is seen to be affecting children's learning and development
- evidence of how they have used reflective practice to create change and improve practice
- a detailed analysis of the children's learning and development over the period, including observations, assessment and further planning to evidence effective use of a planning cycle
- a reflection of implications for future practice for the child/children, the practitioner and the setting.

The list above is not exhaustive and the EPAO will sign off the case study subject, working title and scope to confirm its suitability at the gateway (this scoping document should be no more than 500 words).

The evidence from the case study report, presentation and questioning will be assessed holistically.

Assessment method 2 component 1: Case study report

Delivery

Apprentices will conduct a case study and produce a case study report, either paper based or electronically.

The case study starts after the apprentice has gone through the gateway. The typical duration of the case study should be 12 weeks. The apprentice will conduct a series of observations of a child or group of children over a period of typically six weeks and produce a case study report.

Before the apprentice begins writing up their case study, the EPAO must sign off the case study title and scope to ensure its suitability and sufficient coverage of the assigned KSBs.

The employer should ensure the apprentice has sufficient time and the necessary resources, within this period, to plan and undertake the work associated with the case study.

While completing the case study, the apprentice should be subject to the workplace's normal supervision arrangements.

The case study will be 4,000 words (+/- 10% at the apprentice's discretion) including tables, graphs, figures, though excluding references and annexes. The apprentice will have 12 weeks to write and submit the case study report and the presentation following the EPAO's approval of the case study's scope and title.

All references to children must be anonymised and children referred to as child A, etc.

In order to ensure the case study is robust and sufficiently covers the KSBs, it should include:

- an executive summary
- an introduction
- the scope of the case study (including key performance indicators)
- objectives
- a case study plan
- how the case study outcomes would be achieved
- comment on the validity of the methods of analysis, data interpretation and data presentation used
- resources required
- proposed implementation plan including communications and stakeholder plans
- advice on whether an alternative approach might be considered
- advice on whether it could be completed in a more cost-effective or time-efficient manner
- recommendations and conclusions.

The case study must include, in addition to the word count, an annex showing how the case study maps to all of the KSBs that are being assessed by this method.

The case study report must be submitted 12 weeks after the gateway.

The apprentice should complete their case study unaided. When the case study report is submitted, the apprentice and their employer must verify that the submitted case study report and the case study are the apprentice's own work.

The independent assessor will review and assess the case study report holistically together with the other components of this assessment method.

The independent assessor will make all grading decisions.

Assessment method 2 component 2: Presentation and questioning

Apprentices will prepare and deliver a presentation that appropriately covers the KSBs assigned to this method of assessment alongside the case study report.

The rationale for this assessment method is:

- This component complements the case study report component as it allows the apprentice to provide more clarity around the report and the independent assessor the opportunity to probe and clarify issues through questioning. It is typical for early years practitioners to present the outcomes of their projects to stakeholders and be challenged on their decisions, so this component gives the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate evidence in this way. It is typical for early years practitioners to present their analysis of case studies to others and be questioned on their findings.

Delivery

The presentation will be based on the case study carried out in component 1 and will summarise and make reference to the case study report.

The presentation content will be completed and submitted 12 weeks after the gateway at the same time as the case study report and will be presented to an independent assessor, either face to face or via online video conferencing. If using an online platform, EPAOs must ensure appropriate measures are in place to prevent misrepresentation and ensure the apprentice is not being aided in some way.

There will be a 40-minute presentation and questioning, split into typically 20 minutes for the presentation and 20 minutes for questioning. This presentation requires the apprentice to illustrate the knowledge, skills and behaviours that are mapped to this assessment method. The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the presentation by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last point.

The independent assessor will ask a minimum of four questions at the end of the presentation.

The purpose of the questions will be:

- for clarification
- to assess the depth and breadth of understanding.

The independent assessor will use the questions from a question bank supplied by the EPAO as a guide to tailor their own questions based on the presentation. They will use them to confirm their understanding of the presentation and how it demonstrates the relevant KSBs.

To deliver the presentation, the apprentice will have access to:

- their case study report and case study
- a copy of their presentation (hard copy or electronic)
- notes.

The presentation will be conducted as follows:

- The presentation will take place on a one-to-one basis between the independent assessor and the apprentice.

- The way in which the content of the presentation is made is not prescriptive.
- A copy of the project report and presentation must be sent to the EPAO 12 weeks after the gateway and the independent assessor must have at least two weeks in advance of the assessment to review the report and presentation and prepare questions. The apprentice must also be given two weeks' notice of the presentation date. The presentation submission must be a hard copy and/or electronic slide deck. When submitted, this must outline details of any visual aids to be used and specify any equipment required. The EPAO must ensure these are available on the day of assessment.
- The presentation must be formal in tone and be well balanced in its use of visuals, text and other supporting elements, e.g. audio, documents, small-scale demonstrations.
- KSBs met and answers to questions must be recorded by the independent assessor.
- The independent assessor will make all grading decisions.

Assessment location

EPAOs must ensure that the presentation and questioning elements are conducted in a suitable controlled environment in any of the following:

- employer's premises
- other suitable venue selected by the EPAO (for example, a training provider's premises).

The venue should be a quiet room, free from distraction and external influence.

Video conferencing can also be used to conduct the presentation, but the EPAO must have processes in place to verify the identity of the apprentice and to ensure the apprentice is not being aided.

Only the independent assessor will observe the presentation. A representative from the EPAO may be present when necessary for moderation purposes.

Question and resource development

Questions must be written by EPAOs and must be relevant to the occupation and employer settings. It is recommended that this be done in consultation with employers of this occupation. EPAOs should maintain the security and confidentiality of their questions when consulting employers. EPAOs must develop test specifications and question banks of sufficient size to prevent predictability and review them regularly (and at least once a year) to ensure they and the questions they contain are fit for purpose. The specifications, including questions relating to underpinning KSBs, must be varied, yet allow assessment of the relevant KSBs.

EPAOs must ensure that apprentices have a different set of questions in the case of re-sits/re-takes.

EPAOs will produce the following material to support this assessment method:

- question bank
- assessment specifications.

Reasonable adjustments

The EPAO must have in place clear and fair arrangements for making reasonable adjustments to the assessment methods for the EPA for this apprenticeship standard. This should include how an apprentice qualifies for reasonable adjustments and what reasonable adjustments will be made.

The adjustments must maintain the validity, reliability and integrity of the assessment methods outlined in this EPA plan.

Overall EPA grading

All assessment methods are weighted equally in their contribution to the overall EPA grade.

Performance in the EPA will determine the apprenticeship grade of fail, pass, merit or distinction.

Independent assessors must individually grade the observation with questions, professional discussion supported by a portfolio of evidence and case study with report and presentation and questioning assessment methods, according to the requirements set out in this plan. EPAOs must combine the individual assessment method grades to determine the overall EPA grade.

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be awarded an overall EPA fail. To gain an overall EPA pass, apprentices must achieve a pass in all the assessment methods.

Grades from individual assessment methods should be combined in the following way to determine the grade of the EPA as a whole:

Assessment 1: Observation with questions	Assessment 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio	Assessment 3: Case study with report and presentation and questioning	End-point assessment grade
Fail	Any grade	Any grade	Fail
Any grade	Fail	Any grade	Fail
Any grade	Any grade	Fail	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Distinction	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Distinction	Merit
Distinction	Pass	Distinction	Merit
Distinction	Distinction	Pass	Merit
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

Any grade = fail, pass or distinction

Re-sits and re-takes

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method/s will be offered the opportunity of a re-sit or a re-take at the discretion of the employer. The apprentice's employer will need to agree that either a re-sit or a re-take is an appropriate course of action.

If the apprentice fails the case study assessment method, the apprentice is not required to undertake a new project. Instead, they should submit an amended project report or presentation.

A re-sit does not require further learning, whereas a re-take does.

Apprentices should have a supportive action plan to prepare for a re-sit or a re-take.

The timescales for a re-sit/re-take are agreed between the employer and the EPAO. A re-sit is typically taken within two months of the EPA outcome notification. The timescale for a re-take is dependent on how much re-training is required and is typically taken within four months of the EPA outcome notification.

All assessment methods must be taken within a six-month period, otherwise the entire EPA will need to be re-sat/re-taken.

Re-sits and re-takes are not offered to apprentices wishing to move from pass to a higher grade.

Where any assessment method has to be re-sat or re-taken, the apprentice will be awarded a maximum EPA grade of pass unless the EPAO determines there are exceptional circumstances.

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Apprentice	<p>As a minimum, apprentices should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in and complete on-programme training to meet the KSBs as outlined in the occupational standard for a minimum of 12 months • undertake at least 20% off-the-job training as arranged by the employer and training provider • understand the purpose and importance of the EPA • undertake the EPA including meeting all gateway requirements.
Employer	<p>As a minimum, employers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select the EPAO and training provider • work with the training provider (where applicable) to support the apprentice in the workplace and to provide the opportunities for the apprentice to develop the KSBs • arrange and support a minimum of 20% off-the-job training to be undertaken by the apprentice • decide when the apprentice is working at or above the level of the occupational standard and so is ready for the EPA • ensure that all supporting evidence required at the gateway is submitted in accordance with this EPA plan • remain independent from the delivery of the EPA • confirm arrangements with the EPAO for the EPA (who, when, where) in a timely manner (including providing access to any employer-specific documentation as required, for example company policies) • ensure that the EPA is scheduled with the EPAO for a date and time which allow appropriate opportunity for the KSBs to be met • ensure the apprentice is well prepared for the EPA • ensure the apprentice is given sufficient time away from regular duties to prepare for and complete all post-gateway elements of the EPA and that any required supervision during this time (as stated within this EPA plan) is in place • where the apprentice is assessed in the workplace, ensure that the apprentice has access to the resources used on a daily basis • pass the certificate to the apprentice • provide the EPAO with any workplace-specific policies, requirements and/or instructions as requested at least two weeks in advance of the apprentice being assessed.

EPAO

As a minimum, EPAOs should:

- conform to the requirements of this EPA plan and deliver its requirements in a timely manner
- conform to the requirements of the Register of End-Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO)
- conform to the requirements of the external quality assurance provider (EQAP) for this apprenticeship standard
- understand the occupational standard
- make all necessary contractual arrangements, including agreeing the price of the EPA
- develop and produce assessment materials including specifications and marking materials (for example, mark schemes, practice materials, training material)
- appoint suitably qualified and competent independent assessors
- appoint administrators (and invigilators where required) to administer the EPA as appropriate
- provide training for independent assessors in terms of good assessment practice, operating the assessment tools and grading
- provide adequate information, advice and guidance documentation to enable apprentices, employers and training providers to prepare for the EPA
- arrange for the EPA to take place, in consultation with the employer
- where the apprentice is not assessed in the workplace, ensure that the apprentice has access to the required resources and liaise with the employer to agree this if necessary
- develop and provide appropriate assessment recording documentation to ensure a clear and auditable process is in place for providing assessment decisions and feedback to all relevant stakeholders
- have no direct connection with the apprentice, their employer or training provider. In all instances, including when the EPAO is the training provider (i.e. HEI), there must be no conflict of interest
- have policies and procedures for internal quality assurance (IQA), and maintain records of regular and robust IQA activity and moderation for external quality assurance (EQA) purposes
- deliver induction training for independent assessors, and for invigilators and markers (where used)
- undertake standardisation activity on this apprenticeship standard for all independent assessors before they conduct an EPA for the first time, if the EPA is updated and periodically as appropriate (a minimum of annually)
- manage invigilation of apprentices in order to maintain security of the assessment in line with the EPAO's malpractice policy
- verify the identity of the apprentice being assessed
- use language in the development and delivery of the EPA that is appropriate to the level of the occupational standard

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide details of the independent assessor's name and contact details to the employer have and apply appropriately an EPA appeals process request certification via the Apprenticeship Service upon successful achievement of the EPA.
Independent assessor	<p>As a minimum, independent assessors should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> have the competence to assess the apprentice at this level and hold any required qualifications and experience in line with the requirements of the independent assessor as detailed in the IQA section of this EPA plan understand the occupational standard and the requirements of this EPA have, maintain and be able to evidence up-to-date knowledge and expertise of the subject matter deliver the end-point assessment in line with the EPA plan comply with the IQA requirements of the EPAO have no direct connection or conflict of interest with the apprentice, their employer or training provider in all instances, including when the EPAO is the training provider (i.e. HEI) attend induction training attend standardisation events when they begin working for the EPAO, before they conduct an EPA for the first time and a minimum of annually on this apprenticeship standard assess each assessment method, as determined by the EPA plan, and without extending the EPA unnecessarily assess against the KSBs assigned to each assessment method, as shown in the mapping of assessment methods and as determined by the EPAO, and without extending the EPA unnecessarily make all grading decisions record and report all assessment outcome decisions, for each apprentice, following instructions and using assessment recording documentation provided by the EPAO, in a timely manner use language in the development and delivery of the EPA that is appropriate to the level of the occupational standard.
Training provider	<p>As a minimum, the training providers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with the employer and support the apprentice during the off-the-job training to provide the opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours as listed in the occupational standard conduct training covering any knowledge, skill or behaviour requirement agreed as part of the Commitment Statement (often known as the Individual Learning Plan) monitor the apprentice's progress during any training provider-led on-programme learning advise the employer, upon request, on the apprentice's readiness for the EPA

- remain independent from delivery of the EPA. Where the training provider is the EPA (i.e. a HEI), there must be procedures in place to mitigate against any conflict of interest

Internal quality assurance (IQA)

Internal quality assurance refers to the strategies, policies and procedures that EPAOs must have in place to ensure valid, consistent and reliable end-point assessment decisions. EPAOs for this EPA must adhere to all requirements within the roles and responsibilities section and:

- have effective and rigorous quality assurance systems and procedures that ensure fair, reliable and consistent assessment across employers, places, times and independent assessors
- appoint independent assessors who hold a relevant Level 6 qualification, hold a qualification that meets the criteria as set by the Department for Education* and have two years' postgraduate relevant experience within early years practice. Their knowledge and skills must be maintained through ongoing CPD through their employment as an independent assessor
- appoint independent assessors who are competent to deliver the end-point assessment
- operate induction training for independent assessors
- provide training for independent assessors in terms of good assessment practice, operating the assessment tools and grading
- undertake standardisation activity on this apprenticeship standard for all independent assessors:
 - before they conduct an EPA for the first time
 - if the EPA is updated
 - periodically as appropriate (a minimum of annually)
- conduct effective moderation of assessment decisions and grades
- conduct appeals where required, according to the EPAO's appeals procedure, reviewing and making final decisions on assessment decisions and grades.

Value for money

Affordability of the EPA will be aided by using at least some of the following practice:

- using an employer's premises
- scheduling the professional discussion and presentation with questioning on the same day.

Professional body recognition

This apprenticeship covers the Department for Education criteria for level 3 early years qualifications (Early Years Educator) and is designed to prepare the successful apprentice to meet the requirements for registration as a Level 5 Early Years Lead Practitioner.

* Department for Education criteria can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-qualifications-finder>

Mapping of knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs)

End-point assessment method 1: Observation with questions

KSBs	Apprenticeship standard outcomes
Knowledge	
K1	Ethical and rights-based approaches to support the child, listening to the child's authentic voice within their social and cultural context enabling advocacy for the child and their individual journey, developing high quality childcare environments that are continuously evaluated.
K4	Current and contemporary schools of thought to enable respectful and nurturing personal care.
K14	Potential effects of transitions and schools of thought on how to successfully support children and their families.
K17	Current and contemporary theoretical perspectives and approaches to leadership and how to support others through leaderful practice.
Skills	
S2	Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
S3	Observe, assess, plan, facilitate and participate in play opportunities which include current curriculum requirements.
S4	Ensure plans fully reflect the individual development needs and circumstances of children and actively participate in the provision of consistent care, responding quickly to the needs of the individual child.
S5	Provide a dynamic, evolving and enabling environment that reflects the current interests, motivations, and play of individual and groups of children.
S6	Encourage all children's participation, ensuring a sensitive, respectful and effective balance within the adult and child dynamic to facilitate play opportunities.
S7	Engage in effective strategies to develop and extend children's learning and thinking, including sustained shared thinking.
S8	Support and promote children's speech, language and communication development and determining and adapting appropriate responses and interventions.
S10	Ensure staff are deployed effectively to suit and enhance the learning environment, prioritising the safety and wellbeing of all children.
S14	Take responsibility for supporting the key person in articulating children's progress and planning future learning possibilities.
S15	Use current and contemporary knowledge, research, theories and approaches to develop, enhance and articulate their own pedagogical approach and practice.
S17	Plan, carry out and guide appropriate physical care routines for individual children.

KSBS	Apprenticeship standard outcomes
S20	Identify and act upon own responsibilities in relation to health and safety, prevention and control of infection, carrying out risk assessments and risk management processes in line with policies and procedures.
S22	Be a leaderful practitioner to support, mentor, coach, train and guide colleagues in a range of settings, providing inspiration and motivation to engage others to develop their practice.
S23	Be confident to identify, action and competently challenge issues and undertake difficult conversations where appropriate.
S24	Advocate for children through their child centred approach, listening to the voice of the child, ensuring children's rights, views and wishes are heard, respected and acted upon at all times. Offer appropriate support and influence decisions in the best interests of the child.
Behaviours	
B2	Leaderful and motivating through consistent modelling of innovative and aspirational practice to other colleagues.
B3	Person centred, friendly and approachable, demonstrating caring, empathetic and respectful qualities.
B4	Authentic and fun, demonstrating playful practice through animated and expressive play and quality interactions with children.
B5	Positive and proactive member of the team, being assertive and exercising diplomacy.
B7	Creative and imaginative, demonstrating curiosity and inquisitiveness in order to be resourceful in all areas, including play and problem solving.
B8	Flexible and adaptable, responding to children's spontaneous activities.

End-point assessment method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

KSJs	Apprenticeship standard outcomes
Knowledge	
K5	Local and national child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures in practice, identifying when a child is at risk, and how to challenge in order to protect them. This includes understanding the role of the designated lead for safeguarding and assimilating findings of serious case reviews.
K6	Theories of self-regulation, resilience and wellbeing and the impact of adverse early childhood experiences.
K12	Current and contemporary approaches in the development of emergent literacy and numeracy skills such as synthetic phonics.
K16	How to promote inclusion, equality and diversity in the sector and why it is essential.
K18	Principles of reflection in influencing early years practice with a commitment to life-long learning including continual professional development and action research.
K19	How to maintain accurate and coherent records and reports for the purpose of sharing information and communicate effectively in both oral and written English.
K20	The current and relevant policy, statutory guidance and legal requirements as appropriate to the sector within local, national, historical and global contexts.
K21	Strategies to effect collaborative approaches to working with parents, professional bodies and multi agencies.
Skills	
S11	Advocate for the child, cultivating professional partnerships with parents/carers and other professionals, presenting their understanding of the child's journey within multidisciplinary teams to holistically support the child's individual needs.
S16	Use reflection to develop themselves both professionally and personally to enhance their practice.
S18	Promote, model and support children and families to develop a healthy approach to making choices relating to personal care including eating, sleeping and physical activity.
S19	Develop, model and implement strategies to support the emotional, psychological, physical and cultural needs of all children within the setting.
S21	Ensure the security and confidentiality of data, records and information in line with current legislation.
S25	Competently action and carry out safeguarding procedures, using their professional curiosity, knowledge, insight and understanding.
S26	Explore and understand, challenge and question, knowing when to act to safeguard and protect children.

KSBs	Apprenticeship standard outcomes
Behaviours	
B1	Ethical, fair, consistent and impartial, valuing equality and diversity at all times within professional boundaries.
B6	Reflective practitioner.
B9	Receptive and open to challenge and constructive criticism

End-point assessment method 3: Case study with report and presentation with questioning

KSBS	Apprenticeship standard outcomes
Knowledge	
K2	How individual children learn and develop from conception to 8 years in relation to typical and atypical neurological, cognitive, social, emotional, behavioural, communication and physical development within the social, cultural context and the impact of this on their future.
K3	Factors that have an impact upon health, wellbeing and early learning that can affect children from conception to 8 years.
K7	Current and emerging theories of attachment and how these relate to promoting relationships effectively such as the key person approach.
K8	The importance of the social cultural context on the learning and development of the child and the influence parents, families and carers have within the home learning environment and the complexities of the family situation.
K9	The importance of play and the theoretical perspectives of play and its impact on a child's learning and development.
K10	How to stimulate children's creativity and curiosity and why and how this enables enquiry based active learning.
K11	A wide range of underpinning theories from physiological, neurological, developmental and education and how these can be incorporated to develop own pedagogy.
K13	How planning cycles inform and improve practice and the principles of individual needs-based assessment for effective early intervention for all children responsive to typical and atypical needs and development.
K15	The importance of enabling environments and the impact of opportunities, resources and relationships on learning and development.
Skills	
S1	Analyse and articulate how all children's individual learning can be affected by their current developmental capabilities, characteristics and individual circumstances taking into account all factors contributing to typical and atypical development.
S9	Support children to engage in a range of learning contexts such as individual, small groups and larger groups as appropriate for their play and support confidence within social experiences.
S12	Demonstrate the importance of the home learning environment, developing an effective and collaborative partnership to enhance opportunities for the child.
S13	Make use of formative and summative assessment, tracking children's progress to plan for future learning possibilities including early interventions based on individual developmental needs.

Grading descriptors

Assessment method 1: Observation with questions

Fail: Does not meet the pass criteria

KSBs	Pass The apprentice must meet all of the pass descriptors below	Distinction The apprentice must meet all of the pass descriptors and all of the distinction descriptors below
The Unique Child		
K1, K4, K14 S2, S4, S17, S23, S24 B3	<p>Advocates to ensure the child's voice is always heard, respected and acted upon in their best interest, demonstrating a clear understanding of an inclusive and ethical approach to practice which is responsive and respectful to the individual child and takes account of the social and cultural context. Demonstrates how they continuously evaluate the quality of the childcare environment. (K1, S2, S24)</p> <p>Demonstrates respectful and nurturing care through current and contemporary schools of thought when planning and undertaking theoretically sound physical routines for individual children. Acts in a way that is person centred, friendly and approachable, demonstrating caring, empathetic and respectful qualities. (K4, S17, B3)</p> <p>Responds to a child's individual needs and circumstances, through planning that reflects the child's need for consistent care as well as being able to adapt to the child's and family's needs during change, including transitions. Responds to a child's needs by being consistent in the planning and provision needed for their individual care and development. (K14, S4)</p>	<p>Demonstrates how their practice challenges both explicit and implicit discrimination, and actively supports children to advocate for themselves, by developing a sense of agency, autonomy, and the skills to impact their world. (K1, S2, S24)</p> <p>Critically evaluate all systems including transitions and develop processes, accounting for all children's and families' needs. (K14, S4)</p>

	<p>Demonstrates communication skills to identify, action and address challenging issues and undertake difficult conversations. (S23)</p>	<p>Evaluates their own approach to challenging issues and how undertaking difficult conversations may impact the outcome. (S23)</p>
Learning and Development		
S3, S5, S6, S7, S8 B4, B7, B8	<p>Applies a responsive approach that is influenced by a range of strategies, to develop and extend children's learning and thinking. (S7)</p> <p>Demonstrates how they observe, assess, plan, facilitate and participate in play opportunities with children that include current requirements of the curriculum. (S3)</p> <p>Co-ordinates an exciting and enabling environment providing a wide range of fun, playful and engaging experiences, whilst promoting creativity, imagination, inquisitiveness and curiosity to enable problem solving, with individual and groups of children. (S5, B7)</p> <p>Demonstrates animated and expressive play through practice that is flexible, responsive, sensitive, and respectful, altering their practice to engage in authentic and quality interactions with the child or children. (S6, B4, B8)</p> <p>Demonstrates how to support and promote all children's speech, language and communication development, including determining and adapting appropriate responses and interventions. (S8)</p>	<p>Applies and justifies their approach to using frameworks, theory and strategies to both ongoing assessment systems and within daily playful interactions with individual children. (S7, S3)</p> <p>Leads and models practice within the environment to continually provoke, excite and extend children's current interests and motivations. (S5, S6)</p> <p>Critically appraises how the support of children's speech, language and communication development is promoting a language and interactive rich environment for all. (S8)</p>

Leaderful Practice			
<p>K17 S10, S14, S15, S20, S22 B2, B5</p>	<p>Demonstrates a leaderful approach within practice influenced by current theoretical perspectives and approaches. Inspires, motivates and coaches colleagues by modelling innovative and aspirational practice to support and engage others to develop their practice. (K17, S22, B2)</p> <p>Deploys staff in a way that matches the learning environment, whilst prioritising the safety and wellbeing of all children throughout. Acts as a positive and proactive member of the team, exercising assertiveness and diplomacy. (B5, S10)</p> <p>Co-ordinates an effective and robust key person system to support children's development. (S14)</p> <p>Demonstrates current and contemporary influences on their pedagogical approach and practice. (S15)</p> <p>Implements health and safety practices in line with own responsibilities and in accordance with policies and procedures including leading, modelling, and evaluating within practice. (S20)</p>	<p>Evaluates the impact of theory surrounding their leadership and the impact their leaderful practice has on the practice of others. (K17, S22)</p> <p>Justifies the reasons for all decision making and its impact on practice and provision when deploying practitioners and resources to enhance the learning environment. Takes responsibility for supporting the key person in planning future learning possibilities whilst modelling innovative and aspirational practice to colleagues. (S10, S14, B2)</p> <p>Demonstrates a clearly defined pedagogical approach, justifying and evaluating the influences on their approach and understanding. (S15)</p> <p>Demonstrates a comprehensive and robust understanding of legislation and guidance regarding health and safety and how this is implemented both within the setting and their own practice, including contributing to the development and dissemination of procedures. (S20)</p>	

Assessment method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

Fail: Does not meet the pass criteria

KSBs	Pass The apprentice must meet all of the pass descriptors below	Distinction The apprentice must meet all of the pass descriptors and all of the distinction descriptors below
Effective Implementation of Legislation and Guidance		
K5, K16, K20, K21 S11, S25, S26 B1	<p>Explains the role of the designated lead for safeguarding and assimilating findings of serious case reviews. Explains current legislation and guidance and how this is implemented through policy and procedure. Outlines their own responsibilities, knowing when to question and challenge others, including their own professional curiosity, regarding safeguarding and protecting children. (K5, S25, S26)</p> <p>Explain and justify the strategies they have used when collaborating with parents and stakeholders. (K21)</p> <p>Understand their responsibilities as an advocate for the child within all collaborative relationships and remaining mindful of the importance of this role particularly when challenging others to work in the best interests of the child. (S11)</p> <p>Explains the importance and impact of an inclusion, equality, and diversity policy and how to embed consistent and impartial strategies, that value equality in leaderful practice, within professional boundaries. (K16, B1)</p>	<p>Evaluates and justifies their rationale for decision making with regards to safeguarding and protecting children, drawing on policies and procedures and their professional insight and curiosity. (K5, S25, S26)</p> <p>Evaluates the impact of strategies to cultivate professional partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals. (K21)</p> <p>Justifies the strategies used when collaborating with parents/families and professional bodies, to advocate for a child's needs. (S11)</p> <p>Critically reflect on opportunities to recognise and challenge discriminatory processes, behaviours and attitudes and how these impact the child and family. (K16, B1)</p>

	<p>Explains the current and relevant policy, statutory guidance and legal requirements appropriate to the sector. (K20)</p>	<p>Analyses the current and relevant policy, statutory guidance and legal requirements appropriate to the sector. (K20)</p>
Effective Promotion of Development, Health and Wellbeing		
K6, K12 S18, S19	<p>Explains theories of self-regulation, resilience and wellbeing and the importance for children's holistic development and life experiences. (K6)</p> <p>Understands and evaluates current and contemporary approaches to emergent literacy and numeracy skills. (K12)</p> <p>Describes how they promote and support children and families to develop a healthy approach to making choices about activities and lifestyle and the benefits it has on the children. (S18)</p> <p>Explains how they develop, model, and implement the range of strategies they utilise to understand the holistic needs of children within the setting. (S19)</p>	<p>Analyses the impact of strategies on children's current and long-term development and health and how the sensitive and responsive support can improve key issues such as mental health, agency, autonomy and engagement with learning. (K6)</p> <p>Evaluates current and contemporary approaches to emergent literacy and numeracy. (K12)</p> <p>Analyses the impact this has on children as they grow and develop and considers the implications for early and later adult life. (S18)</p> <p>Justifies their choice of strategies, reflecting on lessons learnt, and explains how they could have further supported the development of the children. (S19)</p>
Continual Professional Development		
K18 S16 B6, B9	<p>Recognises and analyses the impact of reflection and becoming a reflective practitioner on their continuing professional development and enhancing practice including evidence of reflection on change, research, and theoretical approaches. (K18)</p> <p>Describes opportunities they have taken to reflect on their development both professionally and personally, that provided challenges, and allowed the practitioner to act upon constructive criticism. (S16, B6, B9)</p>	<p>Critically analyses the impact reflective practice has had on their effectiveness as a lead practitioner, and explains a range of reflective experiences using challenge and constructive criticism to enhance their professional competence. (K18, S16, B6, B9)</p>

Administrative		
K19 S21	Explains the current administration and records systems they use and how they share oral and written information in line with the security and confidentiality policy, and current legislation. (K19, S21)	

Assessment method 3: Case study with report and presentation and questioning

Fail: Does not meet the pass criteria

KSBS	Pass	Distinction
Child Development		
K2, K3, K7, K8 S1, S12	<p>Analyses and applies to practice theoretical stances with regards to all areas of development, factors that impact upon health, wellbeing and early learning, and how individual learning can be affected by these factors for children from conception to the age of 8. (K2, K3, S1)</p> <p>Demonstrates how they consider social cultural context, and the influence of parents, families, carers and the family situation on the learning and development of the child. (K8)</p> <p>Demonstrates how they have developed an effective and collaborative partnership with parents and carers of the child/children and how that partnership has enabled a greater understanding of the child/children leading to enhanced opportunities. (S12)</p> <p>Explains theories of attachment that promote effective relationships between staff and children. (K7)</p>	<p>Critically evaluate theoretical approaches to children's development and articulate clearly the decisions made in the complexities of daily developmental practice. (K2, K3, S1)</p> <p>Justifies their strategies for creating collaborative partnerships with parents, families and carers, showing holistic practice. (S12)</p>

Observation and Assessment Planning

K9, K10, K13 S9, S13	<p>Uses theoretical knowledge of the importance of play, demonstrating the support strategies for children to engage in through a variety of learning contexts and supporting confidence with social experiences. (K9, S9)</p> <p>Explains how children's creativity and curiosity is encouraged and how this benefits learning. (K10)</p> <p>Evaluates and shows how planning cycles and formative and summative assessments for the child/children have informed and improved practice in relation to needs-based assessment and early intervention. (K13, S13)</p>	<p>Justifies, through critical analysis of theoretical perspectives, their choice of intervention strategies to create play, learning and development and social experiences for the child/children. (K9, S9)</p> <p>Critically analyses approaches to promoting creativity and curiosity and justifies practice decisions in line with theoretical knowledge. (K10)</p>
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Reflective Practice

K11, K15	<p>Describes appropriate relevant underpinning theories from physiological, neurological, developmental and education and how these can be incorporated to develop own pedagogy. (K11)</p> <p>Explains the importance of enabling environments and the impact of opportunities, resources and relationships on learning and development. (K15)</p>	<p>Evaluates the application of one approach and how it could be developed further to impact on current practice. (K11)</p> <p>Facilitates an enabling environment through application of theoretical knowledge. (K15)</p>
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