

End-point assessment plan for Probation Services Practitioner apprenticeship standard

Standard reference number	Level of this EPA plan	Integrated
ST0494	3	No

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Introduction and overview

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

Full time apprentices will typically spend 18 months on-programme (before the gateway) working towards the occupational standard, with a minimum of 20% off-the-job training. All apprentices will 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 that they can be evidenced to an EPAO.

All pre-requisites for EPA assessment methods must also be complete and available for the assessor as necessary.

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 typically lasting a maximum of 6 months, beginning when the apprentice has met the EPA gateway requirements.

The EPA consists of 2 distinct assessment methods.

The individual assessment methods will have the following grades:

Assessment Method 1 - Professional Discussion

- Fail
- Pass
- Distinction

Assessment Method 2 – Case Study and Presentation

- Fail
- Pass
- Distinction

Performance in the EPA will determine the overall apprenticeship grades of:

- Fail
- Pass
- Distinction

EPA summary table

On-programme (typically, 18 months)	Training to develop the occupation standard's knowledge, skills and behaviours.
End Point Assessment Gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer is satisfied the apprentice is consistently working at, or above, the level of the occupational standard. • English/mathematics Level 2 <p>Apprentices must complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A portfolio of examples of real work
End Point Assessment (which would typically take 6 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Method 1: Professional Discussion • Assessment Method 2: Case Study and Presentation

Length of end-point assessment period:

The EPA (including all assessment methods) will typically be completed within 6 months of the apprentice passing through the Gateway.

Order of assessment methods

The assessment methods can be taken in any order.

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 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.

In addition to the employer's confirmation that the apprentice is working at or above the level in the occupational standard, the apprentice must have completed the following gateway requirements prior to beginning EPA:

English and mathematics at level 2.

For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement the apprenticeships English and mathematics minimum requirement is Entry Level 3 and British Sign Language qualification are an alternative to English qualifications for whom this is their primary language.

For the Professional Discussion, the apprentice will be required to submit:

A portfolio of examples of real work, typically consisting of 10-12 pieces of evidence which can include:-

- Individual pieces of evidence to demonstrate competence against one or more of the KSBs mapped to this assessment method. The collated evidence when combined should cover all KSBs mapped to this method.
- Evidence sources may include evidence of work undertaken which may be supported by: client feedback, witness testimonies, employer/trainer feedback, training records, appraisal records, training course completion. This list is not definitive, other evidence sources are permissible however reflective accounts and self-evaluations are not allowed.
- Employer must validate the portfolio and confirm to the EPAO that it is the apprentice's own work

The portfolio will be provided to the EPAO at Gateway in electronic format . This should be at least 4 weeks prior to the Professional Discussion which it supports.

For the Case Study and Presentation there are no specific requirements.

Assessment Methods

Assessment Method 1: Professional Discussion

Rationale

This assessment method has been selected to test a Apprentice's knowledge and applied competency based on number of themes that are linked to the standard. The professional discussion itself will be aided by a portfolio of on the job practice Apprentice. The aim of the professional discussion is to test this further against the expectations of the KSBs for the role of a qualified Probation Officer.

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. The professional discussion is based on the portfolio of evidence that was submitted at gateway and will focus on those areas identified as being assessed by this method.

The professional discussion should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions. The professional discussion can take place in any of the following:

- employer's premises
- a suitable venue selected by the EPAO (e.g. a training provider's premises)

Delivery

The independent assessor will conduct and assess the professional discussion. The professional discussion will be based on the portfolio that was submitted at the gateway.

The apprentice will be informed 4 weeks after gateway when the professional discussion will take place. The apprentices will need to make a copy of the portfolio in order to prepare for the professional discussion

The professional discussion will last for 90 minutes. The assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the professional discussion by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete it. Further time may be granted for apprentices with appropriate needs.

During the discussion, the independent assessor must combine questions from the EPAO's question bank and those generated by themselves. There will be a minimum of 10 questions that will focus on the areas identified as being assessed using this assessment method which must cover the KSBs mapped to this method.

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.

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 the grading decisions.

Other relevant information

A structured specification and question bank must be developed by EPAOs. The 'question bank' must be of sufficient size to prevent predictability and reviewed regularly (and at least once a year) to ensure that it, and its content, are fit for purpose. The independent assessor can use a combination of set questions from the EPAO and their own questions, however the independent assessor must ensure

that the apprentice is treated fairly and consistently with others, and that the objectives of this assessment are met. The specifications, including questions relating to the underpinning knowledge, skills and behaviours, 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 discussions and reaching consistent judgement.

Assessment Method 2: Case Study and Presentation

Rationale

This assessment method has been selected to test an apprentice's knowledge and competence in their application of working with a current service user. They will need to demonstrate their skills in a written format, a requirement of the role, and be able to articulate their case management skills in a succinct manner. An apprentice's knowledge of how to apply their practice and the policies, processes and procedures behind this are the most significant areas tested in this exercise. Apprentice They will need to demonstrate their skills in communication and presenting a rationale on their decision making.

Case Study: Component 1

Overview

This assessment will take the form of a written case study which will be based on a case/service user that the apprentice has been working with at the point of Gateway. This must be appropriately structured to draw out the best of the apprentice's competence,

The case study must cover the knowledge and skills as detailed in the standard that has been identified to be assessed. The apprentice will select their best example of a case/service user.

Apprentices will need to have completed this assessment method before progressing to the Presentation component.

Delivery

The End Point Assessment Organisation will provide guidance and a bank of case study themes for the Apprentice to choose from at the Gateway which will cover the knowledge, skills and behaviours mapped to this method. The candidate will have 8 weeks following the Gateway to produce the written case study based on the chosen theme and submit it to the EPAO. The independent assessor will assess the content of the case study against the relevant grading descriptors. The employer will confirm the authenticity of the work submitted to the EPAO being that of the apprentice. .

The word count for the case study should not exceed 2500 words (+/- 10% tolerance). The case study should be prepared and submitted before moving onto the presentation.

The case study should include (as a minimum) an introduction, case progress, obstacles/challenges, details of any planned work and a summary. Apprentices should also include academic theory and policies, processes and practices that are relevant to the case. Apprentices do not need to follow a set structure for their submission.

Marking

The case study must be marked by independent assessors or markers employed by the EPAO following a marking guide produced by the EPAO.

Resource development

The bank of scenarios for the case study must be written by EPAOs and it is recommended that this be done in consultation with representative employers to gain the necessary occupational expertise in this sector. EPAOs should also maintain the security when consulting employers. EPAOs must develop a bank of themes to prevent predictability and review them regularly (and at least once a year) to ensure they, are fit for purpose.

Presentation: Component 2

Overview

This assessment will take the form of a presentation of the aforementioned case study undertaken by the Apprentice after gateway and will focus on those areas identified as being assessed using this method.

The case study and presentation will be assessed holistically as they are components of the same assessment method.

The presentation should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions. The presentation can take place in any of the following:

- employer's premises
- a suitable venue selected by the EPAO (e.g. a training provider's premises)

Delivery

Following the submission of the written case study, the apprentice will have a further 10 days to prepare a presentation based on the written case study which will be presented to the assessor. This should be an overview of the written case study and appropriately cover the KSBs assigned to this method of assessment. This should be provided to the EPAO at this point.

The presentation and question and answer session should last for a maximum of 45 minutes. The presentation will typically last 20 minutes with questioning typically lasting 25 minutes. minutes with learners being provided with the opportunity to present their materials in a number of ways i.e. PowerPoint, Flipcharts, any other visual aids. Following the presentation, the assessor will undertake a question and answer session to further explore the presentation content and the required KSBs for this assessment method.

A minimum of 10 questions will be asked following the presentation. Questions can be taken from an EPAO question bank and/or generated by the assessor so they are tailored to the presentation content.

The independent assessor must use the assessment tools and procedures that are set by the EPAO to record the presentation and questions and answer session. This can be done on a self-designed EPAO recording summary sheet. The independent assessor will make all grading decisions. The independent assessor must use the assessment tools and procedures that are set by the EPAO to record the presentation and questions and answer session. This can be done on a self-designed EPAO recording summary sheet. The independent assessor will make all the grading decisions.

The independent assessor must:

- a. plan the assessment in consultation with the employer prior to it taking place;
- b. ensure that the location for the assessment is appropriate;
- c. ensure the presentation and discussion takes place in a room free from distractions with no other people present except those with prior approval from the EPAO or EQA provider;
- d. ensure any special needs of the apprentice are taken into consideration;
- e. ensure that the apprentice understands the assessment process, the possible outcomes and how it is graded;
- f. ensure that all resources required for the presentation are available and the apprentice is ready to start the assessment
- g. ensure that the grading criteria and relevant documentation are to hand before commencing;
- h. capture an audio record of the presentation and discussion;
- i. document the outcomes using the EPAO's standard documentation;
- j. ensure the apprentice is not informed of the outcome of the assessment at this stage;
- k. confirm the specification has been fully covered and the rules have been followed;
- l. make the final decision about the outcome of the assessment and recommend the grade;
- m. send documentation to the EPAO within the agreed time.

Other relevant information

Independent assessors must be developed and trained by the EPAO in the assessment of presentations and reaching consistent judgement.

Grading

Assessment Method 1: Professional Discussion

KSBs	Pass	Distinction
K1 K2 K10 S16	<p>Policies, Procedures and Processes</p> <p>Explains key policies, procedures, process and legislative requirements giving examples of how these apply within their work</p> <p>Explains data protection and information sharing policies within own and external organistaions, and the implications of not following these.</p>	<p>Policies, Procedures and Processes</p> <p>Evaluates their approach to applying policies, processes, procedures and legislative requirements and is able to make suggestions for a change and/or improvement in a changing landscape</p>
K5 S5 S6 B1 B4	<p>Service User Engagement</p> <p>Explains how to take account of the service users readiness and motivation to change which may affect engagement and compliance</p> <p>Explain with examples how they have made enforcement decisions in relation to non-compliance by the service user.</p> <p>Explains how and why they uphold the highest professional standards, values and behaviour when engaging with stakeholders</p> <p>Explains the importance of victim empathy with service users and the importance of undertaking specific work to encourage perspective taking.</p>	
S11 B3	<p>Equality and Diversity</p> <p>Explains the types of behaviours which do not promote equality, diversity and inclusion giving examples of when they have challenged these within their role.</p> <p>Explains the protective characteristics and personal circumstances which may affect service users engagement and</p>	

	compliance, and the impact this has on assessing risk.	
K7 K11 S14 S12 B5	<p>Continual Professional Development</p> <p>Explains the importance of team work and how they have contributed in a range of settings to achieve own and team objectives</p> <p>Explains the importance of professional development and reflecting on feedback.</p> <p>Explains how to manage stressful situations, recognising their own emotional welfare and when to seek support when required.</p>	<p>Continual Professional Development</p> <p>Gives an example of leading a team meeting using own knowledge and experience to suggest improvements and enhance the work of others</p> <p>Evaluates the importance of identifying gaps in own learning to maintain continual professional development.</p>

Assessment Method 2: Case Study and Presentation

KSBs	Pass	Distinction
K3 K4 S1 S2 S3 S4 S10 S13 S15	<p>Risk Assessment and Management</p> <p>Apply risk assessments to identify risk of harm to others, public protection and safeguarding checks.</p> <p>Explains the risks associated with non-compliance and how to address these to reduce risks, including multi-agency working and gathering information.</p> <p>Utilises resources and other agencies to manage the risk that service users may pose whilst also considering motivation and individual circumstances.</p> <p>Utilises associated tools to produce assessment of risk and the management of needs producing written and oral assessments in a range of forums.</p>	<p>Risk Assessment and Management</p> <p>Analyse and justify their approach to risk assessment and management.</p> <p>Evaluate the different methods of intervention considered and their value</p>
K6 S13 B6	<p>Collaboration and Communication</p> <p>Explain the importance of partnerships and multi-agency working in caseload management.</p> <p>Explain how they have contributed to partnership and multi-agency working</p>	<p>Collaboration and Communication</p> <p>Evaluates the value of working with partners to manage risk and rehabilitation of service users and how this impacts on own role.</p>

	<p>through case referrals, and meeting forums to manage own caseload and meet objectives</p> <p>Explains the process of local information sharing arrangements and how they actively seek information when managing risk in the community.</p> <p>Identifies potential barriers and risks to information sharing and strategies to overcome them.</p>	<p>Evaluates the importance of building and maintaining effective working relationships with partners and multi-agency groups to protect communities.</p>
<p>K8 K9 S7 S8 S9 B2 B7</p>	<p>Service User Engagement</p> <p>Explains how to take into account the service user's readiness and motivation to change which may affect engagement and compliance.</p> <p>Explains the service users' needs and the interventions available to the service user to support their rehabilitation, how these are delivered and how they support rehabilitation.</p> <p>Explain how they make required referrals for interventions whilst continuing to undertake engagement activity.</p> <p>Explains how they have encouraged and empowered to the service user to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to seek positive change via support, guidance and robust planning and management.</p>	<p>Service User Engagement</p> <p>Describes the importance of continual interaction with service users and the affect this can have on professional development and curiosity</p> <p>Identifies and explains theories that support motivation, desistance and prosocial modelling to support changes in service user behaviour.</p>

Overall EPA grading

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

The Case Study/Presentation method carries more weighting and therefore the 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 – Professional Discussion	Assessment Method 2 – Case Study and Presentation	Overall grading
Fail	Fail	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Fail	Fail
Fail	Pass	Fail
Fail	Distinction	Fail
Distinction	Fail	Fail
Pass	Distinction	Distinction
Distinction	Pass	Pass
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Apprentice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete the on-programme element of the apprenticeship prepare for and complete the EPA
Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify when the apprentice is ready to pass the gateway and undertake their EPA notify the EPAO that the apprentice is ready to enter the gateway
EPAO	<p>As a minimum EPAOs should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide training and CPD to the independent assessors they employ to undertake the EPA have no direct connection with the apprentice, their employer or training provider i.e. there must be no conflict of interest have processes in place to conduct internal quality assurance and do this on a regular basis organise standardisation events and activities in accordance with this plan's IQA section organise and conduct moderation of independent assessors' marking in accordance with this plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have, and operate, an appeals process
Independent assessor	<p>As a minimum an Independent assessor should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be independent of the apprentice, their employer and training provider(s) i.e. there must be no conflict of interest • 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 • have the capability to assess the apprentice at this level • attend the required number of EPAOs standardisation and training events per year (as defined in the IQA section) <p>have practical experience of the probation sector post Transforming Rehabilitation</p>
Training provider	<p>As a minimum the training provider should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • advise the employer, upon request, on the apprentice's readiness for EPA prior to the gateway • support the apprentice during 'on-programme training to remain on track for timely gateway and achievement • complete regular progress reviews with the apprentice and employer • provide advice to the Apprentice on how best to collate and submit any evidence to the EPAO in readiness for EPA • play no part in the EPA itself

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 areas:
3 years' experience of working in the Probation sector
- 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 experienced working in the occupation/sector at least the same level for the last 5 consecutive years.
- The assessor will have the following minimum skills, knowledge and occupational competence:
 - Hold a recognised Assessor 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
- Standardisation events for independent assessors should be held at least annually and more often if the need arises.
- Assessors should attend a minimum of one standardisation event per year for this Standard.

Re-sits and retakes

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 either component of method 2 they will be required to submit a new case study and presentation and will be given a further 8 weeks in which to do so.

The apprentice will not be able to achieve a distinction grade following a re-sit or re-take, the grade will be capped at a pass.

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

Affordability

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

- using an employer's premises
- Remote testing to conduct the professional discussion

Reasonable adjustments

The EPAO must have in place clear and fair arrangements for making Reasonable Adjustments for this 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.

Mapping of KSBs

Some of the KSBs to be achieved, could potentially be met by using a range of assessment methods. This is due to the vast coverage and KSB development of the role, this will allow for and ensure the apprentice is fully conversant in the role at EPA. Due to this the KSBs may therefore appear in more than one assessment method.

KSB code	KSB statement	Methods mapped against
Knowledge		
K1	legislation and organisational policies and procedures relating to Probation practice, the importance of applying them in practice and the risk of not doing so.	Professional Discussion
K2	the Criminal Justice System relevant to all aspects of probation and rehabilitation and how the organisations work collaboratively.	Professional Discussion
K3	different approaches to risk assessment, including the assessment of the needs and strengths of service users and the importance of gathering information to inform risk assessment.	Case Study and Presentation
K4	harm and abuse indicators and potential risk factors that may lead service users to harm themselves or others. How to reduce risk and raise concerns.	Case Study and Presentation
K5	how to include the victim perspective in working practices.	Professional Discussion
K6	roles and responsibilities of agencies involved in public protection and local arrangements in place.	Case Study and Presentation
K7	principles of effective team work to achieve outcomes, build and sustain effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders.	Professional Discussion
K8	the interventions and activities available to help service users to prepare for rehabilitation and resettlement, how these are delivered and how they can reduce re-offending.	Case Study and Presentation
K9	theories and techniques in effective practice to promote rehabilitation	Case Study and Presentation
K10	the importance of sharing, gathering, using and storing information in accordance with data protection requirements.	Professional Discussion
K11	how to identify your own development needs and ways to reflect on own practice.	Professional Discussion
Skills		
S1	Undertake assessment of risk of re-offending, considering the needs and strengths of service users.	Case Study and Presentation

S2	Continuously gather information and review progress of risk and sentence plans throughout the sentence. Respond to changes in the risk of re-offending and harm posed in line with guidance and make adjustments as necessary.	Case Study and Presentation
S3	Record, conclude and present assessments both written and orally, in a range of settings, in the required time-frame in accordance with organisational requirements	Case Study and Presentation
S4	use assessment information, resources of other agencies and available interventions to devise risk and sentence plans in collaboration with the service user	Case Study and Presentation
S5	make enforcement decisions around service users' absences and behaviour.	Professional Discussion
S6	integrate professional values into practice and maintain professional boundaries, adapting approach to individual needs to effectively deal with a range of challenging behaviour.	Professional Discussion
S7	support service users, providing information, advice and resources to enable them to benefit from rehabilitation and resettlement activities.	Case Study and Presentation
S8	make referrals to and deliver interventions. Encourage service users to reflect on their participation and progress on their sentence activities.	Case Study and Presentation
S9	engage, motivate, collaborate with and support service users to explore the effects of their behaviour on themselves and others to achieve a positive change in behaviour and reduce the risk of harm and re-offending.	Case Study and Presentation
S10	make safeguarding checks and use information within assessments when there are safeguarding concerns. Liaise with appropriate agencies and contribute towards plans around vulnerable adults, provide multi-agency reports when required.	Case Study and Presentation
S11	identify and challenge behaviours that do not promote equality, diversity and inclusion.	Professional Discussion
S12	develop own knowledge, skills and competence, respond to feedback and identify improvements to practice.	Professional Discussion
S13	manage own caseload, attend partnership meetings, share assessments and maintain contact with other agencies and intervention partners, as required and in order to oversee the case effectively and meet objectives.	Case Study and Presentation
S14	contribute to regular team meetings and case discussion meetings.	Professional Discussion
S15	use a range of digital tools to record case, risk and sentence assessments.	Case Study and Presentation

S16	maintain records securely in line with data protection and security of information and use information to support delivery of services.	Professional Discussion
Behaviours		
B1	engage positively with service users reinforcing positive attitudes and behaviour.	Professional Discussion
B2	demonstrate pro-social modelling skills.	Case Study and Presentation
B3	act with respect to diversity and cultural differences.	Professional Discussion
B4	Demonstrate high standards of professionalism, uphold organisational values, and professional boundaries	Professional Discussion
B5	manage own emotions in stressful situations, seek support for own welfare.	Professional Discussion
B6	be proactive in working collaboratively with colleagues and stakeholders.	Case Study and Presentation
B7	listen actively in all interactions with service users and show respect whilst being professionally curious about what is being said.	Case Study and Presentation