Apprenticeship End-Point Assessment Plan Funeral Director Level 3

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Introduction

This document sets out the requirements and process for independent end-point assessment of the funeral director apprenticeship standard. All apprenticeship standards must include independent end-point assessment to check the apprentice's overall performance against the standard. It is designed for employers, apprentices, education and training providers and end-point assessment organisations (EPAOs).

Independent end-point assessment occurs when the employer is satisfied that the apprentice is working consistently at or above the level set out in the funeral director apprenticeship standard. The end-point assessment period for the funeral director apprenticeship standard can commence at any point once the apprentice is competent after the twelve-month minimum period of learning and development.

Gateway

The independent end-point assessment ensures that all apprentices consistently achieve the industry set professional standard for a funeral director. Apprentices without level 2 English and maths will need to achieve this level prior to taking the end-point assessment. For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the English and mathematics minimum requirement is Entry Level 3 and British Sign Language qualifications are an alternative to the English qualifications for whom this is their primary language.

Once the employer is satisfied that the apprentice has achieved full competence, the apprentice moves through the Gateway and enters the end-point assessment period. Once the EPA period is entered, a planning meeting must take place within two weeks that includes the apprentice, employer and an independent end-point assessor appointed by the EPAO. This meeting is to plan the timings for the end-point assessment and may be conducted remotely – e.g. a virtual meeting using technology such as Skype, as its aim is to secure the plan for the EPA methods, but does not contribute to any assessment decisions.

At this planning meeting, the independent end-point assessor will agree a plan and schedule for each end-point assessment method with the apprentice and employer to ensure all methods can be completed within a three-month end-point assessment window. EPAOs must inform the EQA of the independent end-point assessments prior to commencement to ensure external quality assurance activity can be planned and implemented. It should be noted that the training provider is not involved in this planning activity as this forms the next step of the apprenticeship journey, moving from the on-programme phase to the end-point assessment.

Order and timings of the end-point assessment

There are three methods for the funeral director independent end-point assessment. These methods may be carried out in any order. All assessment methods must be completed and passed within the three-month assessment window, after the EPA gateway. This end-point assessment window begins on commencement of the first assessment method.

Summary of end-point assessment methods

The apprentice will be assessed to the apprenticeship standard using three complementary assessment methods. The assessment methods are not 'weighted' in percentage terms as they are all important to demonstrating the apprentice's performance.

The assessment methods will be carried out by the independent end-point assessor as follows:

Method 1	Method 2	Method 3
On-demand test:	Simulated scenario:	Professional discussion:
 55-minute on-demand multiple choice test Scenario based questions Externally set and marked automatically by the EPAO Undertaken either on the employer's premises or off site Graded fail, pass, distinction 	 60-minute simulated scenario activity (+ 10% at the discretion of the independent assessor) 2 scenarios 20-minutes per scenario to plan response Presented to EPA (5 minutes per scenario) Follow-up questions led by independent end- point assessor (5 minutes per scenario) Undertaken either on the employer's premises or off site Graded fail, pass, distinction 	 75-minute (+10% at the discretion of the independent assessor) structured meeting Structured discussion between the apprentice and the independent endpoint assessor Led by the independent end-point assessor Undertaken either on the employer's premises or off site Graded fail, pass, distinction

Completion:

Independent end-point assessor confirms that each assessment method has been completed and passed

The **achievement** is determined by the independent end-point assessor based on the combination of performance in all end-point assessment methods.

Fail / Pass / Distinction

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On-demand test

The apprentice must carry out a knowledge test during the EPA period

- Apprentice must have 55-minutes to complete the test
- On-demand multiple-choice test (30 questions, 4 choices per question 1 correct answer = 1 mark, incorrect answers must be assigned 0 marks)
- Externally set and marked by the EPAO on the register of end-point assessment organisations (RoEPAO)
- Undertaken either on the employer's premises or off site

The assessment will be an objective on-demand, computer-based test and will be in a multiple-choice format ensuring validity and reliability and which allows for consistent, efficient and timely allocation of marks. It is expected that the on-demand tests will be on-screen and computer marked, with validated results notified to the EPAO. Questions will cover the knowledge and skills identified on the standard and will be written using the language, tone and style expected for the level of standard. Apprentices taking the tests will be given a proportional sample of these questions which reflect general coverage of the standard to demonstrate competence within the given time constraints.

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 specifications they contain, are fit for purpose.

Multiple online sample tests must be available.

Apprentices will complete their tests on-screen, unless individual assessment needs dictate a suitable alternative method, and in a 'controlled' environment, which may be on or off the employers' premises.

The EPAO will identify a suitable person to invigilate the on-demand test. It may, but does not have to be, the assessor marking the simulated scenario or conducting the professional discussion. Tests will be invigilated in line with the requirements set out by the EPAO.

On-demand test – in order to pass the apprentice will achieve the following grade boundaries 0-17 fail, 18-24 pass and 25-30 distinction. See overall grading criteria on page 16.

Simulated scenario

The apprentice will be required to demonstrate skills, competence and behaviour in their job role. Due to the highly sensitive nature of the business, this assessment method will be via a simulated scenario.

- 2 scenarios selected by the independent end-point assessor from a bank of scenarios created by the EPAO
- 20-minutes per scenario to plan a verbal response
- 5-minute response per scenario presented to independent end-point assessor
- 5-minute follow-up questions per scenario to clarify responses

The scenarios will test behavioural, analytical and decision-making skills based on the following realistic situations with each scenario covering a sub-set of KSBs: The EPAO will pick two scenarios. By completing 2 scenarios, the apprentice will demonstrate all of the required KSBs.

- Team leadership (K27, S1, S3, S4, S8, S13, S19, S20, S21, S22, B9 and B15)
- Customer engagement (to include complaint handling, customer service, communications and conflict resolution) (K27, S1, S3, S4, S6, S8, S20, S21, S22 and B15)
- Business development (to include community engagement) (K27, S4, S6, S8, S13, S19, S20, S21, S22, B9 and B15)

As part of best practice, the assessor will ask a minimum of 3 questions from a bank of suggested questions generated by the EPAO appropriate to the scenario response to clarify skills and evidence behaviours. Questioning should be conducted at the end of the 5-minute presentation and must be asked within a period not exceeding 5 minutes per scenario. The questions should pertain only to the scenario response and the skills and behaviours being tested in this method.

EPAOs must develop 'scenario specifications' and question banks of sufficient size to prevent predictability and review them regularly (and at least once a year) to ensure they, and the specifications they contain, are fit for purpose.

The independent end-point assessor must document questions and answers. The independent end-point assessor will make their judgement using the criteria for assessment identified from the standard. See grading criteria on page 16.

Professional discussion

- 75 minute (+10% at the discretion of the independent assessor) discussion between the apprentice and the independent end-point assessor
- Competency based questions
- Will cover all KSB assigned to this method in the mapping table (see page 12)

The professional discussion will be conducted in a 'controlled environment'. The professional discussion may be conducted using technology, as long as fair assessment conditions can be maintained. Acceptable means of remote assessment include video conferencing / video calling and must include a two-way visual and audio link.

A standard template, provided by the end-point assessment organisation, which can be contextualised will be used. To ensure consistency, the questions will be taken from a bank of questions developed by the EPAO. The professional discussion will be planned in advance to allow for quality assurance activity in line with sampling requirements and will cover all KSB assigned to this method in the mapping table (see page 12).

The amount of questions asked during the professional discussion will vary according to the breadth and depth of the answers given (and how many follow-on questions are required) but as a **minimum** there must be 10 questions asked to cover all the criteria requirements and give full opportunity for the apprentice to demonstrate all the requirements for a distinction.

See grading criteria on page 16.

Reliability, Validity and Consistency

Independent end-point assessment is a culmination of a learning and development journey resulting in external confirmation of an apprentice meeting the industry defined standard. The assessments are conducted by an independent end-point assessor approved and appointed by an end-point assessment organisation (EPAO) which is on the register of end-point assessment organisations (RoEPAO) and which is quality assured to ensure consistent, reliable and valid judgements.

In summary, the following controls must be adhered to:

- A formal structure to plan the end-point assessment, allowing planning of internal and external quality assurance.
- The mandating of both technical and assessment competence and continuing professional development (CPD) for independent end-point assessors to ensure that they have the right tools, qualifications, training and experience to make reliable judgements.
- An end-point assessor from an independent EPAO, who has had no prior involvement with the apprentice, providing an objective independent view
- The internal quality assurance of individuals conducting independent end-point assessments and of independent end-point assessment outcomes and results, by an ESFA registered EPAO.
- The use of on-demand tests with automated marking ensuring a consistent approach regardless of the apprentice's workplace.
- Three complementary assessment methods that provide a clear structure for synoptic assessment across the standard.

Roles and responsibilities

Apprentice

The apprentice takes responsibility for learning independently, preparing for the EPA and contributing to the decision on the timing of their EPA.

Employer

The employer determines when the apprentice is competent and ready to attempt the EPA.

Independent end-point assessor

The independent end-point assessor must be someone who has nothing to gain from the outcome of the assessment and must not have been involved in training or employment of the apprentice. They must be approved and appointed by the EPAO to undertake the independent end-point assessment of the apprentice.

To ensure consistent and reliable judgements are made, independent end-point assessors will be subject to rigorous quality assurance and must take part in regular standardisation activities. The mandatory criteria for independent end-point assessors is set out below:

Mandatory requirements:	Independent Assessors
Be independent of the apprentice, their employer and training provider(s) i.e. there must be no conflict of interest	V
Have recent relevant experience of the occupation/sector gained in the last two years or significant experience of the occupation/sector. This should be at least at the same level as the standard.	V
Hold or be working towards Assessor Award (EPAQ/A1/A2/D32/D33/TAQA or equivalent qualification)	V
Attend a minimum of 2 days EPAO standardisation sessions per year	
Undertake a minimum of 2 days continuing professional development relating to the actual job role per year	
Hold a recognised funeral qualification at Level 3 or higher	

End-point assessment organisations (EPAOs)

EPAOs are registered on the ESFA Register of End-Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO). EPAOs are responsible for ensuring assessments are conducted fairly and that assessments are valid, reliable and consistent.

EPAOs must:

- Develop a question bank for the questioning elements of sufficient size to mitigate predictability.
- Develop a bank of scenarios and follow-up questions for the simulated scenarios and competency-based questions for the professional discussion, of sufficient size to prevent predictability and review them regularly (and at least once a year) to ensure they, and the specifications they contain, are fit for purpose.
- Create documentation for recording assessment decisions.
- Appoint independent assessors that meet the requirements as detailed in this plan see above.
- Have internal expertise in terms of qualified personnel with V1 or equivalent
- Provide training for independent assessors in terms of good assessment practice, operating the assessment tools and grading.
- Have quality assurance systems and procedures that support fair, reliable and consistent assessment across the organisation and over time.
- Operate regular standardisation events that enable assessors to attend a minimum of 2 events per year.
- Operate moderation of assessment activity and decisions, through examination of documentation and observation of activity. Moderation must be performed on a risk basis, i.e. new or poorly performing independent assessors must have every component of every assessment quality assured, but established, high performing independent assessors can be quality assured on a sampling basis, with at least one assessment component being subject to either desk based or live internal quality assurance activity.

All end-point assessment organisations are required to check the independence of the endpoint assessor from the apprentice, ensuring that the end-point assessor has not been involved in the learning, development or employment of the apprentice. End-point assessment organisations will be subject to external quality assurance in order to deliver national consistency across the funeral (retail) sector, which is overseen by the employer-led EQA body.

Affordability

This approach to independent assessment has been tested with employers who have confirmed that it is the preferred approach. The assessment methods chosen are considered the most appropriate and cost effective. The knowledge test can be completed online, the simulated scenario, and professional discussion can be completed on the same day to minimise costs.

Volumes

It is anticipated that there will be 150 starts in the first year on this apprenticeship and 100 per year once established.

Manageability and feasibility

This apprenticeship has been designed to be viable for both large and small organisations. This means that there will be a wide geographical take up. Existing funeral director training providers are used to dealing with this and the assessment model is a simple one to administer.

External quality assurance (EQA) of the end-point assessment for the funeral director apprenticeship standard

The external quality assurance will be an employer-led model carried out by People 1st on behalf of the employers.

The funeral director apprenticeship standard

A funeral director has overall responsibility for the client and the deceased by arranging, conducting and managing the funeral. The funeral director will act as a role model, mentor and coach to the team. They will liaise with a wide range of other organisations and services on behalf of the client to deliver the funeral. On the day of the funeral, a funeral director briefs and leads the team and is the central point of contact, coordination and escalation of feedback. Creating and developing sensitive working relationships with clients and stakeholders such as suppliers, the police, coroners and medical personnel is a key part of the role. Funeral directors are the first point of contact for colleagues regarding specialist funeral services such as exhumation, bequeathal, repatriation, military funerals, burial at sea and multiple funerals. Day to day operations include planning and coordinating arrangements and resources for funerals; overseeing pre-funeral checks; ensuring the funeral meets the needs of the client; assisting in the preparation and presentation of coffins and the deceased; delivering third party products and services; pre-need and aftercare services. Funeral directors must act as an ambassador by upholding the reputation and professional image of the business and actively develop relationships within the local community. They will converse with local customs and practices (all denominations and faiths) and utilise market data to become the funeral director of choice in the area. Funeral directors will work out-of-hours on a rota basis and cover a variety of roles within the funeral sector both on and off site.

	Key to assessment method identification							
EPA	This chart provides an overview of what an apprentice can expect to be covered in each end-point assessment (EPA) method							
Т	Assessment will be through the on-demand test							
PD	Assessment will be through the professional discussion							
S	Assessment will be through the simulated scenario							
2 methods	Some sections of the standard are assessed by more than one method.							
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	Knowledge and Understanding	EPA	Skills (Show it)	EPA	Behaviours (Live it)	EPA
	(Know it)					
Client	 K1 How to support team members to establish clients' needs and wishes when dealing with clients during the grieving process K2 The importance of accurately assessing client needs K3 The profile of the current client base and the business aims and objectives for client services K4 The importance of acting on behalf of the client K5 How to handle client concerns, complaints and compliments which have been escalated to them 	T T T T	S1 Lead the team to use established strategies when handling grieving clients S2 Build a rapport with clients anticipating their requirements and providing excellent service S3 Handle and resolve clients concerns, complaints and compliments	S PD S	B1 Lead the team to use empathy and sensitivity during all interactions with clients from first call through to final contact B2 Act as a role model remaining calm, managing concerns, complaints and compliments and seeking resolutions in a timely manner	PD PD
Reputation	K6 How to manage the protection of the business reputation based on business values, vision, aims and behaviours K7 The market share of the business and the competition K8 The local demographic/community and how to use it to cultivate a positive reputation of the business K9 How technology and applications affect business objectives and reputation	T PD PD T	S4 Lead a service, which delivers business vision and values when dealing with clients, colleagues and all stakeholders S5 Work to improve the profitability and reputation of the business whilst being respectful to competitors S6 Create opportunities to introduce / promote the business at local events, assist with fund raising and support community services S7 Manage and monitor the appropriate use of technologies meeting business objectives	S PD S PD	B3 Be an ambassador and lead by example to create a positive impression of the business at all times B4 Analyse information to keep informed of reputation, market share and competitors B5 Organise events in the local community utilising the skills of the team B6 Create opportunities to use technology in responsible and innovative ways	PD PD PD PD

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Leadership	K10 How to organise the team on a daily basis to achieve short and long term objectives K11 How and why to carry out a team brief / debrief K12 Team dynamics and different leadership styles K13 How to lead by example and the importance of doing so K14 The importance of and how and when to make contingency plans K15 How to support team members during the funeral arrangement process K16 Limits of own authority within the business and who decision makers/stakeholders are in the business	PD T T PD PD T T	S8 Supervise and manage the day-to- day running of the business S9 Carry out briefings and debriefings to organise the team to meet business objectives S10 Lead the team effectively responding positively to different group dynamics and personalities S11 Design and manage contingencies according to own role and business needs S12 Act within limits of own authority making decisions and escalating to business decision makers/stakeholders when necessary	S PD PD PD PD	B7 Adopt a leadership style that contributes to a harmonious, inclusive and safe work environment B8 Respond positively and calmly using own initiative to create solutions and seek assistance when necessary B9 Share positive feedback, successes and key learnings with the team and stakeholders	PD PD S/PD
Legal and Governance	K17 All legislation relating to the sector, including the roles and responsibilities of external agencies and authorities K18 Business governance requirements relating to funeral procedures and working with the deceased and the client K19 The legalities surrounding specialist funeral services	т т т	S13 Apply legal requirements for the sector whilst supervising staff working with external agencies and authorities S14 Supervise operations according to the business' governance, policies and procedures S15 Organise and support colleagues to co-ordinate specialist funeral services within legal requirements	S PD PD	B10 Lead by example working safely, honestly and with integrity and respect at all times B11 Promote good working practices in line with all relevant legislation	PD PD
Personal development and performance	K20 The importance of and how to develop self and team K21 How development impacts both business and team objectives K22 Where and how to source development activities for self and team K23 The importance of acting as a role model, mentor and coach for your team	PD PD PD PD	S16 Facilitate continuous professional development activities and use newly acquired skills and knowledge to improve business, self and others S17 Research, source and implement development activities S18 Identify training needs with team members, arrange and/or deliver development activities to others	PD PD PD	B12 Positively challenge and manage performance of self and others identifying strengths and areas for development B13 Inspire and motivate others through coaching and mentoring	PD PD

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Products and services	K24 Industry product and service developments and where to access information regarding these K25 The importance of keeping the team up to date with new and current products and services K26 How to promote products and services to the team and local community	PD T T	S19 Cascade up to date information to the team regarding new and current products and services S20 Empower the team to confidently offer choice to the client	S	B14 Use own knowledge of products and services to ethically promote own business and improve profitability	PD
Communication	/	S PD T	S21 Demonstrate an appropriate response to all forms of communication showing an ability to interpret a range of cues S22 Monitor the effectiveness of and encourage excellent communications across all operations that achieve the best result for the business	S	B15 Promote the use of effective communication methods	S
Administration and finance	K30 The business operating procedures for example the processing and security of donations and debt management K31 The principles of operating commercially and ethically (social responsibility) K32 Future client markets to help grow the business K33 The need to gather feedback, analyse it and how it contributes to business improvements	PD T PD PD	S23 Manage business information systems and procedures S24 Demonstrate ethical practices to support profitability and maintain own business social responsibilities S25 Analyse management information and suggest ways to improve business performance	PD PD PD	B16 Work ethically when operating and supervising administrative and financial duties	PD
Funeral	K34 The importance of and how to monitor pre-funeral checks in accordance with business needs	PD PD	S26 Demonstrate the ability to take control and ownership of events on the day of the funeral	PD	B17 Lead by example and manage funeral services in a calm and respectful way, handling conflict when necessary	PD

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K35 How to plan, resource and conduct			
a funeral in accordance with the client's			
wishes			

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Grading criteria

Apprentices who fail to demonstrate competence against the standard for the on-demand test, simulated scenario or the professional discussion will be considered to have failed that assessment method and as a result will fail overall (see table below).

On-demand test	Simulated scenario	Professional discussion	Overall grade
Fail 0-17	Any	Any	Fail
Any	Fail	Any	Fail
Any	Any	Fail	Fail
Pass 18-24	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass 18-24	Pass	Distinction	Pass
Pass 18-24	Distinction	Pass	Pass
Distinction 25-30	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass 18-24	Distinction	Distinction	Pass
Distinction 25-30	Distinction	Pass	Pass
Distinction 25-30	Pass	Distinction	Pass
Distinction 25-30	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

Detailed grade descriptors

Method 1: On-demand test

In order to pass the apprentice will achieve the following grade boundaries:

0-17 fail, 18-24 pass and 25-30 distinction – mapped to K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K6 K9 K11 K12 K15 K16 K17 K18 K19 K20 K25 K26 K29 K31

Assessment Method 2 (AM2): Simulated scenario – see table below

Assessment Method 3 (AM3): Professional discussion – see table below

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K30 K32 K33 K34 K35 S2 S5 S7 S9 S10	the professional discussion if they have	clients, the local community and the business. K8 K13 S2 S9 S14 B1 B3 B5 B11 B14	Validates decisions that they have made, explaining the reasoning behind their decisions.
S11 S12 S14 S15 S16 S17 S18 S23 S24 S25 S26 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8	not met the pass criteria.	Describes their business's reputation and current position in the local market and demonstrates the importance of knowing who local competitors are and how they are performing. Can suggest ways to improve business performance and profitability and build/maintain relationships with local competitors. K7 S5 B4	Explains the improvements that they have made to the business and the impact of their actions to the local community.
B9 B10 B11 B12 B13 B14 B16 B17		Uses, manages and monitors the use of a variety of technologies to access and communicate information, products and services internally and externally. Contributes to the efficient, ethical running of the business, achieving business objectives and future growth K10 K24 K28 K32 S7 S23 B6	Evaluates their individual and team performance demonstrating how feedback has been analysed and changes implemented Assembles examples of solutions which have
		Recognises the importance of continuous development and sources information and feedback, which helps their own and colleague's development, influencing business growth and improved performance. K20 K21 K22 K33 S16 S17 S18 S25 B9 B12 B13	been applied to customer, team and business problems.
		Makes decisions within the limits of their own authority, escalating where necessary. Creates and implements contingency plans and leads the team in a harmonious, inclusive and safe environment. K14 K23 S10 S11 S12 S24 B1 B2 B7 B8 B10	
		Demonstrates ethical operating and supervision of business administration and financial procedures K30 B16	
		Carries out pre-funeral checks, manages and conducts routine and specialist funerals with both respect and dignity whilst meeting the individual needs of the clients and those of the business. K34 K35 S2 S15 S26 B1 B17	

Resits / retakes

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

Any assessment method re-sit/re-take must be taken during the three-month EPA period; otherwise, the entire EPA must be retaken, unless in the opinion of the EPAO exceptional circumstances apply outside the control of the apprentice.

Re-sits/re-takes are not offered to apprentices wishing to move from pass to distinction. Where any assessment method has to be re-sat/re-taken, the apprentice may not be awarded a distinction, unless the EPAO determines there are exceptional circumstances requiring a re-sit/re-take.