

PASSENGER TRANSPORT SERVICE OPERATIONS

Manager

Level 4 Assessment Plan

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1. Introduction

This document sets out the requirements and processes for the End Point Assessment (EPA) of the Level 4 Passenger Transport Service Operations (PTSO) Manager Apprenticeship Standard. This document is designed for employers, apprentices, training providers and EPAOs, and should be read in conjunction with the approved apprenticeship standard. The PTSO Manager Level 4 apprenticeship will require a minimum period of learning of 12 months, prior to the end point assessment. This document has been designed to ensure that:

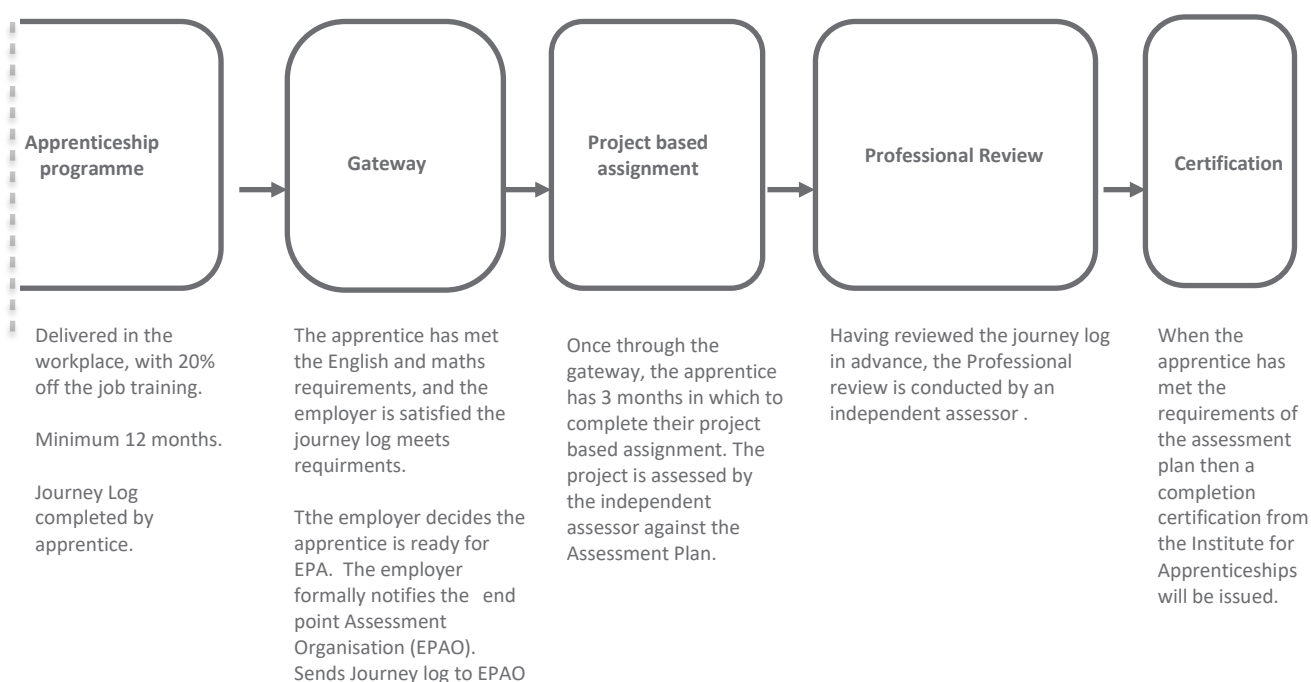
- Apprentices meet the skills, knowledge and behaviours as defined within the standard.
- The end point assessment is appropriate, feasible and consistent.

This apprenticeship standard covers broad and diverse industries; therefore, the method of assessment has been designed to ensure it is applicable across a range of contexts. The assessment process:

- Should encourage continuing professional development.
- Should position the apprenticeship as a starting point for a career and encourage apprentices to explore progression opportunities.

The employer will formally notify the End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) that the apprentice is ready for the EPA (this is the Gateway). Their decision will be based on evidence that, unaided, the apprentice has demonstrated the skills and competency in the apprenticeship standard within their day-to-day role. This is with the exception of skills and competencies listed under decision making, which employer will need to be satisfied have been demonstrated through questioning and appropriate simulation.

The EPA consists of a project based assignment followed by a professional review. Successful completion of the EPA will lead to final certification of the apprenticeship and demonstrate that the apprentice is competent and can work safely and confidently as a Manager.



2. Structured Learning (Journey Log)

The EPA is the culmination of a minimum 12-month apprenticeship programme. During this programme, the apprentice will learn a wide range of skills and knowledge, as well as experiencing incidents and scenarios, which may not occur during the EPA. As part of their professional review the apprentice will need to be able to draw on what they have learnt and experienced over the 12-month programme. Therefore, it is a requirement that their learning is structured in such a way that apprentices are able to accurately record their achievements and experiences, and which allows a third party to be able to review it objectively.

It is the responsibility of the training provider to ensure this structure is in place, below is an example of an approach providers may wish to adopt.

2.1 Mandatory Journey Log

A Journey Log, will help to show how the apprentice has worked towards the achievement of competence across the standard and how their knowledge, skills and behaviours have developed during their apprenticeship. A Journey Log should:

- Focus on personal development.
- Include reference to either the bus, coach or rail roles.
- Include an initial, midway and end self-assessment of the apprentices' skills and behaviours.
- Help prepare them for the workplace.

A Journey Log, or its equivalent, should be based on the Apprenticeship Standard. It should be used by the apprentice to assess themselves against the criteria in the standard, review their effectiveness and identify how to make improvements to their knowledge, skills and behaviours.

2.1.1 Collecting Evidence

A journey log, allows the apprentice to gather evidence of their experiences and achievements, which could include:

- Observation report undertaken by a 3rd party (e.g. an assessor).
- Completed observational checklists and related action plans.
- Witness testimony.
- Worksheets.
- Assignments/projects/reports.
- Record of any formal discussions (e.g. professional discussion, performance review).
- Record of oral and written questioning.
- Apprentice and peer reports.

The volume of evidence collected must be proportionate to the length of the apprenticeship. For example, the apprentice should look to collect a minimum of 3 to 5 pieces of evidence a week.

2.1.1 Verifying Evidence

All evidence should attest to the apprentice's own work and should be capable of being verified objectively by a 3rd party. It is advisable that the journey log is verified by a 3rd party prior to the Gateway.

3. Readiness for End Point Assessment (Gateway)

The independent end point assessment is synoptic, that is, it takes an overview of an apprentices' competence. It is important therefore, that this should only take place when the employer is confident that the apprentice has met all the knowledge, skills and behaviours as set out in the standard. Once the employer is satisfied the apprentice has demonstrated full competence and that all criteria of the standard have been met, the apprentice can progress to the end-point assessment via the apprenticeship gateway. The gateway is where the employer formally confirms to the EPAO that the apprentice is ready to progress to the end point assessment. The employer's decision must be formally recorded by the EPAO.

In addition, the Journey log is a mandatory requirement of the on-programme phase and must be completed by the Gateway. The employer must be satisfied the Journey log reflects competency across the whole Apprenticeship Standard. The Journey log is not assessed and instead informs the Professional Review.

An apprentice should not be recommended for end point assessment until they are ready.

Apprentices without Level 2 English and maths will need to achieve this level.

4. Components of End Point Assessment

The End Point Assessment (EPA) will be made up of 2 components, which are assessed by an independent assessor from the EPAO. These are:

Project-Based Assignment - Primarily focused on the apprentice's skills and behaviours, but also covering knowledge which is implicit through their demonstration.

Professional Review - Primarily focused on the apprentice's knowledge and understanding, but also covering and confirming skills and behaviours, which are implicit with this.

The EPA will last 4 months to allow the apprentice 3 months to complete the project based assignment and following this a month to conduct the professional discussion

4.1 Project-Based Assignment

The project based assignment provides a substantive evidence base from a business-related project to demonstrate the application of skills, knowledge and behaviours.

The project should normally be based on a business problem that forms part of the apprentice's role. It should cover key activities, which include:

- Operational management
- Quality and compliance
- Managing customer safety

All projects must:

- Contain an analysis of the problem
- Outline the steps taken to address the problem and the outcome
- Provide a review of what was done and lessons learnt
- Have a word count of 3000 with a +/- 10% variance permitted.

We have factored in here that Passenger Transport Manager roles have natural variance, and we need to ensure that what is assessed is guaranteed to naturally occur during the 3 month assessment window. So some flexibility as to the Project-based assignment is needed. However we also need to ensure apprentices are assessed consistently.

Therefore immediately following the gateway, the apprentice will, with the support of their employer, propose the title and outline content of their project-based Assignment to the EPAO. The EPAO will within one week sign-this off as acceptable or not, and before work commences.

To do this, the EPAO must be satisfied the chosen project-based assignment addresses a business problem as outlined in the bullet-points above. They must also be satisfied the project-based assignment will afford the apprentice the full opportunity to address all of the knowledge, skills and behaviours being tested, as outline in 4.1.1 overleaf.

The apprentice has 3 months in which to complete their project. Sufficient time should be set aside by the employer for the apprentice to plan, undertake and write up their project, which will typically be undertaken at the employers premises. The employer and training provider will ensure that the apprentice has access to the tools and systems required to complete the tasks within the project

The apprentice will provide a signed statement to confirm the project is their own work.

4.1.1 Project-Based Assignment - Essential Coverage

The Independent Assessor needs to see evidence that the criteria below have been met (the core knowledge, skills and behaviours). These criteria are taken from the apprenticeship standard, and they are critical to the role of a Manager. The wider criteria, as set out in the Standard and not listed here, are implicit within these criteria.

Core Knowledge:

- Understand the diverse range of customers, contractors and stakeholders and their needs, rights and expectations. Understand how to provide an excellent service that promotes the transport industry.
- Understand your role and responsibilities within the organisation, the wider transport network, its targets, performance measures and obligations.

Core Skills and Competence:

- Evaluate the transport environment and ensure it complies with relevant laws and contractual obligations.
- Comply with security procedures and systems, taking appropriate action when a breach has occurred or is suspected.
- Monitor and review the availability of facilities and services and implement plans to meet demand and minimise disruption to the transport service.
- Review processes and procedures to improve performance of service.
- Analyse and interpret management information.
- Manage the control of resources, equipment and materials, determining the quality, quantity and suitability for the benefit of transport service delivery.

Behaviours:

- Be analytical in their approach to maintaining a safe transport environment, able to remain calm under pressure and process challenges systematically.
- Focus on quality, with a keen attention to detail.
- Build relationships that motivate others to deliver quality.
- Be approachable by customers and able to negotiate and influence to achieve the best outcomes.
- Be adaptable, driven and confident to deliver effective management

4.1.2 Setting the Project-Based Assignment

The Independent Assessor needs to see evidence that the apprentice meets each of the tested core knowledge, skills and behaviours. These are set out overleaf in part 4.2.1. These criteria are taken from the apprenticeship standard, and they are critical to the role of a PTSO Manager. The wider criteria, as set out in the Standard and not listed here, are implicit within these criteria.

4.2 Professional Review

The professional review is the final component of the EPA and should take place within 3 weeks of the independent assessor reviewing the project-based assignment. Ideally it be administered by the same Independent Assessor. However, if it is not possible for the same Independent Assessor to review the project-based assignment and administer professional review, then the EPAO must ensure there are procedures in place to ensure the feedback and outcomes from review of the project-based assignment are understood and used by the Independent Assessor undertaking the review to arrive at the final grade.

The IA will use the journey log to explore how the apprentice applied their KSB within the workplace. The Independent Assessor must be given access to the apprentice's journey log at the point at which the employer notifies the EPAO that the apprentice is ready for EPA, this must be at least 1 week prior to the EPA formally commencing

The independent assessor will follow the requirements of the EPAO and record their evidence in a format agreed with the EPAO.

The professional review will be conducted in a 'controlled environment' i.e. a quiet room. This can be on the employer's premises, provided the apprentice is not distracted by their day to day role. The professional review can take place remotely and where the discussion is not face-to-face, independent assessors must ensure adequate controls are in place to maintain fair and accurate assessment, and have robust procedures in place to authenticate the learners' identity.

The professional review will last for 1 hour +/- 10% and will consist of a minimum of 9 questions covering the criteria in 4.2.1 below. Having reviewed the journey log in advance, the Independent Assessor will select their 9 pre-prepared questions from the EPAO question bank, (one for each element of knowledge and skill tested). The Independent Assessor will ask follow-up questions to satisfy themselves each tested knowledge/skill is met or not. The question bank must hold a minimum of 30 questions and these must be rotated with sufficient frequency so as to avoid predictability. The question bank should be reviewed by the Independent EPAO at least once in the 3 year life of this Assessment Plan

4.2.1 Professional Review - Essential Coverage

The Independent Assessor needs to see evidence during the professional review that the criteria below have been met. The Independent Assessor will need to see evidence of understanding, not just knowledge recall.

The criteria below are taken from the apprenticeship standard, and they are critical to the role of a Manager. The wider criteria, as set out in the Standard, are implicit within these criteria.

Core Knowledge:

- Understand how to ensure you and your customers, contractors and stakeholders comply with relevant rules, procedures, regulations and laws and the effect of non-compliance on the business.
- Understand your role and responsibilities within the organisation, the wider transport network, its targets, performance measures and obligations. This could include managing a busy station and responsibility for operational performance.

Core Skills and Competence:

- Ensure checks to the transport environment are performed and that teams are working in a safe and efficient manner.
- Recognise when behaviour is inappropriate and could lead to a conflict or dangerous situation and take prompt actions to ensure safety.

- Investigate the nature and level of an incident or emergency and determine the likely cause based on the evidence and ensure corrective action is taken and preventative controls are put in place.
- Recognise opportunities and implement plans to improve the customer experience within the transport environment.
- Identify and assess situations that may lead to confusion, panic and conflict and provide management intervention in a way that maintains the safe operation of the transport environment.
- Investigate and take action when fraud is suspected or has been identified.
- Evaluate and deal with the performance issues affecting team members ensuring courses of action are in-line with professional codes of conduct.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Ensuring independence is key to the validity of this assessment plan. The final decision on whether the apprentice has passed lies with the Independent Assessor. The EPAO will ensure Independent Assessors' decisions are based on consistent criteria and are quality assured accordingly.

5.1 The Independent Assessor

Independent Assessors are responsible for conducting the end point assessment of the apprenticeship. Independent Assessors are appointed and managed by an EPAO. An Independent Assessor must be someone who has nothing to gain from the outcome of the assessment and has had no involvement in the training, on programme assessment or line management of the apprentice. When conducting an end point assessment, the Independent Assessor is acting on behalf of the relevant EPAO, and is subject to the procedures set by them.

Independent assessors will be subject to rigorous quality assurance, proportionate to their experience and performance over time, and must take part in regular standardisation activities as laid out by the EPAO.

The following key principles are mandatory for independent assessors:

5.1.1 Occupational expertise

Independent assessors must:

- Have excellent knowledge and understanding of the apprenticeship standard.
- Have occupational expertise and knowledge, at the relevant level of the occupational areas they are assessing, which has been gained through working in the industry (within the last 3 years).
- Experience of assessing vocational qualifications and/or operating an assessing role within a quality system (e.g. ISO 9001).

5.1.2 Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Independent Assessors must regularly update their occupational expertise and industry knowledge in the areas being assessed to ensure currency of skills and knowledge. This should be achieved through planned CPD, appropriate to their individual development needs and any requirements specified by the EPAO. A record of this should be maintained through an up-to-date CPD log. Examples of CPD could be (but are not limited to):

- Internal work placements.
- External visits.
- Achievement of new or updated training or qualifications.
- Attendance at trade fairs and conferences.
- Participation at development days.

5.1.3 Best practice in assessment

Independent assessors should:

- Practice standardised assessment principles as set out by the EPAO.
- Attend standardisation meetings with colleagues at least once a year.
- Share best practice in assessment through a range of appropriate activities, such as email, meetings and social media.
- Have sufficient time to carry out the role of assessor.

5.2 EPAOs

EPAOs must be on the Register of End Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO) managed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

EPAOs are responsible for appointing and managing independent assessors and for ensuring that assessments are carried out fairly, are valid, reliable and consistent.

EPAOs wishing to offer end point assessment services for this apprenticeship, must:

- Ensure independent assessors meet the criteria outlined in this plan.
- Deliver the end point assessment outlined in this plan.
- Be able to demonstrate a detailed understanding of the sector.
- Provide appropriate recourse and processes for apprentices, employers and providers, to clarify and/or dispute the outcome of an end point assessment.
- Offer potential Independent Assessors assessment experience.
- Develop assessment and marking materials.

EPAOs must maintain high quality systems and processes, which validate and continuously review an independent assessors' experience, skills and competence.

EPAOs must provide independent assessors the opportunity to attend at least two standardisation workshops annually. These workshops will be run by the EPAO and attendance of at least one per year should be mandatory for all independent assessors.

6. Quality Assurance

6.1 Consistency

Independent end point assessment is a culmination of a learning and development journey resulting in external independent confirmation of an apprentice meeting the industry defined standard. As such the process and procedure for carrying out an end point assessment must be quality assured to ensure consistent, reliable and valid judgments.

6.2 Internal Quality Assurance

Internal quality assurance is carried out by the approved EPAO and involves ensuring that individual end point assessments are undertaken correctly and consistently including the marking, standardising, sampling and reporting of the outcomes of the end point assessment. It must:

- Ensure there are robust processes in place to deliver end point assessments to the required standard and that they are appropriate for the sector.
- Train and standardise all independent assessors at least once a year, to ensure they assess consistently against the requirements of the standard.
- Apply robust internal quality assurance and verification processes to the end point assessments.
- Internal quality assurance must be completed by an appropriately qualified person, and that person must not have been involved in any aspect of the delivery or assessment of the programme they are quality assuring.

6.3 External quality assurance

The Institute for Apprenticeships (IfA) will conduct the external quality assurance for the PTSO Manager apprenticeship.

7. Implementation

7.1 Affordability

The cost and practicalities of the assessment have been key considerations in the development of the assessment plan due to the range of businesses likely to deliver these apprenticeships. Both large and small employers alike must manage the apprenticeship process within organisations of varying sizes and the assessment needs to be affordable for venues housing small numbers of apprentices.

The cost of the end-point assessment will be no more than 20% of the total available for funding available for the PTSO Manager standard, which has been allocated a funding band of maximum £12,000.

Cost will primarily be based on activity of the Independent Assessor, which should constitute a maximum of 2 days per apprentice, which allows sufficient time for planning and administering the assessments, followed on by processing the relevant documents for the EPAO. It is expected that 300 Managers a year will be trained using this apprenticeship.

7.2 Manageability

This assessment plan has been designed to be delivered cost effectively within an employer's workplace. This includes the professional review, which can be on an employer's premises, but in a 'controlled environment' i.e. a quiet room, away from the normal place of work.

EPAOs must work with employers to manage end point assessments in a way that minimises the impact on the employer's business activity.

8. Grading

This is a multi-modal framework, covering both road and rail transport. Rail operators must ensure their workforce complies with the The Railways and Other Guided Transport Systems (Safety Regulations) 2006 (ROGS). Further to this, in line with the assessment criteria for mainline railway safety and certificate and safety authorisation (see Office of Rail Regulation), rail operators must have in place procedures to ensure that staff with delegated responsibility within the organisation have the authority, competence and appropriate resources to fulfil their duty. They also have to demonstrate that safety tasks are clearly defined and delegated to staff with appropriate competence. Finally, Train operators must also provide processes for recruitment, training, assessment, competence monitoring and record keeping, indicating how all of these contribute to achieving maintaining competence.

As such it is essential that apprentices meet the required standard of competence, which is not subject to gradations of competency. Therefore, the apprentice will either have passed or failed. This decision is dependent on whether they have met the standard and its end point assessment criteria.

In order to pass the apprentice must pass each of the components of the end point assessment. If an apprentice does not pass one or more of the components there will be opportunity to be reassessed on that component. However, all parties should be confident that the apprentice is ready to start the end point assessment before the process is started.

Failed:

- The apprentice has not met all the criteria in the in this assessment plan (see 4.2.1 and 4.1.1). To meet the criteria, the apprentice must demonstrate competence of all of the relevant skills, knowledge and behaviours.

Pass:

- To achieve a Pass grade the candidate will be able to meet all of the assessment criteria for both the core and specific knowledge, understanding skills in this assessment plan (see 4.2.1 and 4.1.1).

The apprentice must pass both components of the EPA in order to pass.

Resits/re-takes

Where the apprentice fails either method of assessment then re-sits/re-takes are permitted. The number of re-sits/re-takes is for the employer to decide. Re-takes require the apprentice to undergo additional learning and they must not be put forward again until the employer is satisfied they are ready, however we would normally expect all re-sits/re-takes to be completed within 6 months of the apprentice's first attempt. In the event of an exceptional circumstance causing the apprentice not to have had the full opportunity to undertake an assessment method, then they will not be graded for that method (meaning they are not be given a fail or a pass). Instead, the assessment method will be re-arranged to take place as soon as possible. It is for the Independent Assessor to decide if exceptional circumstances apply. This could be, for example, (but is not limited to) sudden ill health of the apprentice causing the assessment to breakdown.