

# End-point assessment plan for Countryside Ranger apprenticeship standard

Apprenticeship standard reference number	Apprenticeship standard level	Integrated end-point assessment
ST0926	4	No

## Contents

Introduction and overview .....	2
EPA summary table .....	3
Length of end-point assessment period .....	4
Order of assessment methods .....	4
Gateway .....	4
Assessment methods.....	6
Reasonable adjustments .....	12
Grading.....	13
Re-sits and re-takes.....	19
Roles and responsibilities .....	20
Internal Quality Assurance (IQA).....	22
Affordability.....	22
Professional body recognition .....	22
Mapping of knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) .....	23

## Introduction and overview

This document sets out the requirements for end-point assessment (EPA) for the Countryside Ranger 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 Countryside Ranger apprentices, their employers and training providers.

Full time apprentices will typically spend 26 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.

As a gateway requirement and prior to taking the EPA, apprentices must achieve all approved qualifications mandated in the Countryside Ranger standard.

These are:

- An Ofqual regulated Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work which is a minimum of 1 day course.
- An Ofqual regulated Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Brushcutters and Trimmers and (or) the following, employer approved training course: Lantra Certificate of competence in the use of Brushcutters and Trimmer.
- 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 6 month(s), after the EPA gateway.

The EPA consists of 3 discrete assessment methods.

The individual assessment methods will have the following grades:

### **Assessment method 1:** Multiple Choice Test

- Fail
- Pass
- Distinction

### **Assessment method 2:** Observation

- Fail
- Pass
- Distinction

### **Assessment method 3:** Professional discussion underpinned by portfolio

- Fail
- Pass
- Distinction

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

- Fail
- Pass
- Distinction

## EPA summary table

<b>On-programme</b> (typically 26 months)	<p>Training to develop the occupation standard's knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs).</p> <p>Compilation of portfolio</p>
<b>End-point assessment gateway</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employer is satisfied the apprentice is consistently working at, or above, the level of the occupational standard.</li> </ul> <p>Apprentices must achieve the following approved qualifications mandated in the occupational standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Ofqual regulated Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work which is a minimum of 1 day course</li> <li>• An Ofqual regulated Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Brushcutters and Trimmers and (or) the following, employer approved training course: Lantra Certificate of competence in the use of Brushcutters and Trimmer</li> <li>• English and mathematics Level 2</li> </ul> <p>Apprentices must complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A portfolio</li> </ul>
<b>End-point assessment</b> (which will typically take 6 months)	<p>Assessment method 1: Multiple Choice Test</p> <p>With the following grades:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Fail</li> <li>· Pass</li> <li>· Distinction</li> </ul> <p>Assessment method 2: Observation</p> <p>With the following grades:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Fail</li> <li>· Pass</li> <li>· Distinction</li> </ul> <p>Assessment method 3: Professional discussion underpinned by portfolio</p> <p>With the following grades:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Fail</li> <li>· Pass</li> <li>· Distinction</li> </ul>
<b>Professional recognition</b>	<p>Aligns with recognition by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countryside Management Association</li> <li>• Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management</li> </ul>

## Length of end-point assessment period

The EPA will be completed within an EPA period lasting typically 6 month(s), after the EPA gateway.

Any supporting material which underpins an EPA assessment method should be submitted at the gateway.

## Order of assessment methods

The assessment methods can be delivered in any order. The grading and outcome of an assessment method need not be known before advancing to the next assessment method.

## Gateway

The EPA period should only start once the employer is satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard, that is to say they are deemed to have achieved occupational competence. 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.

Apprentices must achieve the following approved qualifications as mandated in the occupational standard:

- 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 qualifications are an alternative to English qualifications for those for whom this is their primary language.
- An Ofqual regulated Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work which is a minimum of 1 day course
- An Ofqual regulated Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Brushcutters and Trimmers and (or) the following, employer approved training course: Lantra Certificate of competence in the use of Brushcutters and Trimmer

For Multiple Choice Test:

- no specific requirements

For Observation:

- no specific requirements

For Professional discussion underpinned by portfolio, the apprentice will be required to submit:

- A portfolio which will be used as evidence to demonstrate examples of their knowledge, skills and behaviours in the workplace as required during questioning by the Independent

Assessor. The portfolio will be used by the Apprentice to refer to, to exemplify a point. Questioning will be used to authenticate evidence, experience and competence.

- There must be at least one piece of evidence relating to each knowledge, skill and behaviour mapped to AM3. One piece of evidence can be referenced against more than one knowledge, skill or behaviour requirement assigned to the professional discussion. It is expected that there will typically be a minimum of 15 pieces and a maximum of 25 pieces of evidence. Reflective accounts and self-assessments should not be included as evidence.
- The format and structure of the portfolio needs to be agreed between the employer, the apprentice and the EPAO (e.g. hard copy or on-line). However, the content must be sufficient to evidence the apprentice can apply the knowledge, skills and behaviours required as mapped to the professional discussion (AM3).
- The portfolio should cover the KSBs for the assessment method it is underpinning and of activities that have been completed and referenced against the KSBs, supported by appropriate evidence. The apprentice's Manager/Mentor will typically support the development of the portfolio in accordance with company policy and procedures, although the EPAO will provide further guidance on the content. The Portfolio Evidence table below details a list of recommended types of evidence that can be included in the portfolio.

<b>Recommended Typical Evidence Types</b>
Short or medium term work programmes, site, habitat action or project plans that the Apprentice have produced
Witness testimony from a relevant professional evidencing the Apprentice can correctly identify a complex range of native and invasive species and habitats for their geographical area
Photographs of a range of native and invasive species and habitats in their local area
Habitat or site management plans relevant to the Apprentices site which they have used for work they have organised, planned and carried out
Environmental information or interpretation planned, designed and evaluated by the Apprentice
Habitat, species, visitor and countryside assets/infrastructure surveys and resulting reports completed by Apprentice
Records associated with tools and machinery, such as machinery maintenance completed by the Apprentice
Documentation associated with a small-scale project which has been planned, organised, project managed and delivered by the Apprentice. This could include examples of financial and resource management, risk assessment, stakeholder consultation and reporting and evaluation
Associated records of major or minor incident or emergency dealt with by the apprentice
Examples of stakeholder and community engagement
Work instructions, safety documentation, company policies and procedures as appropriate to the activities
Performance reviews and diary of CPD
Photographic evidence of work products/ activities completed by the Apprentice

# Assessment methods

**Assessment method 1: Multiple Choice Test** (This assessment method has 1 component.)

## Assessment method 1 component 1: Multiple Choice Test

### Overview

The rationale for this assessment method is:

The Multiple Choice Test will focus on the knowledge mapped to this assessment method. The Multiple Choice Test assessment method can be relatively easy to deliver and mark, providing the independent assessor with a quantitative score. This enables benchmarking for consistency across the standard and appropriate to ensure that this knowledge is embedded.

### Test Format

The test can be:

- Computer based
- Paper based

It will consist of 50 questions.

These questions will consist of:

- Closed response questions (i.e. multiple-choice questions).

For each question there will be four responses to choose from and there will be one correct answer per question, each correct answer is worth one mark.

### Test administration

Apprentices must have 90 minutes to complete the test.

The test is closed book which means that the apprentice cannot refer to reference books or materials.

Apprentices must take the test in a suitably controlled environment that is a quiet space, free of distractions and influence, in the presence of an invigilator. The invigilator may be the independent assessor or specialised (proctor) software, if the test can be taken on-line or another external person employed by the EPAO. The EPAO is required to have an invigilation policy that will set out how the test is to be carried out. This will include specifying the most appropriate ratio of apprentices to invigilators to best take into account the setting and security required in administering the test.

The EPAO is responsible for ensuring the security of testing they administer to ensure the test remains valid and reliable (this includes any arrangements made using online tools). The EPAO is responsible for verifying the validity of the identity of the person taking the test.

The EPAO must verify the suitability of the venue for taking the test and the identity of the person taking the test.

### Marking

Tests must be marked by independent assessors or markers employed by the EPAO following a marking guide produced by the EPAO. Alternatively, marking by computer is permissible where questions types allow this, to improve marking reliability.

A correct response will be assigned one mark.

Any incorrect or missing answers must be assigned zero marks.

Results should be made available to the Apprentice within two weeks of taking the test.

The Multiple Choice Test will result in a fail, pass or distinction, marked by the EPAO.

### **Question and resources 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 also maintain the security and confidentiality of their questions when consulting employers. EPAOs must develop '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.

### **Required supporting material**

As a minimum EPAOs will produce the following material to support this method:

- A test specification
- Sample test and mark scheme
- Live test and mark scheme
- Analysis reports which show areas of weakness for completed tests/exams and an invigilation policy.
- Question banks

## Assessment method 2: Observation (This assessment method has 1 component.)

### Assessment method 2 component 1: Observation

#### Overview

Apprentices must be observed by an independent Assessor completing work in their normal workplace, in which they will demonstrate the KSBs assigned to this assessment method. The EPAO will arrange for the observation to take place, in consultation with the employer.

One independent assessor may observe up to a maximum of 1 apprentice at any one time, to allow for quality and rigour.

The rationale for this assessment method is:

The duties of a Countryside Ranger are practical and hands on in nature and best assessed through observation. The observation will provide apprentices the opportunity to demonstrate that they can apply the knowledge, skills and behaviours safely and effectively in their work environment. It will utilise the apprentice's skills and link their theoretical knowledge to practical working. It would be difficult to replicate the working environment in a valid way and employers would doubt the occupational competence of an individual not assessed in this way.

#### Delivery

The observation should take 5 hours and 40 minutes. This includes a total of 40 minutes for questioning (20 minutes of questioning at the end of each task), leaving 300 minutes for the observation of the two tasks.

The timings of the tasks are allocated below:

- Task One – 150 minutes for the observation plus 20 minutes at the end for questioning
- Task Two – 150 minutes for the observation plus 20 minutes at the end for questioning

The observation may be split into discrete sections held over a maximum of 2 working day(s). The length of a working day is typically considered to be 7.5 hours. The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the observation by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete a task at the end of this component of the EPA. The observations can be in any order and there can be breaks between them in order to travel to other sites to carry out the work and observation.

In advance of the observation, apprentices must be provided with information on the format of the observation, including timescales.

Apprentices must be provided with both a written and verbal overview of the nature of the tasks and site(s) to be used for their observation at least (and no more than) 3 working days before the observation is due to take place. The purpose of this is to allow the apprentice time to undertake a pre work review of the site(s) to determine the conditions, equipment, volunteer and tool requirements for their observation. This is intended to support manageability and reduce any potential unnecessary travel time required on the day of their observation (e.g. if the observation site is located in a different place to the equipment/tools storage area). However, the apprentice is not permitted to undertake preparation work of any kind at any of the site(s) until the set date and time of the formal observation. EPAOs must ensure that there are sufficient processes in place to ensure this.

The following activities **MUST** be observed during the observation:

Task One:

Organise, supervise, work alongside and motivate a minimum of two volunteers who they regularly work with, or a paid member of their team to carry out practical habitat management techniques to



manage habitats and species. This includes selecting, using and instructing them in a range of resources, tools, equipment and machinery and effectively delegating tasks. This must include assessing, maintaining and evaluating a safe working environment and complying with and ensuring the volunteers or member of staff comply with any legal requirements, industry regulations and organisational policies and procedures including health and safety, environmental, sustainability and waste management practices.

#### Task Two:

Organise, supervise, work alongside and motivate a minimum of two volunteers who they regularly work with or a paid member of their team to construct or maintain a boundary, public access route or an asset or piece of countryside infrastructure. This includes selecting, using and instructing them in the use of resources, tools, equipment and machinery and effectively delegating tasks. This must include assessing, maintaining and evaluating a safe working environment and complying with, and ensuring the volunteers or member of staff comply with any legal requirements, industry regulations and organisational policies and procedures including health and safety, environmental, sustainability and waste management practices.

The observation should be conducted in the following way, to take account of the occupational context in which the apprentice operates:

The independent assessor must be unobtrusive whilst conducting the observation. Questions must be asked after each task is complete. The independent assessor must ask a minimum of 5 questions and up to 10 questions maximum per task from the question bank. They may ask follow up questions where clarification is required. Activities not observed by the independent assessor during the observation can instead be covered by questioning after the observation, but all questions must be asked within a time period not exceeding 20 minutes per task.

KSBs observed and questions and answers, must be documented by the independent assessor.

The independent assessor will make all grading decisions.

### Other relevant information

There may be breaks during the observation to allow the apprentice to move from one location to another as required.

### Support material

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

- Outline of the assessment method's requirements
- Marking materials
- Standard template upon which to record the assessment outcome
- Open question banks to assess related underpinning knowledge, skills and behaviours

### Venue

The observation can take place in:

- Employer's premises
- Workplace other than the employer's own premises (e.g. premises of a client)

### Question development

EPAOs will create open questions to assess related underpinning KSBs. They must develop '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.

Assessment method 3: Professional discussion underpinned by portfolio (This assessment method has 1 component.)

## Assessment method 3 component 1: Professional discussion underpinned by portfolio

### 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. Questioning should assess the KSBs assigned to this assessment method and the apprentice may use their portfolio to support their responses.

The rationale for this assessment method is:

The professional discussion will allow some KSBs which may not naturally occur during an observation or take too long to observe to be assessed. The apprentice can refer to their portfolio to assist with examples to use for discussion. Some aspects of the apprenticeship can only be determined through this method, for example most of the behaviours required to be successful.

### Delivery

The independent assessors will conduct and assess the professional discussion.

The professional discussion must last for 90 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.

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 will be a structured discussion between the apprentice and independent assessor. It will also cover the apprentice's achievements, the standard of their work and their approach. The portfolio of evidence will be used to inform questioning during the professional discussion. The professional discussion will be used to assess the Countryside Ranger on:

- Knowledge, skills and behaviours, mapped in the mapping table, using the apprentice's portfolio of evidence to underpin the discussion (the portfolio is not assessed).

The professional discussion will provide the opportunity for the apprentice to synoptically demonstrate knowledge, skills and behaviours.

The portfolio must be reviewed by the independent assessor; therefore, it must be submitted at Gateway stage. The portfolio will be used as evidence to demonstrate examples of their knowledge, skills and behaviours in the workplace as required during questioning by the independent assessor. The portfolio will be used by the apprentice to refer to in order to exemplify a point. Questioning will be used to authenticate evidence, experience and competence.

The independent assessor will use standardised competency-based questions from an agreed set of questions developed by the EPAO. Questions will be reviewed annually and moderated by the EPAO. The EPAO will also provide a template to record Apprentice responses.

There will be a minimum of 14 competency-based questions asked during the professional discussion. These will be based on the following 9 themes for discussion:

1. Work programming
2. Small scale project management
3. Local ecology
4. Dealing with incidents or emergencies
5. Surveys and monitoring
6. Working collaboratively with stakeholders
7. Communication
8. Environmental interpretation and information
9. Personal development

Any number of follow-up questions may be used in addition to the competency-based questions during the 90 minute assessment duration to probe further into the detail to satisfy the independent assessor of the apprentice's depth of knowledge, skills and behaviours. The professional discussion will be conducted under controlled conditions. The apprentice's responses will be documented by the independent assessor.

A structured brief will be provided by the EPAO in the Assessment Tools, to be used by the independent assessor in the professional discussion. This will ensure that a consistent approach is taken.

Video conferencing can 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 in some way.

Apprentices are expected to use examples from their portfolio to refer to in order to exemplify a point, which is the basis for the discussion.

Questioning from the independent assessor is permitted with a minimum of 9 taken from the EPAO and 5 generated by the independent assessor, meaning that there should be a minimum total of 14 questions.

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

The independent assessor will make all grading decisions.

## Venue

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:

- employer's premises or via an online platform such as skype
- a suitable venue selected by the EPAO (for example a training provider's premises)

## Other relevant information

A structured test specification and question bank must be developed by EPAOs. The 'question bank' must be of sufficient size to prevent predictability and the EPAO must reviewed regularly (at least once a year) to ensure that it, and its content, are fit for purpose. The specifications, including 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.

Independent assessors must be developed and trained by the EPAO in the conduct of professional discussion and reaching consistent judgement.

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

- Outline of the assessment method's requirements
- Marking materials
- Structured brief
- Agreed set of standardised competency based questions
- A template to record apprentices responses
- A structured test specification and question bank

## Reasonable adjustments

The EPAO must have in place clear and fair arrangements for making reasonable adjustments for this apprenticeship standard. This should include how an apprentice qualifies for reasonable adjustment and what reasonable adjustments will be made. The adjustments must maintain the validity, reliability and integrity of the assessment methods outlined in this assessment plan.

## Weighting of assessment methods

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

## Grading

### Assessment method 1: Multiple Choice Test

KSBs	Fail	Pass	Distinction
<b>K1 K3 K6 K10 K13 K16 K17 K18 K19</b>	0-30 marks	31-40 marks	41-50 marks

### Assessment method 2: Observation

The observation is broken down into 2 tasks but is graded holistically, meaning the apprentice must demonstrate all the pass criteria in order to pass overall and all the distinction criteria in order to gain a distinction overall.

Task One			
KSBs	Fail	Pass	Distinction
<b>K5  S5</b>	Does not meet the pass criteria	<p>Describes and explains the main practical land and habitat management techniques used for a range of habitats and how to balance conflicting needs (K5)</p> <p>Demonstrates the management of habitats and species using a variety of specialist techniques and resources (S5)</p>	<p>In addition to pass criteria;</p> <p>Critically compares the choice of practical and land management techniques with others that could have been selected (K5)</p> <p>Conducts the management of a habitat which considers the local area, level of protection and conflicting needs (S5)</p>

Task Two			
KSBs	Fail	Pass	Distinction
<b>K11  S12</b>	Does not meet the pass criteria	<p>Describes and explains the legislation, principles and best practice for the design, construction and management of assets and infrastructure, boundaries and public access routes (K11)</p> <p>Demonstrates the construction, maintenance and management of boundaries, public access routes, infrastructure and assets using specialist techniques, tools, equipment and resources (S12)</p>	<p>In addition to pass criteria;</p> <p>Construction, maintenance or management methods take into account existing land management practices, terrain and regional character (S12)</p>

To be observed during both tasks			
KSBs	Fail	Pass	Distinction
<b>K12</b>  <b>S1, S2, S3, S7, S15, S16, S19</b>  <b>B5, B8</b>	Does not meet the pass criteria	<p>Describes and explains the application of tools, machinery and equipment for countryside based work (K12)</p> <p>Selects and uses several types of tools, equipment and machinery (S15)</p> <p>Demonstrates safe working practices and assumes responsibility for the health and safety of co-workers in the organisation (S1, B8)</p> <p>Complies with legal requirements, industry regulations and standards, organisations policies, processes and procedures and promotes to others (S2)</p> <p>Carries out work in a manner which minimises environmental damage, is environmentally sustainable and disposes of waste safely and correctly (S3)</p> <p>Delegates tasks to volunteers / team members (S7)</p> <p>Instructs on the correct and safe use of the tools and equipment and ensures operator competence (S16)</p> <p>Demonstrates the supervision of volunteers in the organization (S19)</p> <p>Acts in accordance with the organisational policies, procedures, values and behaviours and in a polite, professional and inclusive manner (B5)</p>	

To be observed during either Task One or Two			
KSBs	Fail	Pass	Distinction
<b>K2,</b> <b>K12,</b> <b>K15</b>  <b>S1, S9,</b> <b>S17,</b> <b>S19,</b> <b>S25</b>  <b>B1, B2,</b> <b>B4</b>	Does not meet the pass criteria	<p>Describes current UK environmental legislation, land and wildlife designations, permissions and licences (K2)</p> <p>Describes and explains the recruitment, training, supervision and role of volunteers in the organisation (K15)</p> <p>Demonstrates workload management and problem solving. Selects and applies resources, equipment or methods in response to changing circumstances (S9)</p> <p>Completes records relating to tools and machinery (S17)</p> <p>Demonstrates decisions made using organisational principles, other perspectives and the bigger picture which focus on solutions (S25, B4)</p> <p>Demonstrates a self-disciplined, self-motivated and proactive approach to work (B1)</p> <p>Assumes the responsibility for ensuring tasks are completed on time and within the agreed budget (B2)</p>	<p>In addition to pass criteria;</p> <p>Critically evaluates current UK environmental legislation (K2)</p> <p>Plans for dynamic risk assessment (S1)</p> <p>Evaluates a habitat, access or asset management work and selects the correct tools, machinery and equipment for work planned (K12)</p> <p>Evaluates the role of volunteers in the organisation (K15)</p> <p>Plans for the resolution of problems created by volunteers as a result of non-compliance with organisational policy and/or procedures (S19)</p>

## Assessment method 3: Professional discussion underpinned by portfolio

KSBs	Fail	Pass	Distinction
<p><b>K4, K7, K8, K9, K14, K20, K21, K22</b></p> <p><b>S4, S6, S8, S10, S11, S13, S14, S18, S20, S21, S22, S23, S24</b></p> <p><b>B3, B6, B7, B9, B10, B11, B12</b></p>	Does not meet the pass criteria	<p>1. <u>Work programming</u></p> <p>2. <u>Small scale project management</u></p> <p>Describes and explains the structure, content, purpose and uses of work programmes and site, habitat and project management plans (K7)</p> <p>Demonstrates the production of plans based on organisational requirements and ecological principles which adhere to current legislation (S6, S11)</p> <p>Describes the principles of financial management and coordinates and delivers tasks and projects on time, to a high standard, using allocated resources and within planned budget (K8, S8)</p> <p>Explains methods for managing teams, allocating work and delegation (K9)</p> <p>Demonstrates the organisation, work programming and prioritisation and review of environmental and land management activities including a small scale project and a range of habitat management tasks and boundary, public access or asset and infrastructure works (S4, S11)</p> <p>Demonstrates communication with the correct authorities and seeking advice on land, nature conservation and asset management (S10)</p> <p>Demonstrates communication and engagement with stakeholders, including the public, landowners, tenants, contractors and co-workers (S18)</p>	<p>In addition to pass criteria</p> <p>Evaluates completed work and shares review with co-workers to be used in future projects or work (S4, B9)</p> <p>Selects cost effective, safer ways of working or more sustainable ways of working (S8)</p> <p>Considers the conflicts existing between species within a specified geographical area (S13)</p> <p>Suggests methods to deal with issues arising from managing teams, allocating work or delegation (K9)</p>



		<p>3. <u>Local ecology</u></p> <p>Describes the main ecosystems and habitats in the UK and key indicator species for 3 habitats in the geographical area (K4)</p> <p>Identifies the range of species from a range of taxa including where present invasive or non-native species in the geographical area. Gives a reasoned argument as to the importance of the species and habitats to the site (S13)</p> <p>4. <u>Dealing with incidents or emergencies</u></p> <p>Demonstrates ability to deal with an emergency or incident as appropriate and act within their limits of responsibility, authority and level of training (S21)</p> <p>5. <u>Surveys and monitoring</u></p> <p>Describes, explains and demonstrates how they have carried out habitat, species and countryside asset surveys and analyses, communicates and evaluates the results (K14, S14)</p> <p>6. <u>Working collaboratively</u></p> <p>Assumes responsibility for identifying and addressing the needs of customers while remaining focused on objectives and builds collaborative working relationships (B7)</p> <p>Awareness of own knowledge and limits of responsibility and seeks advice and support (B10)</p> <p>Establishes and promotes respect for the work of the organisation from customers, stakeholders and co-workers (B11)</p> <p>7. <u>Communication</u></p> <p>Demonstrates the presentation of information to customers, stakeholders and the public. (S20, S23)</p>	
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		<p>Communicates effectively in a range of situations and with a variety of methods by adapting communication style and medium to suit the audience (B6)</p> <p>8. <u>Environmental interpretation and information</u></p> <p>Explains the differences between environmental interpretation and information provision and outlines methods of delivery, intended uses and benefits (K20)</p> <p>Outlines and demonstrates design, production and evaluates environmental interpretation and information to an audience (K21, S22)</p> <p>9. <u>Personal development</u></p> <p>Demonstrates the use of objectives and feedback to improve performance (S24)</p> <p>Describes and explains the approach and value of performance management to the organisation and the individual and acts independently to improve their own performance (K22, B3, B9)</p> <p>Takes a positive approach to working outside in differing weather conditions (B12)</p>	
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## Overall EPA grading

All EPA methods must be passed for the EPA to be passed overall.

Apprentices must gain a pass in one method plus a pass or higher in other methods to gain a pass. Apprentices must gain a distinction in all three assessment methods to gain a distinction.

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

Assessment method 1 – Multiple Choice Test	Assessment method 2 - Observation	Assessment method 3 – Professional Discussion Underpinned by Portfolio	Overall grading
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	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Distinction	Pass
Distinction	Distinction	Pass	Pass
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

## Re-sits and re-takes

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be offered the opportunity to take a re-sit or a re-take. A re-sit does not require further learning, whereas a re-take does.

Apprentices should have a supportive action plan to prepare for the re-sit or a re-take. The apprentice's employer will need to agree that either a re-sit or re-take is an appropriate course of action.

An apprentice who fails an assessment method, and therefore the EPA in the first instance, will be required to re-sit or re-take any failed assessment methods only. If the apprentice fails the observation assessment method then the apprentice must re-sit or re-take both tasks and these must be new tasks e.g. different boundary, asset or piece of infrastructure or location for habitat management works.

Any assessment method re-sit or re-take must be taken during the maximum EPA period, otherwise the entire EPA must be taken again, unless in the opinion of the EPAO exceptional circumstances apply outside the control of the apprentice or their employer.

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

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 requiring a re-sit or re-take.

## Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Apprentice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participate in development opportunities to improve their knowledge skills and behaviours as outlined in the standard</li> <li>• meet all gateway requirements when advised by the employer</li> <li>• understand the purpose and importance of EPA and undertake EPA</li> </ul>
Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support the apprentice to achieve the KSBs outlined in the standard to their best ability</li> <li>• determines when the apprentice is working at or above the level outlined in the standard and is ready for EPA</li> <li>• select the EPAO</li> <li>• confirm all EPA gateway requirements have been met</li> <li>• confirm arrangements with EPAO for the EPA (who, when, where) in a timely manner</li> <li>• ensure apprentice is well prepared for the EPA</li> <li>• should not be involved in the delivery of the EPA</li> </ul>
EPAO	<p>As a minimum EPAOs should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand the occupational role</li> <li>• appoint administrators/invigilators and markers to administer/invigilate and mark the EPA</li> <li>• provide training and CPD to the independent assessors they employ to undertake the EPA</li> <li>• provide adequate information, advice and guidance documentation to enable apprentices, employers and providers to prepare for the EPA</li> <li>• deliver the end-point assessment outlined in this EPA plan in a timely manner</li> <li>• prepare and provide all required material and resources required for delivery of the EPA in-line with best practices</li> <li>• use appropriate assessment recording documentation to ensure a clear and auditable mechanism for providing assessment decision feedback to the apprentice</li> <li>• have no direct connection with the apprentice, their employer or training provider i.e. there must be no conflict of interest</li> <li>• maintain robust internal quality assurance (IQA) procedures and processes, and conducts these on a regular basis</li> <li>• conform to the requirements of the nominated external quality assurance body</li> <li>• organise standardisation events and activities in accordance with this plan's IQA section</li> <li>• organise and conduct moderation of independent assessors' marking in accordance with this plan</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have, and operate, an appeals process</li> <li>• arrange for certification with the relevant training provider</li> </ul>
Independent assessor	<p>As a minimum an independent assessor should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand the occupational standard and end-point assessment plan</li> <li>• deliver the end-point assessment in-line with the EPA plan</li> <li>• comply to the IQA requirements of the EPAO</li> <li>• be independent of the apprentice, their employer and training provider(s) i.e. there must be no conflict of interest</li> <li>• satisfy the criteria outlined in this EPA plan</li> <li>• hold or be working towards an independent assessor qualification e.g. A1 and have had training from their EPAO in terms of good assessment practice, operating the assessment tools and grading</li> <li>• have the capability to assess the apprentice at this level</li> <li>• attend the required number of EPAOs standardisation and training events per year (as defined in the IQA section)</li> </ul>
Training provider	<p>As a minimum the training provider should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work with the employer to ensure that the apprentice is given the opportunities to develop the KSBs outlined in the standard and monitor their progress during the on-programme period</li> <li>• advise the employer, upon request, on the apprentice's readiness for EPA prior to the gateway</li> <li>• plays no part in the EPA itself</li> </ul>
Either a volunteer or colleague assisting with Task 1 or 2 in the Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• act normally and naturally and participate and follow all the instructions and guidance given by the apprentice during either task 1 or task 2 in the observation</li> </ul>

## Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Internal quality assurance refers to the requirements that EPA organisations must have in place to ensure consistent (reliable) and accurate (valid) assessment decisions. EPA organisations for this EPA must:

- Appoint independent assessors who have knowledge of the following occupational areas: Relevant knowledge, experience and skills of countryside management work which is demonstrated by their employment history and relevant to the duties, KSB's and work activities demonstrated within the Countryside Ranger Apprenticeship Specification. This should be in sufficient depth to be effective and reliable when judging an apprentice's competence during all aspects of the end point assessment.
- Appoint independent assessors who have recent relevant experience of the occupation/sector at least the same level as the apprentice gained in the last three years or significant experience of the occupation/sector.
- Appoint independent assessors who are competent to deliver the end-point assessment and who meet the following minimum requirements:
  - Hold or be working towards a relevant assessment qualification
- Provide training for independent assessors in terms of good assessment practice, operating the assessment tools and grading
- Have robust quality assurance systems and procedures that support fair, reliable and consistent assessment across the organisation and over time
- Operate induction training and standardisation events for independent assessors when they begin working for the EPAO on this standard and before they deliver an updated assessment method for the first time
- Ensure independent assessors attend standardisation events on an ongoing basis and at least once per year

## Affordability

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

- online assessment
- using an employer's premises

## Professional body recognition

This apprenticeship is designed to prepare successful apprentices to meet the requirements for registration at a 'Capable' level with Countryside Management Association and / or Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

# Mapping of knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs)

## Assessment method 1: Multiple Choice Test

Knowledge
<b>K1</b> Current legislation including health and safety, codes of practice, and work place policies and procedures relevant to their role and duties for example Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations, General Data Protection Regulations, safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, waste management, risk management and assessment, record keeping and compliance.
<b>K3</b> Current legislation, planning regulation and legal processes and procedures in relation to managing public rights of way and other public access such as Highways Act, Countryside and Rights of Way Act and Definitive Maps and Statements.
<b>K6</b> Main uses of land in UK such as agriculture, forestry, housing, recreation and their interactions.
<b>K10</b> The types of UK funding streams relevant to organisational objectives. For example: Countryside Stewardship, farming subsidies, developer contributions and lottery funding.
<b>K13</b> Survey techniques and how to plan surveys, appropriateness of the surveys and techniques and technology used in their implementation for habitats and species, visitors or volunteers, and assets.
<b>K16</b> Communication methods used to influence and build effective relationships with colleagues, team members, volunteers, contractors, local community groups such as Friends of groups, interest groups such as British Horse Society, educational and corporate groups, neighbouring landowners, tenants and stakeholders and the public and how to promote the work of their organisation in a positive light.
<b>K17</b> Customer service principles including types and needs of different customers (internal and external to the organisation), their expectations and managing conflict.
<b>K18</b> The different types of minor and major emergencies and incidents in the sector such as landslips, flooding, snow and ice, fires, pollution, first aid emergencies or theft of equipment. How to manage them including safe working practices, limits of responsibility, organisational and legislative processes and the response/actions needed and how they impact upon the environment, natural habitats, assets and people.
<b>K19</b> Notifiable or other pests and diseases relevant to their role which affect plant, animal and human health and reporting procedures and biosecurity measures associated with them e.g. Phytophthora and Ash Dieback.

## Assessment method 2: Observation

Knowledge
<b>K2</b> Key UK environmental legislation, land and wildlife designations, permissions and licences relevant to the management of habitats and species and other countryside management works e.g. Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act and Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act.
<b>K5</b> Practical and technical land and habitat management techniques such as felling, pruning, planting, cutting, mowing, coppicing, thinning, spraying and uprooting, livestock grazing and controlling vegetation and invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed and best practice for a range of habitats and species and how to balance conflicting needs.
<b>K11</b> Legislation, principles and best practice for the design, construction and management of assets and infrastructure such as steps, ramps, gates, stiles, bridges and drainage; boundaries such as fences, walls and hedges; and public access routes such as public rights of way and permissive access including a technical understanding of their type, usage, cost, lifespan, historic value and relationship with landscape, terrain and regional character.
<b>K12</b> Applications for different machinery, tools and equipment for a wide variety of habitat, access or asset management work, and their use e.g. 4WD vehicles, winches and other powered and non-powered tools such as chainsaws, mobile devices and other technology such as GPS and tablets.
<b>K15</b> How to recruit, train, supervise, motivate and manage volunteers and staff to maintain good team relations and provide a positive volunteer experience.
Skills
<b>S1</b> Assess, prioritise, maintain and evaluate a safe working environment following relevant legislation, work place policies and procedures including identifying hazards, assessing risk and minimising risk and implementing and complying with control measures.
<b>S2</b> Comply with and ensure others comply with legal requirements, industry regulations and standards and organisational policies, processes, procedures and professional codes and ethics.
<b>S3</b> Comply with environmental best practices and procedures and follow sustainability and waste management practices.
<b>S5</b> Manage a range of habitats and species using a variety of specialist techniques and resources which takes account of the local area, habitat, species of flora and fauna and levels of associated protection such as felling, pruning, planting, cutting, mowing, coppicing, thinning, spraying and uprooting, livestock grazing and controlling vegetation and invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed.
<b>S7</b> Delegate tasks to volunteers / team members.
<b>S9</b> Manage workload, taking into account competing and changes in priorities and demonstrate problem solving ability.
<b>S12</b> Construct, maintain and manage a range of boundaries, public access routes, infrastructure and assets using a variety of specialist techniques, tools, equipment and resources.
<b>S15</b> Select and use a range of work-based tools, machinery and equipment e.g. 4WD vehicles, trailers, winches and other powered and non-powered tools such as chainsaws, brushcutters, hedge trimmer and hand tools, mobile devices and other technology such as GPS, tablets and cameras



<b>S16</b> Instruct others how to use tools and machinery correctly and safely and ensure operator competence.
<b>S17</b> Complete records associated with tools and machinery e.g. maintenance, use, vibration and noise levels etc.
<b>S19</b> Supervise, motivate and work alongside others while undertaking habitat management, construction and maintenance of boundaries, access routes and associated countryside assets.
<b>S25</b> Make decisions based on the organisations principles and relevant and accurate information.
<b>Behaviours</b>
<b>B1</b> Has a self-disciplined, self-motivated, and proactive approach to work.
<b>B2</b> Is conscious of time constraints and takes personal responsibility for delivering their work to time and budget.
<b>B4</b> Considers other perspectives, options and the bigger picture to make a decision and focuses on solutions rather than problems.
<b>B5</b> Acts in accordance with the organisational policies, procedures, values and behaviours and in a polite, professional and inclusive manner.
<b>B8</b> Proactively promotes and champions health, safety and wellbeing within their organisation.

## Assessment method 3: Professional discussion underpinned by portfolio

Knowledge
<b>K4</b> Ecology including main UK ecosystems, habitats and indicator species and identification and requirements of a complex range of native and invasive species and the relationship between them and the environment in relation to their local area.
<b>K7</b> The structure, content, purpose and uses of work programmes, site, habitat and project plans to assist with the day to day and technical management of the delegated countryside sites, areas or projects. For example, habitat action plans, biodiversity action plans.
<b>K8</b> Principles of financial management including how to set up and manage a budget and the project management life cycle from business case to implementation including risk assessment, planning, financial management, resources, reporting and evaluation techniques.
<b>K9</b> Methods for managing teams, allocating work and delegation and how their team's work links to the organisational objectives, lines of responsibility and who to speak to if they need to escalate issues.
<b>K14</b> How to examine and interpret survey data with particular attention to how this data is used internally such as Ecologists, externally, locally and nationally to assess current populations of flora and fauna and current and future habitat management and visitor management.
<b>K20</b> The differences between environmental interpretation and information provision and methods of delivery, intended uses and benefits e.g. social media, public events, educational visits and Forest School, interactive displays, guided walks, leaflets and trails.
<b>K21</b> How to plan, research, design, analyse and evaluate environmental interpretation and information provision including selecting methods, style and structure best suited to the needs of the audience, location and focus of content.
<b>K22</b> The importance of and organisational approaches to performance management and supervisory practices to improve performance.
Skills
<b>S4</b> Organise and prioritise environmental and land management work activities such as habitat management, work associated with public access or assets such as bridges and scheduled monuments. This includes assessing tasks, identifying and allocating the required resources to deliver the task effectively and review completed work.
<b>S6</b> Produce short or medium term work, site, habitat action or small scale project plans for the delegated areas of responsibility for and in line with organisations requirement and based on sound knowledge of ecological principles and in line with relevant legislation.
<b>S8</b> Deliver work and projects on time, to a high standard, using allocated resources, to planned budget, method and quality and represent value for money e.g. environmental and land management, public engagement, interpretation or survey work.
<b>S10</b> Communicate with the correct authorities and seek advice on land, nature conservation and asset management, such as Historic England for Scheduled Monuments or ecologists.
<b>S11</b> Organise and prioritise asset and infrastructure construction, maintenance and management works including any surveys and alternative plans.
<b>S13</b> Correctly identify a complex range of native and invasive species in the geographical area.

<b>S14</b> Survey, analyse, communicate and evaluate results for habitats, species and countryside assets.
<b>S18</b> Engage and communicate clearly and effectively with stakeholders, including the public, landowners, tenants, contractors and colleagues.
<b>S20</b> Present information to the public and relevant stakeholders on planned works, site designation, its species and habitat and techniques used to manage an area.
<b>S21</b> Deal with emergencies and incidents as appropriate within the limits of their responsibility, authority and level of training.
<b>S22</b> Design, produce and evaluate various types of environmental interpretation and information provision for a range of audiences.
<b>S23</b> Speak in public and engage with a wide range of audiences such as stakeholders e.g. tenants, local community or interest groups, volunteers, educational and corporate groups and members of the public on a range of topics. For example, planned or ongoing habitat or access management, local flora and fauna or history and archaeology of an area.
<b>S24</b> Recognise strengths and areas for development, creates SMART objectives in line with organisational objectives, participates in development opportunities and regularly seeks feedback.
<b>Behaviours</b>
<b>B3</b> Responds positively to feedback and is open to change.
<b>B6</b> Communicates effectively - Adapts communication style and medium to suit the audience.
<b>B7</b> Acts as an ambassador for the organisation and takes personal responsibility for identifying and addressing the needs of customers and builds effective and collaborative working relationships.
<b>B9</b> Takes personal responsibility for developing their knowledge and skills and continually seeks to improve their performance.
<b>B10</b> Self-awareness – aware of own knowledge and limits of responsibility and seeks relevant advice and support when appropriate.
<b>B11</b> Establishes and promotes respect for the work of the organization from customers, stakeholders and co-workers.
<b>B12</b> Takes a positive approach to working outside in differing weather conditions.