



**Supply Chain Skills**  
Delivering Excellence

# **Warehouse Operative Trailblazer Apprenticeship Approach to Assessment**



## Warehouse Operative Trailblazer Apprenticeship: Approach to Assessment

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## 1. Introduction and Overview

The apprenticeship standard for Warehouse Operative was designed by employer representatives of the supply chain and logistics industry, and is suitable for apprentices employed in a wide variety of organisations.

This apprenticeship provides the foundation knowledge, skills and experience for the role of Warehouse Operative.

Warehouse Operatives communicate with a wide range of people and customers. They have a passion to meet customers' expectations by providing a quality service that encourages repeat business. Individuals in this role are highly competent in using industry-recognised systems and associated services (eg Traffic/Warehouse Management Systems) and will be able to work under pressure to tight deadlines. A Warehouse Operative will often be required to be flexible and work shifts including 4-on-4-off, days, nights, evenings and weekends.

Employers likely to use these standards include:

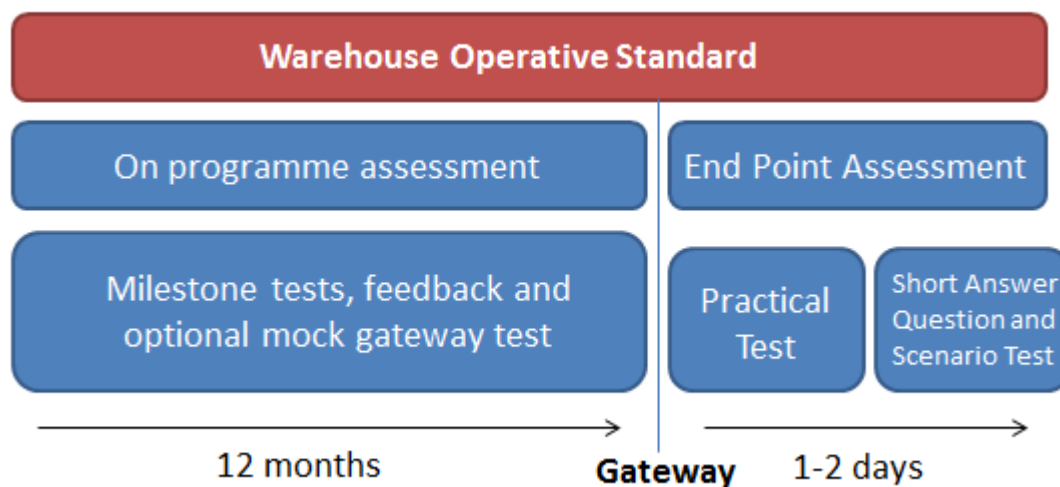
- public, private and voluntary organisations
- the armed forces, which offers apprenticeship programmes in a number of logistic roles
- small to medium-sized specialist supply chain organisations who employ a small number of apprentices as core and/or support staff to provide the skills for growth
- larger specialist supply chain organisations
- small to medium sized non-supply chain organisations, who may employ a small number of apprentices
- larger non-supply chain organisations, who may take on a handful of apprentices.

The approach to assessment has been designed to be appropriate, manageable and valid in a range of contexts while also ensuring consistency.

Employers have adopted the following basic principles to inform the approach:

- the apprenticeship should add real value to the apprentice and the employer, by developing the apprentice to such a point as they're able to start in a career in the industry, not just get a job.
- The apprenticeship should be manageable, cost-effective and appropriate for all employers within the industry regardless of size.
- The assessment process should confirm full competence within the relevant occupation, with differentiation given for those high-performing individuals.
- The apprenticeship should have maximum relevance to the job wherever possible.
- The apprentice is not over-assessed.

## Assessment Overview



### 2. Content – what is being assessed?

The standards for Warehouse Operative were developed by the trailblazer employer group, made up of around 50 different employers in this sector. The same group produced a list of learning outcomes which represent the higher order skills and knowledge that should be assessed at end point assessment stage (appendix 1). It is these learning outcomes which must be achieved in order for the apprentice to be deemed a competent Warehouse Operative.

### 3. On Programme Assessment

The employer and training provider will use the Warehouse Operative standard and the list of learning outcomes (appendix 1) to develop a training plan.

Apprentices will be required to demonstrate continuous and sustained progress towards the end point assessment, by completing work as set out by their employer, demonstrating the knowledge and skills required in the relevant role. They will also complete Level 1 or Level 2 English and maths if required, and may achieve nationally-recognised vendor or other qualifications if the employer chooses such as Fork Lift Truck qualifications.

The on programme aspect of the apprenticeship is expected to take a minimum of 12 months to complete, and should include specific milestones to ensure that the apprentice continues to make good progress towards their end point assessment. We recommend quarterly milestone meetings with the training provider, employer and apprentice to check progress against the standard and for everyone to give feedback. The milestone meetings could take the form of an interview or professional conversation to help develop the apprentice's communication and employability skills. Apprentices may also wish to compile a portfolio of evidence to help them keep a record of their progress.

Training providers and employers may find that the following qualification is useful to support delivery of this standard: Level 2 Certificate in Warehousing and Storage.

This period of learning and associated assessments must be complete before the final assessment can take place.

#### **4. Gateway for Progression to End Point Assessment**

Quarterly milestone meetings will allow the employer, apprentice and training provider to keep track of progress and will be a good indicator of when the apprentice is ready for their end point assessment. A mock end point test or completed portfolio of evidence may also help. If apprentices are completing the Level 2 Certificate in Warehousing and Storage, successful completion of this qualification will be an indicator of readiness for end point assessment.

Apprentices must have completed the relevant English and maths qualifications before attempting the end point assessment.

#### **5. End Point Assessment**

The end point assessment will comprise of the following two methods.

Both elements will be equally weighted at 50% of the overall grade.

##### **i. Knowledge and Behaviours Test**

The knowledge test will cover the learning outcomes listed as 'knowledge' in appendix 1. These are higher order learning outcomes taken from the wider Warehouse Operative standard. The assessment will be externally set and marked by the selected Assessment Organisation and will consist of structured short answer and scenario based questions (SAQs). This test will be taken under exam conditions and assessed by the selected Assessment Organisation.

The knowledge test will include enough questions to assess the apprentice's understanding of all knowledge based learning outcomes, including at least 2 scenario-based short answer questions replicating a real situation that the Warehouse Operative could come up against. These scenario based questions will assess how an apprentice would deal with a particular situation relevant to their role and should be used to assess the apprentice's ability to demonstrate the learning outcomes grouped under 'behaviours' in appendix 1. The Assessment Organisation will design a suitable and reliable mark scheme to assess these behaviours. The end point assessment organisation may choose to use scenario based questions throughout the knowledge test to assess the knowledge and behaviour outcomes in an integrated way.

The test does not need to be written and has the option to be delivered online so long as the employer or test centre has the appropriate technology and we suggest that video clips might make the scenarios more realistic and perhaps easier to relate to. It is the

responsibility of the Assessment Organisation to design the knowledge test as appropriate including a suitable and reliable mark scheme for assessing behaviours.

To pass this assessment learners will need to demonstrate full competence in the necessary knowledge and behaviours required for a Warehouse Operative.

Distinction candidates will:

- provide more advanced, sophisticated examples and more detailed and relevant responses relating to warehousing systems and processes
- have a detailed understanding of key concepts in warehousing and in their specific role and how they interlink
- recognise the varying impact of different strengths and weaknesses to overall outcomes, and explain effective ways to improve the outcomes or processes.
- show detailed planning, organisation and investigatory skills in a well-structured and thorough format
- demonstrate the ability to work to tight deadlines and to review plans.

Distinction candidates may also be more likely to evidence exceptional behaviours.

The recommended duration of the knowledge and behaviours test is 1 hour.

## **ii. Practical Assessment**

The practical assessment should cover the learning outcomes listed as 'skills' in appendix 1. These are the higher order skills taken from the wider Warehouse Operative standard. The practical assessment will be observed by an independent assessor who will make a judgement on whether the apprentice is competent to carry out the practical aspects of their job role.

Where appropriate, the apprentices should be observed by an independent assessor carrying out their everyday tasks. The assessor will use an observation check list and mark scheme to make sure all learning outcomes have been met. The assessor should be prepared to ask questions or use simulated scenarios to collect any evidence they have not been able to gather over the course of the assessment, so no candidates are disadvantaged by the nuances of their job role.

In some settings a simulated scenario may be more appropriate. In this situation the candidate should be given a task or job sheet as they would on a normal given day and a situation created in either the warehouse or assessment centre, whereby the learner can demonstrate all required skills of the role. The assessor should have a standardised set of questions or prompts to use with each learner to make sure the learner can react to changing or unexpected situations.

The selected Assessment Organisation will produce a test specification and outline the controlled conditions for this practical assessment.



To pass this assessment learners will need to demonstrate full competence in the necessary skills required for a Warehouse Operative.

Distinction candidates will:

- go above and beyond what is expected of their role, for example increased awareness and application of health and safety skills, dealing with more complex situations, spatial awareness and demonstration of particularly fast, efficient and new ways of working and improved ways of working
- demonstrate advanced driving skills and techniques in relation to relevant vehicles
- demonstrate a keen interest in the sector and in the job and in keeping up to date with industry changes
- demonstrate originality in the consistent, effective application of technical processes, resources, techniques and materials
- complete tasks independently to a level that far exceeds the minimum standard with few or no errors
- select and use appropriate skills and processes, justifying their choices
- be able to challenge where appropriate and identify solutions rather than just problems or issues.

Distinction candidates may also be more likely to evidence exceptional behaviours.

The recommended duration of the practical assessment is 1 hour.

## 6. Grading

The apprentice will achieve an overall grade of pass or distinction. The grade will be made up from the two end point assessment methods; the knowledge test and the practical test. Both elements are equally weighted towards the final grade. Grading descriptors will be developed by the Assessment Organisation and standardised by the external quality assurer to outline clearly what a distinction or pass candidate would look like.

A pass candidate will be someone who is fully job ready. They will have met all of the standards for the Warehouse Operative Trailblazer apprenticeship. They will be able to make their own decisions and complete tasks independently, as a competent member of staff.

A distinction candidate will be someone who goes above and beyond what may be expected of them. A good place to see examples of distinction evidence may be in the behaviours.

We have set the following grade boundaries:

- Distinction – 90+%
- Pass – 70%

These boundaries must be achieved separately in both assessment methods, so a pass mark can only be awarded where the learner has achieved 70% in the knowledge assessment and 70% in the practical assessment.

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## 7. Quality Assurance

**Internal** – The Assessment Organisation carrying out the end point assessment will be expected to put in place their own quality assurance procedures adhering to best practice and their regulator's requirements. This will include minimum occupational competence requirements for assessors and markers, standardisation training for markers and assessors and consistency across test conditions.

**External** – We have asked the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) to carry out the external quality assurance function for this standard, in the first instance. This arrangement will be reviewed in due course and CILT are happy to work with other professional bodies in the sector as required. As an established and well respected professional body in this sector, with an awarding organisation arm, CILT has a wealth of professional and sector expertise to draw on as well as robust quality assurance procedures which are already in place and can be applied to ensure consistency and quality across end point assessments for this standard. CILT propose to do this through the employment of external verifiers and moderators who will arrange a series of visits to end point assessment organisations, sampling assessment evidence, monitoring the policies of assessment organisations (such as equal opportunities) and keeping logs of good practice.

Following an initial approval visit, assessment organisations will be subject to regular visits by the External Verifier (EV) who will be a representative from CILT. The frequency of these visits is dependent on the status of the assessment organisation (ie their experience and performance in previous visits) but they are advised to budget for at least three visits per year, where on average we carry out two per year. There may also be the option to carry remote sampling of assessment material.

The purpose of the EV visit is to develop the working relationships between the assessment organisation and the external quality assurer, to assess the management systems of the assessment organisation, ensure that the administrative, managerial and physical resources are maintained and to provide continued support to the assessment organisation. The EV is also responsible for ensuring that provision, assessment and internal verification meets the required standards.

It is part of the EV role to sample learner evidence and to monitor the consistency and quality of the assessment process. When sampling, the EV will take into account the experience of the assessment organisation, the number of assessors, the number of learners and the number of assessment locations. The sample chosen will reflect assessment across areas and assessors to ensure consistency of assessment and will also include consideration of IV sampling records. The EV will request a greater sample size if there is a large number of assessors or if the assessment organisation considers that there are any other factors which justify closer monitoring of the quality assurance of an individual assessment organisation.

No profit will be made through conducting this activity.

## **8. Ensuring Independence and Impartiality**

Our approach to delivery and end point assessment demonstrates clear impartiality and independence, with the inclusion of an independent assessor at end point assessment stage. In addition, no single party who has been involved in delivery can make the sole decision on whether the apprentice is competent. The employer and training provider will jointly make the decision about whether the learning is complete and the apprentice is ready for end point assessment and an independent assessor will make the final judgement surrounding competency and grading.

The independent assessor will be recruited and trained by the assessment organisation and participation in standardisation activities as organised by the assessment organisation will be mandatory. The independent assessor will take a holistic view of the apprentice's work, as well as the grade to be awarded, based on the evidence provided in the knowledge and practical tests.

## **9. Delivering consistent, reliable judgements**

The assessment methods used for the Warehouse Operative trailblazer apprenticeship are designed to produce assessment outcomes consistently and reliably, and when combined with the standards which set out what knowledge, skills and behaviours all apprentices must successfully demonstrate, ensure a true comparison between apprentices regardless of their employer or specific role. Training Providers and Assessment Organisations will appear on the relevant SFA register and should have suitable and current experience in the Supply Chain and Logistics sector. Assessors must have met the criteria for occupational competence as outlined by the Assessment Organisation.

## **10. Delivering accurate, valid judgements**

The assessment methods for the Warehouse Operative Trailblazer standards have been designed by experts with both sector and educational assessment expertise as the most valid methods of determining competence in this role.

Assessment of apprentices will be based on their individual performance and measured against the skills, knowledge and behaviours as set out in the standards. The elements of the end point assessment build a holistic picture of the individual apprentice's development and performance over the apprenticeship, allowing the independent assessor to judge whether or not the apprenticeship has been achieved, and if performance deserving of a distinction has been demonstrated.

We recommend that Assessment Organisations consider using practices such as double or split marking practices to strengthen the accuracy and reliability of their assessment judgements.

Assessors should meet the minimum requirements for expertise in assessment principles and practices and occupational competence as laid out by the Assessment Organisation.

These should include relevant assessor qualifications and industry qualifications at level 3 or above, and relevant and current professional experience in Warehousing roles.

### **11. Affordability and sustainability**

We have considered the costs and the most appropriate forms of assessment in great detail to ensure that organisations of all types and size are not excluded from hiring and assessing an apprentice. Resits will be kept to a minimum by the gateway requirements. We have selected only two methods of assessment with one of these including assessment of behaviours in order to minimise stress and over-assessment for the apprentice as well as to keep costs down.

Consultation with awarding organisations and training providers has confirmed the costs so they are a realistic estimation. We estimate that end point assessment will make up 10-15% of the overall cost of the apprenticeship.

Centres will also be able to use the Assessment Organisation's Reasonable Adjustments Policy to give additional assistance to meet evidence requirements as needed.

The costs will provide a high return on investment as successful completion of the Warehouse Operative standard is expected to fill increasing skills gaps in the sector, with expected volumes of 100-200 starts annually.

### **12. Manageability and Feasibility**

This approach to assessment has been designed to be viable for both large and small employers, with a wide geographical take-up across a number of different settings.

The fact that there are only 2 methods of assessment will make the assessment more manageable for employers, apprentices and end point Assessment Organisations. We also expect that both the practical and knowledge test could be administered on the same day, meaning that the apprentice would be off-site for the least amount of time possible. The knowledge test could be taken on the employer's premises if it is under exam conditions with an invigilator and as the practical test can take place in a simulated environment this should also make the assessment more manageable for employers and for the Assessment Organisation, without taking away from its validity.

**Appendix 1: Learning Outcomes**

	<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Assessed by</b>
<b>Knowledge</b>	1. Safe and controlled driving and/or operating techniques relating to materials handling equipment	Short Answer Question (SAQ) Test
	2. The environmental impact of the industry and how it can be minimised	Short Answer Question (SAQ) Test
	3. Safe use of equipment and machinery	Short Answer Question (SAQ) Test
	4. How to use warehouse systems and processes relating to packaging, moving and receiving stock	Short Answer Question (SAQ) Test
	5. How to use relevant IT, technology and systems	Short Answer Question (SAQ) Test
	6. Relevant regulation and legislation governing the Supply Chain Industry	Short Answer Question (SAQ) Test
	7. The structure of the industry	Short Answer Question (SAQ) Test
	8. The importance of delivering excellent customer service	Short Answer Question (SAQ) Test
	9. The vision, objectives and brand of the organisation	Short Answer Question (SAQ) Test
	10. Proposed and actual changes to systems, processes and technology	Short Answer Question (SAQ) Test
<b>Skills</b>	1. Operate at least one vehicle safely and efficiently	Practical Assessment
	2. Use and position vehicle fitted equipment	Practical Assessment
	3. Safely and efficiently move, handle, pack and unpack different items	Practical Assessment
	4. Manage waste effectively	Practical Assessment
	5. Safely and efficiently load and unload items	Practical Assessment
	6. Select, prepare and use most appropriate packaging materials	Practical Assessment
	7. Use correct equipment and procedures to record receiving or stowing goods	Practical Assessment
	8. Use IT systems and other relevant technology and	Practical Assessment

	systems	
<b>Behaviours</b>	1. Communicate effectively with customers and colleagues	Scenario based element of SAQ
	2. Work effectively in a warehousing team	Scenario based element of SAQ
	3. Demonstrate integrity, credibility, positivity and honesty	Scenario based element of SAQ

**Appendix 2: Roles and Responsibilities**

Training Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works with employer to develop a training plan tailored to the apprentice to cover the knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the standards.</li> <li>• Participates in some milestone meetings over the course of the on programme delivery and provides constructive feedback to the apprentice and employer.</li> <li>• Works with the employer to decide when the apprentice is ready for end point assessment.</li> <li>• Supports the apprentice throughout the learning journey.</li> <li>• Helps the employer to find a suitable end point Assessment Organisation.</li> </ul>
Assessment Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops the test specification for each method of assessment.</li> <li>• Develops the grading descriptors.</li> <li>• Works with occupationally competent writers to design and develop valid assessments.</li> <li>• Employs occupationally competent assessors and ideally has geographical coverage across England.</li> <li>• Provides the option for apprentices to sit their knowledge test in a test centre if the employer doesn't have the facilities to run it on-site.</li> <li>• Provides and requires CPD for assessors.</li> </ul>
Independent Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attends the practical test to make the assessment judgement about the apprentice's competence.</li> <li>• Marks the knowledge test to make the assessment judgement about the apprentice's competence.</li> </ul>
Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates opportunities for learners to achieve all standards and go above and beyond.</li> <li>• Decides jointly on readiness for end point assessment.</li> <li>• Commits to continuous review with the training provider.</li> </ul>
Professional Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carries out the external quality</li> </ul>

	assurance function to ensure consistency, accuracy and independence across end point Assessment Organisations and assessment conditions.
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