**Appendix 2: On-site audit**

The purpose of the on-site observation/audit is to establish answers to three main questions:

1. Is the End-point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) following the assessment plan?
2. Do we have any areas of concern having conducted a desk-based review of the information they provided?
3. Is there evidence that written documents are working documents that are regularly reviewed?

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| Standard and Level: | EPAO: | Location: |
| Date: | Contact point: | External quality assurers: |
| Activity observed: | Providers: | Employer/s: |

**Gateway access**

The EQA process should provide assurance that:

* All requirements of the Standard in terms of achievement of gateways, qualifications and maths and English are achieved prior to sign off by the employer for End-point Assessment (EPA).

In most cases, employers will determine the readiness of apprentices for EPA, however there is a need to ensure that any other requirements are met before any apprentice can be registered for EPA. These will include mandatory requirements such as English and maths and having completed a minimum of 12 months of training, but may also include the completion of qualification(s) or other requirements as set out in the Assessment Plan.

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| **Evidence type** | **Description of evidence and external quality assurer judgement** |
| Contracts:   * Can we see the contract between EPAO and employer? * Is there any evidence of a conflict of interest? How often is it updated? * What happens if the EPAO disagrees with the employer about gateway achievement/duration? |  |
| Gateway requirements:   * Qualifications – what evidence have we seen? E.g. certificates or other documentation * Employer sign-off – what evidence have we seen? * Additional mandated requirements in the Standard – what evidence have we seen? * Is there a learner tracking form to state which Gateway requirements have been achieved? |  |
| * Have all the necessary learning objectives and assessment criteria been assessed? |  |

**Assessment validity, reliability, comparability, independence**

The EQA process should provide assurance that:

* Assessment instruments and assessments are valid across a range of real work settings and for employers of any size and in any sector. Assessment methods should be clearly aligned to the application of specific skills, knowledge and behaviours.
* Assessment is carried out as far as is practicable synoptically and that this applies to at least one method of assessment of skills and knowledge.
* Assessments are reliable and comparable across different assessment organisations, employers, places, times and assessors.
* Assessment is carried out independently in practice. This means that both the organisation and the individual assessors are independent of the delivery of training.
* Access to assessment is fair.

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| **Evidence type** | **Description of evidence and external quality assurer judgement** |
| End Point Assessment (all methods):   * Do the assessment instruments match those set out in the assessment plan, and align to specific knowledge, skills and behaviour specified? * Which knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) are assessed synoptically? * Are assessments taken in appropriate conditions including environment and duration? * Are practical settings appropriate and able to accommodate all apprentices? * Did the assessor give clear information on the assessment process to the learner? * Did the assessor record evidence and assessment decisions to internal quality assurance (IQA) requirements? Which specified documents did the assessor use? * Has appropriate and sufficient assessment planning taken place including:   + timeliness of assessment window?   + booking and management of assessment? * Do the assessment materials (if applicable) give clear information on the assessment process to the learner and encourage them to identify and present evidence? * Are the outcomes of each assessment recorded appropriately? |  |
| Presentation:   * Did the assessor use questions which were clear and appropriate to the presentation? * How is learners’ work authenticated as their own? |  |
| Professional discussion/interview:   * How much encouragement did the assessor give the learner to identify and present evidence? * Did the assessor use questions that were clear and did not lead the learner? * Were questions appropriate in assessing the KSBs? * Does the assessor clarify and resolve inconsistencies in evidence where necessary? * Did the assessor use sufficient, justifiable questioning to infer competence? |  |
| Practical observation:   * Does the practical observation allow the apprentice to demonstrate the relevant KSBs to achieve a pass and a higher grade (if appropriate)? * Did the assessor remain as unobtrusive as practicable? |  |
| Portfolio:   * Can the portfolio be reliably attributed to the learner? What evidence is there to support this e.g. employer letter? * How is learners’ work authenticated as their own? |  |
| Test:   * Have procedures for ensuring that test materials are kept secure been followed? * Can we have a demonstration of the online test system? * Can we observe a test paper development meeting? * Is invigilation carried out sufficiently? Is guidance available? * Has the test been administered under the correct controlled conditions? * Are tests marked appropriately (paper tests/online tests)? * Are the mark schemes fit-for-purpose? |  |
| End-point grading:   * Have the grading descriptors been interpreted consistently? * Have the grading rules been applied consistently? * Did the assessor consider all feasible sources of evidence? * Are resits and retakes managed in line with the assessment plan? * Is there evidence that the overall grade has been reached correctly? |  |
| Consistency over time:   * How is it intended that information be gathered on the occupation and Standard over time in order to assist the Institute in ensuring apprenticeship occupations have sufficient skill and breadth and that Standards are effectively written? * How often is a review undertaken? * Can we see comparison data on assessors, RAAOs, employers etc? * What are the arrangements for gathering feedback from apprentices and employers on end point assessment and the Standard? * Is this feedback recorded using: Risk and issue logs, lessons learnt activity, contingency plans? |  |

**INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AND DELIVERY OF SERVICE**

The EQA process should provide assurance that:

* Internal quality assurance processes prescribed in the assessment plan are being carried out, operating effectively and achieving the desired outcomes.
* Assessors are fully occupationally competent, up-to-date and meet the requirements prescribed in the assessment plan.

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| **Evidence type** | **Description of evidence and external quality assurer judgement** |
| Assessor competence:   * Does the EPAO have sufficient assessors and internal verifiers available? * Is their assessment competence acceptable, and does it meet the assessment plan requirements? * Can we see assessor and internal verifier application forms, CVs, CPD records, verification of qualifications? * Are robust processes in place to ensure that assessors and internal verifiers are fully occupationally competent and up-to-date? * Can we observe assessor training? Is it recorded properly? * Is the performance of assessors monitored and recorded? * Are EPAOs and assessors independent from training providers/delivery? * Does the EPAO have appropriate contractual relationships with assessors when they deliver assessment? * Are assessors able to clarify and resolve inconsistencies in evidence where necessary, through a moderation process? * Are assessors able to justify their decisions, taking into account all evidence referenced? |  |
| Operational activity:   * What evidence is there of proactive quality assurance and improvement measures? * Are the records of quality assurance activity complete and thorough? * Is there an effective appeals process in place? * Can we see the complaints handling system? Is it operated effectively? |  |
| Assessor training:   * Is there evidence of internal and external training? * What training records exist from the past 12 months? * How detailed are the training programmes? Do they meet the needs of the assessors? * Are the assessors given opportunity to comment on the training and provide feedback? * How is assessor training used to review staff competence? * How is the review of staff competence completed? (vocational/occupational/assessment expertise) |  |
| Standardisation:   * How is standardisation organised (process map)? * How frequently does this take place? * Are assessors given the opportunity to discuss the outcomes of standardisation? * What changes are made to processes/documents on completion of standardisation? * Who agrees/approves any changes? * What happens to the assessor’s feedback on completion of standardisation? * How is good practice and areas for improvement captured? * How effective is the standardisation process for determining that the EPA is fit-for-purpose? |  |
| Moderation:   * How is moderation organised (process map)? * Which methods require moderation and how frequently does this take place? * How many samples of work are discussed? * Does moderation include borderline samples? * How is an agreement between assessors achieved? * How are the outcomes of moderation recorded? * How effective is the moderation process for determining that the EPA plan is applied consistently? |  |
| Final decision panel   * Is there a final decision panel consensus report? * Have members of the panel completed a conflict of interest form that is regularly reviewed? * Is there a confidentiality agreement in place signed by all panel members? * If a grade changes up or down after moderation, is it justified? |  |

**Costs and Data**

Pricing structures for assessment must be clear and represent value for money.

Sensitive data should be kept securely, and there should be robust records management and retention policies in place.

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| **Evidence type** | **Description of evidence and external quality assurer judgement** |
| Marketing and costs:   * Are individual employers choosing EPAOs, and do they have enough information to make an informed choice? * Can we see marketing literature? Is this information appropriate? * Is the information provided and fees charged by EPAOs clear and transparent? * Is there a clear rationale provided? Is it reasonable? |  |
| Record keeping:   * Can we see records management system? * Are accurate records kept for both candidates and assessors? * Is data held securely with appropriate protocols in place, especially for sensitive information? |  |
| Accessibility and equality:   * Does the EPAO ensure the safety of those being assessed on site? How? * Are safety precautions and reasonable adjustments in place? * Is EPA appropriate for small and large employers? * Is EPA fully inclusive e.g. race, gender, culture, background? * Is there a prevent and safeguard policy in place? |  |
| * Are there any other concerns from the desk review which have not been covered by the bullet points above? |  |