

These revised versions of the occupational standard and end-point assessment plan are available for information but are not yet approved for delivery pending ministerial approval of the funding band. Once a funding band has been approved, a notice period will begin, after which this new version of the apprenticeship standard will replace the current version for new starts

L7: Senior leader (revision)

Title of occupation

Senior leader (revision)

UOS reference number

ST0480_V1.1

Core and options

No

Option title/s

Level of occupation

Level 7

Route

Business and administration

Typical duration of apprenticeship

24 months

Occupation summary

This occupation is found in small, medium and large organisations in the public, private or third sectors and in all areas of the economy including health, finance, engineering, manufacturing, business and professional services, education, retail, leisure, technology and construction. Senior Leaders are a key component of all types of business model where there is a workforce to lead, manage and support.

The broad purpose of the occupation is to provide clear, inclusive and strategic leadership and direction relating to their area of responsibility within an organisation. Typically, this involves setting, managing and monitoring achievement of core objectives that are aligned to the overall strategic objectives of their organisation's Board (or equivalent). In a smaller organisation they are also likely to contribute to the execution and achievement of these strategic objectives. A Senior Leader influences at a higher organisational level, including sometimes at Board (or equivalent) level, and sets the culture and tone across their area of responsibility. They may work in varied environments including in an office, onsite, or remotely and demonstrate a high level of flexibility and adaptability to meet the needs of the organisation.

In their daily work, an employee in this occupation interacts with internal stakeholders such as members of their team, other senior leaders/managers, support services (for example: finance, marketing, HR) and project groups and, in larger organisations, they may be part of a wider specialist team. Depending on the size of their organisation, a Senior Leader may be responsible for reporting results relating to their area of responsibility to a Board, trustees, shareholders, executive team or to other senior management within the organisation. Externally, a Senior Leader acts as an ambassador for their organisation with wide-ranging networks typically involving customers/clients, supply chains and statutory/regulatory bodies.

An employee in this occupation will be responsible for:

- Setting direction, vision, governance and providing a clear sense of purpose for their area of responsibility.
- Providing clear and inclusive leadership.
- Identifying longer-term opportunities and risks using data from internal intelligence sources and external influences.
- Developing ethical, innovative and supportive cultures that get the best from people and enable the delivery of results.
- Resources that may include budgets, people, assets and facilities.
- Staying up to date with innovation and championing its adoption.
- Keeping pace with and responding to change by leading agile transformation.
- Leading and promoting sustainable business practices.
- Responding and managing crisis situations.

Are there any statutory/regulatory or other typical entry requirements?

No

Occupation duties

Duty

KSBs

Duty 1 Set the overall strategic direction of their area of responsibility in partnership with the Board (or equivalent), encouraging employees to buy into the organisation's vision.

K1 K2 K6 K13 K14
S1 S2 S10 S11
B2

Duty 2 Lead on the development and critical review of operational policies and practices within their area of responsibility, to ensure they are aligned to the needs of the organisation and remain fit for purpose and sustainable.

K2 K6 K16 K19
S2 S7 S10 S11
B2

Duty 3 Lead and influence agreed projects to deliver organisational strategy such as change and agile transformation programmes, diversification, new product implementation, and customer experience improvement.

K3 K5 K6 K7 K14 K15
S2 S3 S4
B2 B3

Duty 4 Make decisions about organisational resource requirements (budgets, people, technology) based on strategic insight and reliable evidence.	K4 K6 K7 K8 K9 S5 S7 S10 S11 S12 B2
Duty 5 Lead and respond to crisis management, assessing the risks and opportunities which could affect business/department performance, and finding solutions that meet the needs of both the organisation and its customers/stakeholders in a responsible and ethical way.	K5 K6 K17 K19 S4 S5 S8 B1
Duty 6 Lead people development including talent management, succession planning, workforce design, and coaching, and mentoring arrangements for people within their area of responsibility.	K6 K10 K11 K18 S2 S9 S13 S14 S15 S16 S18 B1 B4 B5
Duty 7 Promote an ethical, inclusive, innovative and supportive culture that generates continuous business improvement.	K6 K10 K11 S4 S9 S13 S14 S15 S16 S17 S18 B1 B4 B5
Duty 8 Report to the Board (or relevant governance/management structure) on the progress of their operational activities towards achieving business goals.	K12 K13 S19 S20 B1
Duty 9 Cultivate and maintain collaborative relationships with key senior internal and external stakeholders to influence key decision makers as appropriate.	K4 K7 K12 K13 S2 S6 S19 B1
Duty 10 Shape the approach to external communications for their area of responsibility and ensure it aligns with any wider organisational communications strategy.	K15 K20 S2 S21 B1
Duty 11 Proactively keep up to date with social, economic and technological trends and developments relevant to their area of responsibility and wider organisation and promote innovation to address changing requirements and to take advantage of new opportunities.	K3 K4 K7 K19 S3 S4 S7 S9 S13 B3
Duty 12 Ensure that their area of responsibility is compliant with internal governance, such as any assurance framework requirements, and with external governance, such as any regulatory and statutory requirements.	K2 K9 S3 S8 S12 B3

KSBs

Knowledge

K1: How to shape organisational mission, culture and values.

K2: Organisation structures; business modelling; diversity; global and horizon scanning perspectives; governance and accountability; technological and policy implications.

K3: New market strategies, changing customer demands and trend analysis.

K4: Innovation; the impact of disruptive technologies (mechanisms that challenge traditional business methods and practices); drivers of change and new ways of working across infrastructure, processes, people and culture and sustainability.

K5: Systems thinking, knowledge/data management, research methodologies and programme management.

K6: Ethics and values-based leadership theories and principles.

K7: Competitive strategies and entrepreneurialism, approaches to effective decision making, and the use of big data and insight to implement and manage change.

K8: Financial strategies, for example scenarios, modelling and identifying trends, application of economic theory to decision-making, and how to evaluate financial and non- financial information.

K9: Financial governance and legal requirements, and procurement strategies.

K10: Organisational/team dynamics and how to build engagement and develop high performance, agile and collaborative cultures.

K11: Approaches to strategic workforce planning, for example, talent management, learning organisations, group work, workforce design, succession planning, diversity and inclusion.

K12: Influencing and negotiating strategies both upwards and outwards.

K13: The external social and political environment and use of diplomacy with diverse groups of internal and external stakeholders.

K14: Working with board and other company leadership structures.

K15: Brand and reputation management.

K16: Working with corporate leadership structures, for example, the markets it operates in, roles and responsibilities, who its stakeholders are and what they require from the organisation and the sustainability agenda.

K17: Crisis and risk management strategies.

K18: Coaching and mentoring techniques.

K19: Approaches to developing a Corporate Social Responsibility programme.

K20: The organisation's developing communications strategy and its link to their area of responsibility.

Skills

S1: Use horizon scanning and conceptualisation to deliver high performance strategies focusing on growth/sustainable outcomes.

S2: Set strategic direction and gain support for it from key stakeholders.

S3: Undertake research, and critically analyse and integrate complex information.

S4: Lead change in their area of responsibility, create an environment for innovation and creativity, establishing the value of ideas and change initiatives and driving continuous improvement.

S5: Lead and respond in a crisis situation using risk management techniques.

S6: Act as a Sponsor/Ambassador, championing projects and transformation of services across organisational boundaries.

S7: Challenge strategies and operations in terms of ethics, responsibility, sustainability, resource allocation and business continuity/risk management.

S8: Apply principles relating to Corporate Social Responsibility, Governance and Regulatory compliance.

S9: Drive a culture of resilience and support development of new enterprise and opportunities.

S10: Oversee development and monitoring of financial strategies and setting of organisational budgets based on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and challenge financial assumptions underpinning strategies.

S11: Uses financial data to allocate resources.

S12: Oversee procurement, supply chain management and contracts.

S13: Use personal presence and "storytelling" to articulate and translate vision into operational strategies, demonstrating clarity in thinking.

S14: Create an inclusive culture, encouraging diversity and difference and promoting well-being.

S15: Give and receive feedback at all levels, building confidence and developing trust, and enable people to take risks and challenge where appropriate.

S16: Enable an open culture and high-performance working environment and set goals and accountabilities for teams and individuals in their area.

S17: Lead and influence people, building constructive working relationships across teams, using matrix management where required.

S18: Optimise skills of the workforce, balancing people and technical skills and encouraging continual development.

S19: Manage relationships across multiple and diverse stakeholders.

S20: Lead within their area of control/authority, influencing both upwards and outwards, negotiating and using advocacy skills to build reputation and effective collaboration.

S21: Shape and manage the communications strategy for their area of responsibility.

Behaviors

B1: Work collaboratively enabling empowerment and delegation.

B2: Take personal accountability aligned to clear values.

B3: Curious and innovative - exploring areas of ambiguity and complexity and finding creative solutions.

B4: Value difference and champion diversity.

B5: Seek continuous professional development opportunities for self and wider team.

Qualifications

English & Maths

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 apprenticeship's English and maths minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. A British Sign Language (BSL) qualification is an alternative to the English qualification for those whose primary language is BSL.

Does the apprenticeship need to include any mandated qualifications in addition to the above-mentioned English and maths qualifications?

No

End-point assessment plan for Senior Leader apprenticeship standard

Apprenticeship standard reference number	Apprenticeship standard level	Integrated end-point assessment
ST0480	7	No

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Introduction and overview

This document sets out the requirements for end-point assessment (EPA) for the Senior Leader apprenticeship standard. It explains how EPA for this apprenticeship must operate.

This document provides the EPA design requirements for end-point assessment organisations (EPAOs) for this apprenticeship standard. It will also be useful for apprentices undertaking this apprenticeship, their employers and training providers.

EPA must be conducted by an EPAO approved to deliver EPA for this apprenticeship standard. Each employer should select an approved EPAO from the Education & Skills Funding Agency's Register of end-point assessment organisations (RoEPAO).

Full-time apprentices will typically spend 24 months on-programme (before the gateway) working towards this occupational standard. All apprentices must spend a minimum of 12 months on-programme. All apprentices must spend a minimum of 20% of on-programme time undertaking off-the-job training.

Before starting EPA, an apprentice must meet the gateway requirements. For this apprenticeship they are:

- the employer must be content that the apprentice is working at or above the occupational standard
- apprentices must have achieved English and mathematics at Level 2¹

The EPAO must confirm that all required gateway evidence has been provided and accepted as meeting the gateway requirements. The EPAO is responsible for confirming gateway eligibility. Once this has been confirmed, the EPA period starts.

This EPA should then be completed within an EPA period lasting typically for 5 months.

This EPA consists of 2 discrete assessment methods.

It will be possible to achieve the following grades in each end-point assessment method:

Assessment method 1: Strategic business proposal, presentation with questioning

- Fail
- Pass
- Distinction

¹ For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the apprenticeship's English and mathematics minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. British Sign Language (BSL) qualifications are an alternative to English qualifications for those who have BSL as their primary language.

Assessment method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

- Fail
- Pass
- Distinction

Performance in the EPA will determine the overall apprenticeship standard grade of:

- Fail
- Pass
- Distinction

¹ For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the apprenticeship's English and mathematics minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. British Sign Language (BSL) qualifications are an alternative to English qualifications for those who have BSL as their primary language.

EPA summary table

<p>On-programme (typically 24 months)</p>	<p>Training to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) of the occupational standard.</p> <p>Training towards English and mathematics Level 2, if required.</p> <p>Compiling a portfolio of evidence.</p>
<p>End-point assessment gateway</p>	<p>The employer must be content that the apprentice is working at or above the level of the occupational standard.</p> <p>Apprentices must have achieved English and mathematics Level 2.</p> <p>Apprentices must submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A portfolio of evidence <p>The EPAO must sign-off the strategic business proposal title and scope, at the gateway, to confirm its suitability prior to the work commencing.</p>
<p>End-point assessment (typically 5 months)</p>	<p>Assessment method 1: Strategic business proposal, presentation with questioning</p> <p>With the following grades:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fail • Pass • Distinction <p>Assessment method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p> <p>With the following grades:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fail • Pass • Distinction <p>Performance in these assessment methods will determine the overall apprenticeship standard grade of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fail • Pass • Distinction
<p>Professional recognition</p>	<p>Aligns with recognition by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chartered Management Institute – Chartered Manager or Chartered Fellow • The Institute of Leadership and Management - Fellow

Length of end-point assessment period

The EPA will be completed within an EPA period lasting typically 5 months, starting when the EPAO has confirmed that all gateway requirements have been met.

The EPA period must last for a minimum of one week.

Order of end-point assessment methods

The assessment methods can be delivered in any order.

EPA gateway

The apprentice should only enter the gateway once the employer is content that the apprentice is working at or above the occupational standard. 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.

The EPAO determines when all gateway requirements have been met, and the EPA period will only start once the EPAO has confirmed this.

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

- achieved English and mathematics Level 2. For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the apprenticeship's English and mathematics minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. British Sign Language (BSL) qualifications are an alternative to English qualifications for those who have BSL as their primary language.

For the strategic business proposal, presentation with questioning:

- The strategic business proposal's subject, title and scope will be agreed between the employer and the EPAO at the gateway.
- A brief summary should be provided to the EPAO (of no more than 500 words) outlining the details of the strategic business proposal.
- The EPAO must sign-off the strategic business proposal's title and scope to confirm its suitability at the gateway.

For the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence, the apprentice will be required to submit:

- A portfolio of evidence

The portfolio of evidence requirements are as follows:

- apprentices must compile a portfolio of evidence during the on-programme period of the apprenticeship
- it must contain evidence related to the KSBs that will be assessed by the professional discussion
- the portfolio of evidence will typically contain 18 discrete pieces of evidence
- evidence may be used to demonstrate more than one KSB; a qualitative as opposed to quantitative approach is suggested
- evidence must be clearly mapped, in an annex, against the KSBs allocated to this assessment method
- evidence sources may include:
 - video/audio extracts (these should be a maximum of 5 minutes in length)
 - written statements

- project plans
- observation reports
- presentations
- feedback from managers, supervisors or peers (any employer or peer contributions should focus only direct observation of evidence (for example witness statements) rather than opinions)
- papers or reports written by the apprentice
- performance reviews.

This is not a definitive list; other evidence sources are allowable.

- It should not include reflective accounts or any methods of self-assessment
- any employer contributions should focus on direct observation of performance (for example witness statements) rather than opinions
- The content must be sufficient to evidence the apprentice can apply the knowledge, skills and behaviours required as mapped to assessment method 2 (professional discussion). There must be at least one piece of evidence relating to each knowledge, skill and behaviour mapped to assessment method 2.
- The evidence provided must be valid and attributable to the apprentice; the portfolio of evidence must contain a statement from the employer confirming this
- The portfolio of evidence must be submitted to the EPAO at the gateway

The portfolio of evidence is not directly assessed. It underpins the professional discussion and therefore should not be marked by the EPAO. EPAOs should review the portfolio of evidence in preparation for the professional discussion but are not required to provide feedback after this review.

End-point assessment methods

The apprentice will be assessed against the KSBs assigned to the assessment methods outlined below, as shown in the mapping section of this EPA plan.

End-point assessment method 1: Strategic business proposal, presentation with questioning (This assessment method has 2 components.)

Assessment method 1 component 1: Strategic business proposal

Overview

The assessment method is the production of a strategic business proposal, presentation and questioning. The strategic business proposal must be undertaken after the apprentice has gone through the gateway.

A strategic business proposal involves the apprentice completing a relevant and defined piece of work that has a real business benefit. Apprentices will prepare and deliver a presentation that, along with the strategic business proposal, appropriately covers the KSBs assigned to this method of assessment. It will be followed by questioning from the independent assessor.

The strategic business proposal should be designed to ensure that the apprentice's work meets the needs of the business, is relevant to their role and allows the relevant KSBs to be assessed for the EPA. The employer will ensure it has a real business application and the EPAO will ensure it meets the requirements of the EPA, including suitable coverage of the KSBs assigned to this assessment method as shown in the mapping of assessment methods. The strategic business proposal does not need to be fully implemented during the EPA period, but it must be a comprehensive strategic business proposal that will enable full implementation at an appropriate time for the organisation. The strategic business proposal must include evidence of board or senior leader sign-off for implementation to ensure assessment of S2. The full range of KSBs needs to be evidenced.

The EPAO must refer to the grading descriptors to ensure that strategic business proposals are pitched appropriately.

This assessment method includes two components:

- an outcome component - a strategic business proposal based on post-gateway work
- a presentation with questioning to ensure the apprentice is assessed against the KSBs assigned to this assessment method.

Both components should allow the apprentice the opportunity to obtain the highest possible grade. The combination of the components makes the method more robust and gives the apprentice an opportunity to provide depth.

The rationale for this assessment method is:

- The strategic business proposal is designed to demonstrate the application of knowledge, skills and behaviours as they would occur in occupational practice.

Producing a strategic business proposal reflects normal practice in the workplace for a Senior Leader, so this assessment method is appropriate.

- It is a significant and relevant piece of work that thoroughly tests both higher and lower order knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- The strategic business proposal should have a real business benefit and is a cost-effective assessment method.

The evidence from the strategic business proposal, and presentation with questions will be assessed holistically.

Delivery

Apprentices will conduct a strategic business proposal either paper-based or electronically.

The strategic business proposal may be based on any of the following:

- The need to review and implement a change plan to improve financial efficiency within the workplace over a 3-year period
- A focus on the next financial year on how they will take the business forward increasing profits and customers
- The need to implement a direct saving (e.g. percentage decrease in direct costs, reduction in headcount) across their team, department or organisation following a reforecast activity
- A strategic investment in a significant corporate initiative that will have long term benefits to the business.

The list above is not exhaustive but the EPAO should sign-off the strategic business proposal's title and scope to confirm its suitability at the gateway (which should be no more than 500 words). The employer is responsible for ensuring it has a real business benefit and the EPAO is responsible for confirming that it provides appropriate coverage of the KSBs. In order to ensure that all the EPA related work is completed during the EPA period, the EPAO must be involved in determining the focus of the strategic business proposal's scope and title at the gateway.

The strategic business proposal starts after the apprentice has gone through the gateway. The duration of the strategic business proposal should be 12 weeks.

The employer should ensure the apprentice has sufficient time and the necessary resources, within this period, to plan and undertake the work associated with the strategic business proposal.

The EPAO must provide a generic specification for a range of qualifying strategic business proposals, to enable the employer to select a strategic business proposal that will meet the requirements of the EPA. Note that the employer is not restricted to this selection; however, the strategic business proposal's scope and title must be signed off at the gateway by the EPAO to ensure sufficient coverage of the assigned KSBs.

The strategic business proposal's word limit will be 4,000 words (+/- 10% at the apprentice's discretion) excluding tables, graphs, figures, references and annexes. 4,000 words is reflective

of the real world that senior leaders work in and aligns with this role's demands, as well as adding real value. It will also ensure that the KSBs aligned to this assessment method can be evidenced appropriately. The apprentice will have 12 weeks to write and submit the strategic business proposal and presentation, following the EPAO's approval of the strategic business proposal's scope and title.

Apprentices must include evidence of board or senior leadership support for the implementation of the strategic business proposal which must be included as an appendix so that this can be discussed during the presentation (this could be either an email, letter or similar written confirmation). The evidence provided must be valid and attributable to the apprentice; the strategic business proposal must contain a statement from the employer confirming this.

In order to ensure the strategic business proposal is robust and sufficiently covers the KSBs, it must include:

- An executive summary
- The scope of the strategic business proposal (including key performance indicators)
- Objectives
- The strategic business proposal (which may include Gantt charts, risk/issue/mitigation, responsibility assignment matrix (RACI matrix))
- Financial budgeting and resources
- Proposed implementation of the strategic business proposal including communications and stakeholder plans
- Analysis of options identified in the strategic business proposal
- Recommendations and conclusions
- Evidence of senior leader or board agreement to the implementation of the strategic business proposal

The strategic business proposal must include, in addition to the word count, an annex showing how the strategic business proposal maps to all of the KSBs that are being assessed by this method.

The strategic business proposal, plus materials relating to the presentation (see below), must be submitted together 12 weeks after the gateway.

The apprentice should complete their strategic business proposal unaided. When the strategic business proposal is submitted, the apprentice and their employer must verify that the submitted strategic business proposal is the apprentice's own work.

The independent assessor will review and assess the strategic business proposal holistically together with the other component of this assessment method. The independent assessor should have two weeks to review the strategic business proposal and presentation prior to the presentation date.

The independent assessor will make all grading decisions.

Marking

The independent assessor will review and mark the strategic business proposal in a timely manner, as determined by the EPAO, and without extending the EPA unnecessarily. Similarly, all quality control processes will also be conducted in a timely manner, as determined by the EPAO.

Supporting material

EPAOs will produce the following material to support this assessment method:

- Outline of the assessment method's requirements
- Marking materials
- Sample specifications for the strategic business proposal
- A guidance document for employers and apprentices on how the assessment will take place, including timescales.

Assessment method 1 component 2: Presentation with questioning

Overview

A presentation with questioning involves an apprentice presenting to an independent assessor, focusing on the list below. It will be followed by questioning from the independent assessor.

Apprentices will prepare and deliver a presentation that appropriately covers the KSBs assigned to this method of assessment. The purpose of the questioning is to seek clarification of the strategic business proposal or presentation, to assess the depth and breadth of knowledge, skills and behaviours and to assess those KSBs that the apprentice did not have the opportunity to demonstrate with the strategic business proposal, although these should be kept to a minimum.

The presentation must be submitted at the same time as the strategic business proposal, 12 weeks after the gateway. The independent assessor should have two weeks to review the strategic business proposal prior to the presentation. The apprentice needs to notify the EPAO at the submission of the strategic business proposal of any technical requirements for the presentation component.

Delivery

The presentation will focus and expand upon the strategic business proposal and will allow the apprentice to cover the following:

- What are the intended outcomes and impact of the strategic business proposal?
- How have they undertaken the strategic planning?
- What was the rationale for the activities?
- Further recommendations for future growth and progress.
- How they have negotiated with and influenced stakeholders.

The independent assessor will then draw out any further information using questions.

The presentation must be submitted with the strategic business proposal 12 weeks after the gateway. The apprentice will be given 4 weeks' notice of the presentation date to allow the independent assessor sufficient time to review the strategic business proposal and presentation and prepare appropriate questions. The presentation and questioning will take 60 minutes. The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the presentation and questioning by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer. The presentation will typically last for 20 minutes, and the questioning will typically last for 40 minutes. The discretionary additional 10% time can be allocated in any proportion across the presentation and questioning.

The independent assessor will ask a minimum of 6 questions at the end of the presentation with 2 questions from each of the themes in the grading descriptors. The independent assessor will use the questions from a question bank supplied by the EPAO as a guide to tailor their own questions based on the presentation and strategic business proposal. They will use them to confirm their understanding of the presentation and how it demonstrates the relevant KSBs. They may ask follow-up questions where clarification is required. The independent assessor must use the full time available for questioning to allow the apprentice the opportunity to evidence occupational competence at the highest level available, unless the apprentice has already achieved the highest grade available.

The purpose of the questions will be:

- for clarification
- to assess the depth and breadth of understanding

To deliver the presentation, the apprentice will have access to:

- Audio-visual presentation equipment
- Flip chart and writing and drawing materials
- Computer
- Any other requirements as notified to the EPAO on submission of the strategic business proposal and presentation

KSBs met and answers to questions, must be recorded in writing by the independent assessor.

The independent assessor will make all grading decisions.

Assessment location

EPAOs must ensure that the presentation and questioning elements are conducted in a suitable controlled environment in any of the following:

- Employer's premises
- A suitable venue sourced by the EPAO e.g. training provider's premises
- Via video conferencing

The venue should be a quiet room, free from distraction and external influence.

Video conferencing can be used to conduct the presentation with questioning but the EPAO must have processes in place to verify the identity of the apprentice and ensure the apprentice is not being aided.

The independent assessor will assess all components of this assessment method holistically. They will be expected to make an overall judgement on the grade for this assessment method based on the strategic plan and the presentation and responses to questions.

Question and resource development

EPAOs will create and set open questions to assess KSBs mapped to this assessment method. Each EPAO must develop a question bank of sufficient size to prevent predictability and review them regularly (and at least once a year) to ensure the questions they contain are fit for purpose. Independent assessors must use the question bank as a source for questioning and are expected to use their professional judgment to tailor those questions appropriately. Independent assessors are responsible for generating suitable follow-up questions in line with the EPAO's training and standardisation process. The questions relating to underpinning KSBs must be varied yet allow assessment of the relevant KSBs.

It is recommended that this be done in consultation with employers. EPAOs should put in place measures and procedures to maintain the security and confidentiality of their questions if employers are consulted.

EPAOs must ensure that apprentices have a different set of questions in the case of re-sits/re-takes.

EPAOs will produce the following material to support this assessment method:

- independent assessor training materials
- assessment specifications
- grading guidance
- question bank
- assessment recording documentation
- examples of strategic business proposals

End-point assessment method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence (This assessment method has 1 component.)

Assessment method 2 component 1: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

Overview

A professional discussion is a two-way discussion which involves both the independent assessor and the apprentice actively listening and participating in a formal conversation. It gives the apprentice the opportunity to make detailed and proactive contributions to confirm their competency across the KSBs mapped to this method.

The rationale for this assessment method is:

The professional discussion was selected as a valid way to draw out KSBs, in particular behaviours. It allows for a range of examples to be brought forward during the two-way conversation and ensures that excellence can be achieved and acknowledged.

It allows the apprentice to be assessed against KSBs that may not naturally occur during other assessment methods.

It enables the apprentice to demonstrate the application of skills and behaviours as well as knowledge.

It allows scope for the apprentice to demonstrate the depth and breadth of KSBs, allowing for a distinction marking.

Delivery

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 and cover the KSBs assigned to this assessment method. The purpose of the questions will be to give the apprentice the opportunity to make detailed and proactive contributions to confirm their competency across the KSBs mapped to this method.

The independent assessor will conduct and assess the professional discussion.

The professional discussion must last for 60 minutes. The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the professional discussion by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer.

The professional discussion will have a minimum of 8 questions. During this method, the independent assessor must combine questions from the EPAO's question bank and those generated by themselves.

The professional discussion will be conducted as follows:

The independent assessor will ask a minimum of 8 open questions taken from an EPAO question bank and those generated by the assessor. Follow-up questions can be used to draw out further evidence.

The apprentice should be encouraged to refer to their portfolio of evidence during the professional discussion to support their responses. The independent assessor should have a minimum of 2 weeks to review the contents of the portfolio prior to the professional discussion in order to generate appropriate questions. The apprentice should have at least 4 weeks notice of the professional discussion.

The independent assessor must use the assessment tools and procedures that are set by the EPAO to record the professional discussion.

KSBs met and answers to questions, must be recorded by the independent assessor.

The independent assessor will make all grading decisions.

Assessment location

The professional discussion should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence.

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.

The professional discussion can take place in any of the following:

- employer's premises
- remotely with the agreement of the apprentice and employer
- a suitable venue selected by the EPAO (for example a training provider's premises)
- video conferencing

Question and resource development

Independent assessors are responsible for generating suitable questions in-line with the EPAO's training and standardisation process. A question bank must be developed by EPAOs. Independent assessors must use the question bank as a source for questioning and are expected to use their professional judgment to tailor those questions appropriately. The question bank must be of sufficient size to prevent predictability and the EPAO must review it regularly (at least once a year) to ensure that it, and its content, are fit for purpose. The questions relating to the underpinning KSBs, 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.

EPAOs will produce the following material to support this assessment method:

- Outline of the assessment method's requirements
- Marking materials
- Data capture form for evidence and gaps
- Bank of questions

- Guidance document for employers and apprentices on the process / timescales for the discussion as well as a description of the purpose of the discussion
- Guidance document for independent assessors on how to carry out the assessment

Reasonable adjustments

The EPAO must have in place clear and fair arrangements for making reasonable adjustments to the assessment methods for the EPA for this apprenticeship 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 EPA plan.

Overall EPA grading

All assessment methods are weighted equally in their contribution to the overall EPA grade. Performance in the EPA will determine the apprenticeship grade of fail, pass or distinction. Independent assessors must individually grade each assessment method, according to the requirements set out in this plan.

EPAOs must combine the individual assessment method grades to determine the overall EPA grade.

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be awarded an overall EPA 'fail'.

In order to gain an overall EPA 'pass', apprentices must achieve a pass in all the assessment methods.

To achieve a 'distinction', the apprentice must achieve a distinction in both assessment methods by achieving all pass criteria and all distinction criteria.

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 – Strategic business proposal, presentation with questioning	Assessment method 2 - Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence	Overall grading
Fail	Fail	Fail
Pass	Fail	Fail
Fail	Pass	Fail
Distinction	Fail	Fail
Fail	Distinction	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Pass
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

Re-sits and re-takes

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 the strategic business proposal assessment method, they will be required to amend the strategic business proposal and presentation in line with the independent assessor's feedback. The apprentice will be given 3 weeks to rework and submit the amended strategic business proposal and presentation. The independent assessor will have 2 weeks to review the strategic business proposal and presentation and the apprentice will have 4 weeks' notice of the presentation date.

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

The timescales for a re-sit/re-take are agreed between the employer and EPAO. A re-sit is typically taken within 3 months of the EPA outcome notification. The timescale for a re-take is dependent on how much re-training is required and is typically taken within 6 months of the EPA outcome notification. All assessment methods must be taken within a 6-month period, otherwise the entire EPA will need to be re-sat/re-taken.

Where any assessment method has to be re-sat or re-taken, the apprentice will be awarded a maximum EPA grade of pass, unless the EPAO determines there are exceptional circumstances requiring a re-sit or re-take.

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Apprentice	<p>As a minimum, apprentices should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in and complete on-programme training to meet the KSBs as outlined in the occupational standard for a minimum of 12 months • undertake 20% off-the-job training as arranged by the employer and EPAO • understand the purpose and importance of EPA • undertake the EPA including meeting all gateway requirements
Employer	<p>As a minimum, employers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select the EPAO and training provider • work with the training provider (where applicable) to support the apprentice in the workplace and to provide the opportunities for the apprentice to develop the KSBs • arrange and support a minimum of 20% off-the-job training to be undertaken by the apprentice • decide when the apprentice is working at or above the occupational standard and so is ready for EPA • ensure that all supporting evidence required at the gateway is submitted in accordance with this EPA plan • remain independent from the delivery of the EPA • confirm arrangements with the EPAO for the EPA (who, when, where) in a timely manner (including providing access to any employer-specific documentation as required, for example company policies) • ensure that the EPA is scheduled with the EPAO for a date and time which allow appropriate opportunity for the KSBs to be met • ensure the apprentice is well prepared for the EPA • ensure the apprentice is given sufficient time away from regular duties to prepare for and complete all post-gateway elements of the EPA, and that any required supervision during this time (as stated within this EPA plan) is in place • where the apprentice is assessed in the workplace, ensure that the apprentice has access to the resources used on a daily basis

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pass the certificate to the apprentice
EPAO	<p>As a minimum, EPAOs should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conform to the requirements of this EPA plan and deliver its requirements in a timely manner • conform to the requirements of the Register of End-Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO) • conform to the requirements of the external quality assurance provider (EQAP) for this apprenticeship standard • understand the occupational standard • make all necessary contractual arrangements, including agreeing the price of the EPA • develop and produce assessment materials including specifications and marking materials (for example mark schemes, practice materials, training material) • appoint suitably qualified and competent independent assessors • appoint administrators (and invigilators where required) to administer the EPA as appropriate • provide training for independent assessors in terms of good assessment practice, operating the assessment tools and grading • provide adequate information, advice and guidance documentation to enable apprentices, employers and training providers to prepare for the EPA • arrange for the EPA to take place, in consultation with the employer • where the apprentice is not assessed in the workplace, ensure that the apprentice has access to the required resources and liaise with the employer to agree this if necessary • develop and provide appropriate assessment recording documentation to ensure a clear and auditable process is in place for providing assessment decisions and feedback to all relevant stakeholders • have no direct connection with the apprentice, their employer or training provider. In all instances, including when the EPAO is the training provider (i.e. HEI), there must be no conflict of interest • have policies and procedures for internal quality assurance (IQA), and maintain records of regular and

	<p>robust IQA activity and moderation for external quality assurance (EQA) purposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deliver induction training for independent assessors, and for invigilators and/or markers (where used) • undertake standardisation activity on this apprenticeship standard for all independent assessors before they conduct an EPA for the first time, if the EPA is updated and periodically as appropriate (a minimum of annually) • manage invigilation of apprentices in order to maintain security of the assessment in line with the EPAO's malpractice policy • verify the identity of the apprentice being assessed • use language in the development and delivery of the EPA that is appropriate to the level of the occupational standard • provide details of the independent assessor's name and contact details to the employer • have and apply appropriately an EPA appeals process • request certification via the Apprenticeship Service upon successful achievement of the EPA
<p>Independent assessor</p>	<p>As a minimum, independent assessors should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have the competence to assess the apprentice at this level and hold any required qualifications and experience in line with the requirements of the independent assessor as detailed in the IQA section of this EPA plan • understand the occupational standard and the requirements of this EPA • have, maintain and be able to evidence up-to-date knowledge and expertise of the subject matter • deliver the end-point assessment in-line with the EPA plan • comply with the IQA requirements of the EPAO • have no direct connection or conflict of interest with the apprentice, their employer or training provider; in all instances, including when the EPAO is the training provider (i.e. HEI) • attend induction training • attend standardisation events when they begin working for the EPAO, before they conduct an EPA for the first time and a minimum of annually on this apprenticeship standard • assess each assessment method, as determined by the EPA plan, and without extending the EPA unnecessarily • assess against the KSBs assigned to each assessment method, as shown in the mapping of assessment methods

	<p>and as determined by the EPAO, and without extending the EPA unnecessarily</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make all grading decisions • record and report all assessment outcome decisions, for each apprentice, following instructions and using assessment recording documentation provided by the EPAO, in a timely manner • use language in the development and delivery of the EPA that is appropriate to the level of the occupational standard • mark open (constructed) test answers accurately according to the EPAO's mark scheme and procedures
<p>Training provider</p>	<p>As a minimum, training providers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with the employer and support the apprentice during the off-the-job training to provide the opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours as listed in the occupational standard • conduct training covering any knowledge, skill or behaviour requirement agreed as part of the Commitment Statement (often known as the Individual Learning Plan). • monitor the apprentice's progress during any training provider led on-programme learning • advise the employer, upon request, on the apprentice's readiness for EPA • remain independent from delivery of the EPA. Where the training provider is the EPA (i.e. a HEI) there must be procedures in place to mitigate against any conflict of interest

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Internal quality assurance refers to the strategies, policies and procedures that EPAOs must have in place to ensure valid, consistent and reliable end-point assessment decisions. EPAOs for this EPA must adhere to all requirements within the Roles and Responsibilities section and:

- have effective and rigorous quality assurance systems and procedures that ensure fair, reliable and consistent assessment across employers, places, times and independent assessors
- appoint independent assessors who have recent relevant experience of the occupation/sector gained in the last 5 years or significant experience of the occupation/sector
- appoint independent assessors who are members of relevant professional bodies
- appoint independent assessors who are competent to deliver the end-point assessment and who meet the following minimum requirements:
 - Be independent of the apprentice, their employer and training provider i.e. there must be no conflict of interest
 - hold a relevant leadership and management qualification, at a minimum of a Level 7 (or equivalent) or have significant occupational experience of more than 7-years as a manager or leader
 - Complete 40 hours of recorded Leadership and Management related CPD per year.
- operate induction training for independent assessors, markers and invigilators
- provide training for independent assessors in terms of good assessment practice, operating the assessment tools and grading
- where appropriate:
 - provide ongoing training for invigilators
- undertake standardisation activity on this apprenticeship standard for all independent assessors:
 - before they conduct an EPA for the first time
 - if the EPA is updated
 - periodically as appropriate (a minimum of annually)
- conduct effective moderation of assessment decisions and grades
- conduct appeals where required, according to the EPAO's appeals procedure, reviewing and making final decisions on assessment decisions and grades

Affordability

Affordability of the EPA will be aided by using at least some of the following practices:

- using an employer's premises
- using video conferencing
- scheduling the professional discussion and presentation with questioning on the same day

Professional body recognition

This apprenticeship standard is designed to prepare successful apprentices to meet the requirements for registration as a Senior Leader with:

Chartered Management Institute (CMI) – Chartered Manager or Chartered Fellow

The Institute of Leadership and Management (TILM) - Fellow

Mapping of knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs)

End-Point Assessment method 1: Strategic business proposal, presentation with questioning

Knowledge
K3 New market strategies, changing customer demands and trend analysis.
K5 Systems thinking, knowledge/data management, research methodologies and programme management.
K8 Financial strategies, for example scenarios, modelling and identifying trends, application of economic theory to decision-making, and how to evaluate financial and non- financial information.
K9 Financial governance and legal requirements, and procurement strategies.
K12 Influencing and negotiating strategies both upwards and outwards.
K14 Working with board and other company leadership structures.
K15 Brand and reputation management.
K16 Working with corporate leadership structures, for example, the markets it operates in, roles and responsibilities, who its stakeholders are and what they require from the organisation and the sustainability agenda.

Skills
S2 Set strategic direction and gain support for it from key stakeholders.
S3 Undertake research, and critically analyse and integrate complex information.
S11 Uses financial data to allocate resources.
S13 Use personal presence and “storytelling” to articulate and translate vision into operational strategies, demonstrating clarity in thinking
S19 Manage relationships across multiple and diverse stakeholders.
S20 Lead within their area of control/authority, influencing both upwards and outwards, negotiating and using advocacy skills to build reputation and effective collaboration.

Behaviours
B3 Curious and innovative - exploring areas of ambiguity and complexity and finding creative solutions.

Assessment method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

Knowledge
K1 How to shape organisational mission, culture and values.
K2 Organisation structures; business modelling; diversity; global and horizon scanning perspectives; governance and accountability; technological and policy implications.
K4 Innovation; the impact of disruptive technologies (mechanisms that challenge traditional business methods and practices); drivers of change and new ways of working across infrastructure, processes, people and culture and sustainability.
K6 Ethics and values-based leadership theories and principles.
K7 Competitive strategies and entrepreneurialism, approaches to effective decision making, and the use of big data and insight to implement and manage change.
K10 Organisational/team dynamics and how to build engagement and develop high performance, agile and collaborative cultures
K11 Approaches to strategic workforce planning, for example, talent management, learning organisations, group work, workforce design, succession planning, diversity and inclusion.
K13 The external social and political environment and use of diplomacy with diverse groups of internal and external stakeholders
K17 Crisis and risk management strategies.
K18 Coaching and mentoring techniques.
K19 Approaches to developing a Corporate Social Responsibility programme.
K20: The organisation's developing communications strategy and its link to their area of responsibility.

Skills
S1 Use horizon scanning and conceptualisation to deliver high performance strategies focusing on growth/sustainable outcomes.
S4.1 Lead change in their area of responsibility, create an environment for innovation and creativity.
S4.2 Establish the value of ideas and change initiatives and driving continuous improvement.
S5 Lead and respond in a crisis situation using risk management techniques.
S6 Act as a Sponsor/Ambassador, championing projects and transformation of services across organisational boundaries
S7 Challenge strategies and operations in terms of ethics, responsibility, sustainability, resource allocation and business continuity/risk management.
S8 Apply principles relating to Corporate Social Responsibility, Governance and Regulatory compliance.
S9 Drive a culture of resilience and support development of new enterprise and opportunities.
S10 Oversee development and monitoring of financial strategies and setting of organisational budgets based on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and challenge financial assumptions underpinning strategies.
S12 Oversee procurement, supply chain management and contracts.

S14 Create an inclusive culture, encouraging diversity and difference and promoting well-being.
S15 Give and receive feedback at all levels, building confidence and developing trust, and enable people to take risks and challenge where appropriate.
S16 Enable an open culture and high-performance working environment and set goals and accountabilities for teams and individuals in their area.
S17 Lead and influence people, building constructive working relationships across teams, using matrix management where required.
S18 Optimise skills of the workforce, balancing people and technical skills and encouraging continual development.
S21 Shape and manage the communications strategy for their area of responsibility.

Behaviours
B1 Work collaboratively enabling empowerment and delegation
B2 Take personal accountability aligned to clear values.
B4 Value difference and champion diversity.
B5 Seek continuous professional development opportunities for self and wider team.

Grading Descriptors

End-Point Assessment method 1: Strategic business proposal, presentation with questioning

KSBs	Fail	Pass The apprentice must meet all of the pass descriptors below	Distinction The apprentice must meet all of the pass criteria and all of the distinction descriptors below
Research K3 K14 K16 S2 S19	Does not meet the pass criteria	<p>Creates a high-performance strategy, focussing on improving efficiency changing customer demands and trend analysis and which has support from a range of stakeholders. (K3, S2)</p> <p>Evaluates how the strategic business proposal takes full account of the leadership structures within the organisation and of key stakeholders and manages relationships across stakeholders. (K14, K16, S19)</p>	Critically evaluates the need for improving brand management and reputation, and explains how this would reduce risks to the organisation brand
Methodologies and analysis K5 K8 K9 S3 S11 B3	Does not meet the pass criteria	<p>Justifies how they selected and used an approach that is underpinned by research using a range of methodologies, critically analysing and synthesising the outcomes and producing creative solutions to areas of ambiguity or complexity. (K5, S3, B3)</p> <p>Applies economic theories and financial modelling to develop strategies and allocate resources in line with legal, governance and procurement requirements (K8, K9, S11)</p>	Critically evaluates the financial strategies used and justifies recommendations made
Communication K12 K15 S13 S20	Does not meet the pass criteria	<p>Justifies how they use influencing and negotiating strategies to collaborate with stakeholders and build their organisation's brand and reputation in developing the strategic business proposal (K12, K15, S20)</p> <p>Delivers a strategic business proposal and presentation that demonstrates a clear vision for the organisation and translates this into operational strategies (S13)</p>	Persuasive and engaging in articulating strategies that maximise opportunities for sustainable growth based on synthesizing complex information including changing customer demand and robust research, critically analysing and justifying proposed solutions and their alternatives

Assessment method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

KSBs	Fail	Pass The apprentice must meet all of the pass descriptors below	Distinction The apprentice must meet all of the distinction descriptors below
Organisational values K2 K6 K13 K19 K20 S1 S7 S8 S10 S19 S21	Does not meet the pass criteria	<p>Interprets ethics and value-based leadership theories and principles in order to challenge strategies, operations and financial assumptions and defines their responsibility for resource allocation and overseeing development and monitoring of financial strategies based on KPIs that maintain sustainability and business continuity/risk management (K6, S7, S10)</p> <p>Summarises how the communications strategy links to their area of responsibility and justifies the approaches taken to shape and manage it, taking account of the external social and political environment and the diverse needs of internal and external stakeholders (K13, K20, S21)</p> <p>Implements a high-performance strategy, focussing on growth and improving efficiency, synthesising outcomes from modelling and horizon scanning (K2, S1)</p> <p>Applies the approaches and principles to developing a corporate social responsibility programme and justifies how they apply these principles to ensure the organisation's compliance to governance and regulations (K19, S8)</p>	Evaluates the effectiveness of the communications strategy for their area of responsibility, explaining how they have acted on analysis and feedback to make recommendations for continuous improvement to the organisation's overall strategy.
Finance, workforce, planning and procurement K11 S9 S12 S14	Does not meet the pass criteria	Analyses their approach to workforce planning, evaluating its effectiveness in developing a diverse, inclusive, resilient and valued workforce that optimises their skills to the benefit of the organisation (K11, S9, S14, B4)	

B4		Justifies their approach to overseeing procurement, supply chain management and contracts (S12)	
Driving change and risk management K1 K4 K7 K17 S4.1 S5 S6 B1	Does not meet the pass criteria	<p>Evaluates how they shape their organisation's mission, culture and values by championing projects as an ambassador that transform services across the organisation (K1, S6)</p> <p>Justifies how they have worked collaboratively in driving change and implementing new ways of working to improve the sustainability of the organisation and how they have established a creative and innovative environment (K4, S4.1, B1)</p> <p>Critically analyses approaches to decision making and the use of big data when developing competitive strategies to implement and manage change (K7)</p> <p>Justifies the risk management techniques they have used to lead and respond to a crisis situation (K17, S5)</p>	<p>Drives transformative change with tangible benefits for the organisation</p> <p>Analyses and evaluates a crisis situation that they have managed explaining and justifying changes to policy and procedure that they recommended as a result of the experience</p>
Team working and development K10 K18 S4.2 S15 S16 S17 S18 B2 B5	Does not meet the pass criteria	<p>Justifies how they use and encourage continued professional development opportunities for themselves and others, as well as coaching and mentoring techniques, to build engagement in their team and develop an agile and collaborative culture of high performance (K10, K18, S18, B5)</p> <p>Evaluates how they have led and influenced people, building constructive and trustful teams confident to take risks when appropriate and able to respond to and provide constructive feedback and challenge (S15, S17)</p> <p>Justifies how they have taken responsibility for driving continuous improvement through establishing an open and high-performing working environment with clear goals and accountabilities (S4.2, S16, B2)</p>	Evaluates where they have used coaching and mentoring techniques to improve the performance of an individual or a team with a positive impact for the organisation

