# Improvement Leader Apprenticeship Standard, Level 6

# End-Point Assessment Plan

## Introduction and overview

This document sets out the requirements for end-point assessment (EPA) for the improvement leader apprenticeship standard. It is for end-point assessment organisations (EPAOs) who need to know how EPA for this apprenticeship standard must operate. It will also be of interest to improvement leader apprentices, their employers and training providers.

Full time apprentices will typically spend 14-18 months on-programme working towards the occupational standard, with a minimum of 20% off-the-job training.

The EPA 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, the pre-requisite gateway requirements for EPA have been met and that they can be evidenced to an EPAO.

As gateway requirements, apprentices must complete a portfolio of evidence generated throughout the apprenticeship, have agreed a dissertation title, rationale and scope with their EPAO and employer, and they must have achieved Level 2 English and maths.[1] Additionally, their employer must confirm that they are consistently working at or above the level of the occupational standard.

The EPA must be completed within a 20-week period, after the apprentice has met the EPA gateway requirements.

EPA must be conducted by an organisation approved to offer services against this apprenticeship standard, as selected by the employer, from the Education & Skills Funding Agency's (ESFA) Register of End-Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO).

The EPA consists of two distinct assessment methods:

- **Professional discussion,** underpinned by portfolio of evidence
- **Dissertation,** presentation and questioning

Performance in the EPA will determine the apprenticeship grade of fail, pass, merit or distinction.

---

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

Diagram 1. Improvement leader apprenticeship standard summary

| On-programme (typically 14-18 months) | End-point assessment gateway | End-point assessment (maximum 20 weeks) |
|---|---|---|
| Training to develop the improvement leader occupational standard's knowledge, skills and behaviours<br><br>Working towards English/maths Level 2 (if required)<br><br>Compilation of portfolio of evidence | English/maths Level 2<br><br>Portfolio of evidence<br><br>Agreement with EPAO and employer of dissertation title, rationale and scope<br><br>Employer satisfied apprentice is consistently working at, or above, the level of the occupational standard | Professional discussion, underpinned by portfolio of evidence<br><br>Dissertation, presentation and questioning<br><br>Graded fail, pass, merit or distinction |

Diagram 2. Improvement leader apprenticeship end-point assessment summary – flow chart
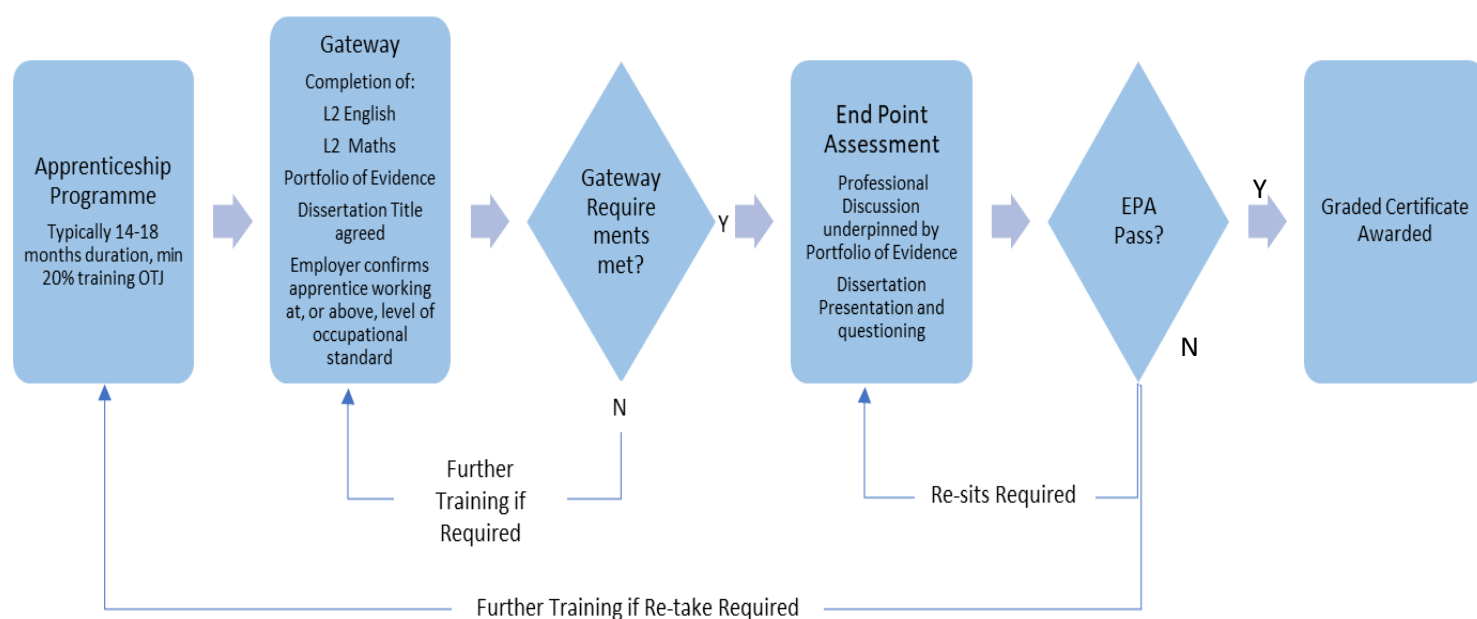
## End-point assessment gateway

The EPA commences once the employer is satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard, the pre-requisite gateway requirements for EPA have been met and that they can be evidenced to an EPAO. Employers may wish to take advice from their apprentice's training provider(s) on the apprentice's readiness for EPA.

Gateway requirements:

1. English and mathematics at level 2, as a minimum[2]
2. Portfolio of evidence (see below)
3. Agreed title, scope and rationale for dissertation with their EPAO and employer. The dissertation must be based on the development and deployment of improvement strategy in their business
4. Written confirmation from the apprentice's employer that they are satisfied the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level of the occupational standard

Portfolio of evidence requirements:

- The portfolio of evidence must include a minimum of one set of evidence for each of the topic areas assessed by the professional discussion as shown in annex A
- The above evidence must include a range of documents such as Minitab screen shots of regression analysis, coaching reports and a 1-page summary from the Lean strategy
- The portfolio of evidence must also include evidence relating to the preparation and delivery of a training session which can have been delivered during the on-programme phase of the apprenticeship with Level 5 learning outcomes linked to one or two improvement topics

  Training session and evidence requirements:

  o The training session must cover a subject selected from the following list: Project and Change Management, Lean Principles and Tools, Measurement System Analysis and Data Collection Planning Graphical Analysis and Statistical Analysis, Data Transformation and Process Capability, Experimentation, Optimisation and Modelling, Failure Mode Avoidance

---

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

- o The training materials must be prepared by the apprentice (they must not deliver published training material prepared by someone else and this requirement will be authenticated by a signed statement provided by the apprentice's employer) and included in the portfolio of evidence
- o The training session must be delivered to a group of Level 5 delegates in their normal working environment and last 45-50 minutes in duration
- o A continuous video recording of the session must be included in the portfolio of evidence
- o Training materials may include for example PowerPoint presentation, lesson plan, training notes, photographs of white boards, handouts, flipcharts
- o All training materials and records of delegate feedback must be included in the portfolio of evidence
- The evidence must be mapped holistically against the KSBs, as shown in Annex A
- Apprentices should focus on the quality of evidence rather than quantity
- The evidence must be generated by the apprentice (either independently or in a team-based environment) with the apprentice's role and that of a team, clearly identified and authenticated by a signed statement provided by the apprentice's employer (which should be included in the portfolio of evidence)
- The portfolio of evidence must be used to underpin the professional discussion in the EPA and is not assessed as part of the EPA
- The completed portfolio of evidence must be submitted to the EPAO within two weeks of EPA gateway completion to allow time for the EPAO to review it and prepare for the EPA

## End-point assessment methods, timescales and location

The EPA consists of two distinct assessment methods:

- **Professional discussion,** underpinned by portfolio of evidence
- **Dissertation,** presentation and questioning

The EPA must be completed within a 20-week period, after the apprentice has met the EPA gateway requirements. Assessment methods can be completed in any order, allowing EPAOs flexibility in scheduling and cost-effective allocation of resources. EPAOs must ensure that each assessment method is scheduled for an apprentice within their maximum 20-week EPA period. It is recommended that the professional discussion, and presentation and questioning components be completed on the same day however this is not a requirement.

The requirements for each assessment method are detailed below.

1. **Professional discussion, underpinned by portfolio of evidence**
   - This must be a discussion between the apprentice and their assessor, with a technical expert from the apprentice's employer present. The technical expert's role is to provide the assessor with clarifications around specific company policy and procedure or technical knowledge only. They must not provide information on behalf of the apprentice, ask the apprentice questions or influence the apprentice in any way. The technical expert must not amplify or clarify points made by the apprentice. Note that the EPA judgement lies solely with the assessor who grades the professional discussion.
   - It must last 2-hours to 2-hours 20 minutes in duration.
   - Assessors must ask open/competency based questions to cover the KSBs mapped against this method as shown in Annex A.
   - Questions must be devised by the apprentice's assessor following a review of the evidence in the apprentice's portfolio of evidence, including the video of the training session, prior to the professional discussion.
   - The skill/judgement of assessors will be necessary to formulate and ask sufficient questions (including follow-up questions if required to seek clarification) to make a sound assessment against the grading criteria set-out in Annex B.
   - Apprentices may refer to the portfolio of evidence when answering questions.

2. **Dissertation, presentation and questioning**
   - Apprentices must produce a dissertation during the EPA period, which will be the basis of a presentation to the apprentice's assessor and a technical expert from the apprentice's employer, with follow up questioning immediately after the presentation.
   - The dissertation must have been reviewed by the apprentice's assessor prior to the presentation and questioning components.

- The main body of the dissertation must be 4,000 to 4,500 words. A summary and appendices must be included, additional to the word count. The summary must be a concise one-page of A4, visual, follow the principles of 'A3 Thinking' and convey key points in a way that enables messages to be grasped 'within 3 seconds.' Appendices must contain supporting evidence, such as meeting minutes, extracts from business strategy, key performance indicator dashboards, risk log and organisation charts (not included in the word count).

- The dissertation must focus on the development and deployment of improvement strategy in their business and of sufficient scope to demonstrate the knowledge and skills as set out in Annex A. For example, 'A Continuous Improvement Strategy and Deployment plan for department x'.

- The title and scope of the dissertation must be agreed between by the EPAO and the employer as a gateway requirement. The EPAO will have the final say on the title and scope.

- The dissertation must be submitted to the EPAO three weeks prior to the presentation and questioning components, to allow the assessor to review the contents and prepare for the questioning component.

- The presentation on the dissertation must be delivered by the apprentice to an assessor and technical expert. The technical expert's role is to provide the assessor with clarifications around specific company policy and procedure or technical knowledge only. They must not provide information on behalf of the apprentice, ask the apprentice questions or influence the apprentice in any way. The technical expert must not amplify or clarify points made by the apprentice. Note that the EPA judgement lies solely with the assessor who grades the dissertation, presentation and questioning.

- Apprentices can use presentation aides as they see fit e.g. PowerPoint, A3 posters, handouts; any technology requirements must be arranged with the EPAO ahead of the day of the presentation and questioning components.

- The presentation must be 45 to 50 minutes in duration.

- The presentation must outline the focus of the dissertation, approach, outcomes and evaluation.

- The presentation must be followed by questioning lasting 35 to 40 minutes.

- Questions must be devised by the assessor based on the dissertation and presentation observed.

- The skill/judgement of assessors will be necessary to formulate and ask sufficient questions (including follow-up questions if required to seek clarification) to make a sound assessment against the grading criteria set-out in Annex B.

- Apprentices can refer to their dissertation and/or presentation materials in answering the questions.

- The apprentice's assessor must holistically assess the dissertation, presentation and questioning against the KSBs as set out in Annex A, using the grading criteria set-out in Annex B.

EPAOs must ensure that both assessment methods are conducted in suitable controlled environments i.e. quiet room free from distraction and influence, with the necessary equipment for each assessment method for example, computer (if required by the apprentice). It is anticipated that EPAOs will use the apprentice's employer's premises wherever possible to minimise costs. Assessments may be conducted face-to-face or via an online platform for example, video-conferencing. EPAOs must ensure appropriate methods to prevent misrepresentation are in place. For example, screen share and 360-degree camera function with assessors when the assessments are undertaken remotely.

Each assessment method must assess the KSBs as set out in Annex A.

## Apprenticeship grading

Each assessment method will be individually graded – fail, pass, merit, distinction using the criteria in Annex B.

For each assessment method, the apprentice's assessor must make independent judgements against each set of KSBs as set out in Annex A using the grading criteria set out in Annex B.

The EPAO must combine the grades of the two assessment methods to determine the overall EPA grade. In order to get an overall pass apprentices must achieve a pass as a minimum in both assessment methods. Apprentices will be awarded an overall merit where they achieve a merit or higher in both assessment methods **or** a distinction and pass. In order to get a distinction apprentices must get a distinction in both assessment methods.

See table in Annex C for grading combinations. Note that restrictions on grading apply where apprentices re-sit/re-take an assessment method – see re-sit/re-take section below.

Assessors' decisions must be subject to moderation by the EPAO – see internal quality assurance section below. Decisions must not be confirmed until after moderation.

## Re-sit and re-take information

Apprentices who fail one or more EPA method will be offered the opportunity to take a re-sit/re-take. Re-sits/re-takes must not be offered to apprentices wishing to move from pass to merit or distinction or from merit to distinction. A re-sit does not require further learning, whereas a re-take does.

The apprentice's employer will need to agree that a re-sit/re-take is an appropriate course of action. Apprentices should have a supportive action plan to prepare for the re-sit/re-take.

The timescales for a resit/retake is agreed between the employer and EPAO. A resit is typically taken within three months of the EPA outcome notification. The timescale for a retake is

dependent on how much re-training is required and is typically taken within 6 months of the EPA outcome notification.

The maximum grade awarded to an assessment method re-sit/re-take will be pass, unless the EPAO identifies exceptional circumstances accounting for the original fail.

## End-point assessment organisations

Employers must choose an independent EPAO approved to deliver the EPA for this apprenticeship standard from the Education & Skills Funding Agency's (ESFA) Register of End-Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO).

**Requirements for assessors**

EPAOs must appoint:

- Assessors to grade each assessment method
- Quality assurance staff to undertake moderation of EPA

Assessors must meet the following requirements:
- Be independent of the apprentice, their employer and training provider(s) - there must be no conflict of interest.
- Hold or be working towards an assessor qualification, for example CAVA (Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement) or A1 and have had training from their EPAO in terms of good assessment practice, operating the assessment tools and grading.
- Be qualified at level 6 or above in an improvement discipline (Lean, Six Sigma, etc.) and have recent (within last 6 years) experience working in improvement, or be approved by the EPAO as meeting this requirement through demonstrable knowledge and experience and currently working in the improvement sector.
- Have attended all of the training for the delivery elements of this apprenticeship standard, or attended an induction with a training provider that details the delivery elements prior to carrying out any EPA activities in order to be familiar with the learner journey and KSB of the occupational standard.
- Undertake a minimum of two standardisation events per year.

Quality assurance staff must meet the following requirements:

- Hold or be working towards quality assurance qualifications, for example TAQA (Training, Assessment and Quality Assurance).
- Be independent of the apprentice, their employer and training provider - there must be no conflict of interest.

**Requirements for technical experts**

Employers must appoint technical experts to support assessors, they must:

- Have knowledge and experience of the processes being measured and improved by the apprentice as the basis of their dissertation, presentation and questioning.
- Ideally be trained to Level 6 in Improvement principles and tools for example, certified as a Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt or have equivalent experience.

**Internal quality assurance**

Internal quality assurance refers to the requirements that EPAOs must have in place to ensure consistent (reliable) and accurate (valid) assessment decisions. EPAOs for this EPA must undertake the following:

- Appoint assessors that meet the requirements as detailed in this plan – see above.
- Provide training for assessors in terms of good assessment practice, operating the assessment tools and grading.
- Have quality assurance systems and procedures that support fair, reliable and consistent assessment across organisation and over time.
- Operate regular standardisation events that enable assessors to attend a minimum of two events per year.
- Operate moderation of assessment activity and decisions through examination of documentation and observation of activity, with a minimum of 10 percent of each independent assessors' assessments moderated every six months.

**Assessment tools and materials**

EPAOs must produce assessment tools and supporting materials for the EPA that follow best assessment practice, as follows:

- Guidance for apprentices, their employers and training providers on the EPA including both written and verbal instructions on the tasks to be completed by apprentices for each assessment method including timescales.
- Template documents for recording all assessment evidence and decisions to enable a sound assessment against the grading criteria set-out in Annex B; identification of trend-data that can be shared with training providers to enable continuous improvement of provision; cost-effective quality assurance by third parties.
- Sample questions to enable assessors to assess and grade the two assessment methods however, the assessor should also develop additional questions pertinent to the evidence presented. The question bank must be of sufficient size to prevent predictability and be reviewed regularly (and at least once a year) to ensure they are fit for purpose and allow a different set of questions to be used in the case of re-sits/re-takes.

## External quality assurance

External quality assurance arrangements will ensure that EPAOs delivering EPA for this apprenticeship standard operate consistently and in line with this plan.

The Institute for Apprenticeships will undertake external quality assurance for this apprenticeship standard.

## Implementation

### Affordability

Flexibility in the scheduling of assessments and the ability to use technology and employers' premises should enable EPAOs to minimise costs and deliver the EPA in the volumes required. The use of a dissertation to underpin the EPA that delivers business benefit should provide value to the employer.

### Volumes

It is anticipated that there will be initially 20 starts per year on this apprenticeship but it is expected that this number will grow substantially within the first three years of delivery, with a minimum number of 100 starts by this point.

**Annex A – Knowledge, skills and behaviours to be assessed by each assessment method**

| Assessment method | Key |
|---|---|
| Professional discussion, underpinned by portfolio of evidence | P |
| Dissertation, presentation and questioning | D |

| Knowledge statement - Improvement leaders have the knowledge and understanding of: | Assessment method |
|---|---|
| 1. **Strategy development:** Policy deployment principles and Hoshin Kanri  Porter's 5 forces, Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT)/Political Economic Social Technological Legal Economic (PESTLE), Ansoff's growth matrix, Boston Consulting Group growth share matrix, GE-McKinsey matrix | **D** |
| 2. **Business benefits:** Net present value, activity based costing | **D** |
| 3. **Team formation & leadership:** Team types and constraints, dysfunctional teams, emotional intelligence, Neuro-linguistic programming techniques, reinforcement strategies | **D** |
| 4. **Self-development:** Latest thinking in Continuous Improvement and Operational Excellence | **D** |
| 5. **Presentation and reporting:** Single page reporting – A3 thinking | **D** |
| 6. **Project selection and scoping:** Business performance metrics | **D** |
| 7. **Measurement systems:** Audit Measurement System | **P** |
| 8. **Data analysis – statistical methods:** Regression (multiple & binary logistic), forecasting and queuing theory | **P** |
| 9. **Experimentation and optimisation:** Monte Carlo and Discrete Event simulation. Balanced and unbalanced designs, General Linear Model | **P** |

| Skills statements - Improvement leaders have the following skills: | Assessment method |
|---|---|
| 1. **Strategic deployment of continuous improvement:** Contribute to the business planning cycle and lead the development of improvement strategy. Analyse current state and identify opportunities. Develop deployment plans considering key enablers. Contribute to the development of an improvement culture. Maintain engagement through effective communication | **D** |
| 2. **Business benefits:** Identify, quantify and communicate financial and non-financial benefits | **D** |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3. | **Team formation and leadership:** Use appropriate tools and techniques to identify, diagnose and resolve sources of under-performance and conflict within teams | D |
| 4. | **Capability Development:** Design, source and evaluate learning interventions. Facilitate multi-functional workshops. Advise on selection of individuals for different levels of training | D |
| 5. | **Project management:** Plan and manage an improvement programme with appropriate levels of governance. Apply processes for managing a portfolio of improvement projects including reporting, escalation, audit and risk management/mitigation | D |
| **6.** | **Reviewing projects and coaching others:** Provide guidance for structured project reviews. Conduct group coaching reviews. Identify, diagnose and resolve project performance issues | P |
| 7. | **Presentation and reporting:** Critique own and others' improvement reports/presentations | P |
| 8. | **Change management:** Assess the effectiveness of change and identify opportunities to improve outcomes, guiding and supporting others to deliver results | D |
| 9. | **Principles and methods**: Clearly communicate the importance of appropriate method-selection to others, and enable the organisation to make appropriate decisions through learning and tools | P |
| **10.** | **Project selection and scoping:** Establish guidelines for project identification and prioritisation. Assess effectiveness of identification and prioritisation processes and implement counter-measures to enhance outcomes. Engage leadership team to identify improvement opportunities | D |
| 11. | **Problem definition**: Promote importance of evidence-driven problem definition in everyday work | P |
| 12. | **Voice of Customer (VOC):** Coach others on the importance of understanding VOC. Identify ways that an organisation can improve customer insight through feedback loops to enable improvement activities to be focused appropriately | P |
| 13. | **Process mapping and analysis:** Apply process thinking to identify opportunities to improve business and process performance and maintain ongoing process control | P |
| 14. | **Lean concepts and tools:** Easily translate and communicate fundamental Lean concepts for application to a wide range of business functions. Assess the effectiveness of a Lean strategy and make recommendations for improving outcomes | P |

| | |
|---|---|
| 15. **Data acquisition for analysis:** Assess data acquisition conducted by others in terms of tool selection and application, conclusions and recommendations | P |
| 16. **Statistics and graphical analysis:** Assess and guide graphical and statistical analysis conducted by others in terms of tool selection and application, conclusions and recommendations. Communicate opportunities for robust application of basic data analysis methods and engage others to extend/embed the application of data-driven approaches. Investigate and evaluate measurement and analysis approaches which extend the capabilities of the organisation. Establish strategies for gathering and analysing life-cycle data | P |
| 17. **Process capability and performance:** Make recommendations on how an organisation can drive improvement through the selection of tools and metrics for process capability analysis | D |
| 18. **Root cause analysis:** Guide and coach others in planning to ensure efficiency of approach | P |
| 19. **Experimentation, optimisation and simulation:** Support the building of mathematical models and exploitation of these | P |
| 20. **Identification & prioritisation:** Develop a Creative Thinking strategy to support improvements | P |
| 21. **Failure Mode Avoidance:** Communicate the business case, aims, methods & key tools. Identify opportunities for application within product and project life cycles including Lean Design | D |
| **22. Data analysis – Statistical Process Control:** Make recommendation on how an organisation can drive sustained improvement through the application of Statistical Process Control | P |
| 23. **Benchmarking:** Develop a benchmarking strategy to support an improvement programme | P |

| **Behaviour statements** - Improvement leaders demonstrate the following behaviours: | **Assessment method** |
|---|---|
| 1. **Drive for results:** Be a primary advocate for Improvement and Operational Excellence acting as a role model for others, focused on improving customer experience and delivering benefits | P |
| 2. **Team Working:** Actively seeks opportunities for improving team performance and coaches others to resolve under-performance issues | P |

| 3. **Professionalism:** Demonstrates personal resilience. Challenge, influence & engage seniors | P |
|---|---|
| 4. **Strategic Thinking:** Drives future thinking for themselves and others**.** Actively seeks out new ideas, opportunities methods and tools. Build a knowledge and best practice sharing network | P |
| 5. **Safe Working:** Recognises opportunities to improve safe working practices | P |

**Annex B – Pass, Merit and Distinction criteria**

| Professional discussion underpinned by portfolio of evidence | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Area of occupational standard** | **Fail Criteria**<br>the Apprentice will display any of the following | **Pass Criteria**<br>the apprentice must demonstrate all of the following | **Merit Criteria**<br>In addition to the pass criteria the Apprentice must demonstrate 14 of the following, one-two of which must be behaviours | **Distinction Criteria**<br>In addition to the merit criteria the Apprentice must demonstrate an <u>additional eight of the merit criteria</u> |
| **K5. Presentation and reporting:** Single page reporting – A3 thinking | Fail to create and communicate effective summaries. | Demonstrate knowledge of the principles and benefits of A3 thinking. | 1. Guide and support others in A3 thinking.<br><br>2. Establish or improve the organisation's approach to A3 thinking. | |
| **K7. Measurement systems:** Audit Measurement System | Fail to understand the value and importance of validating measurement systems. | Complete a measurement system audit and draw conclusions and recommendations. | 3. Build the organisation's knowledge and skills in terms Measurement System Analysis. | |
| **K8. Data analysis – statistical methods:** Regression (multiple & binary logistic), forecasting and queuing theory | Fail to interpret and draw accurate conclusions. | Complete a multiple regression or Binary Logistic Regression analysis study and draw accurate conclusions and recommendations. | 4. Guide others on the completion of multiple regression or Binary Logistic Regression analysis studies.<br><br>5. Promote the principles and benefits of statistical modelling to the wider organisation. | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **K9. Experimentation and optimisation:** Monte Carlo and Discrete Event simulation. Balanced and unbalanced designs, General Linear Model | | Set-up and complete a designed experiment and draw conclusions and recommendations. | 6.Guide others in the use of appropriate experimentation tools. | |
| **S6. Reviewing projects and coaching others:** Provide guidance for structured project reviews. Conduct group coaching reviews. Identify, diagnose and resolve project performance issues | Fail to recognise the value and importance of structured project reviews.\n\nFail to use coaching techniques to enable and encourage others to think and learn independently. | Coach at least 3 L5 improvement projects and at least 3 L5 coaches (coaching a L4 improvement project) to deliver business benefits, providing specific and accurate feedback to coaches such there is a clear understanding of gaps and next steps required.\nMitigates risk of project performance issues. | 7. Promote the principles and benefits of coaching to the wider organisation.\n\n8. Assess the organisation's approach to conducting coaching reviews and make recommendations for improvement. | |
| **S7. Presentation and reporting:** Critique own and others' improvement reports/presentations | Fail to:\n• Set/communicate objectives/outcomes\n• Communicate clearly and in a logical, engaging order to fully meet objectives/outcomes | Listen and respond positively to questions and feedback.\n\nGive structured and constructive feedback to others. | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Seek feedback and reflect on opportunities for improvement | | | |
| **S9. Principles and methods**: Clearly communicate the importance of appropriate method-selection to others, and enable the organisation to make appropriate decisions through learning and tools | Fail to recognise the importance of appropriate method-selection. | Clearly communicate the importance of: <br>• Selecting appropriate methods and tools <br>• Linking the inputs to one tool to the outputs of another (and vice versa). <br><br>Select and accurately apply appropriate methods and tools to deliver business benefits. | 9. Establish or improve the organisation's approach to method and tool selection. | |
| **S11. Problem definition**: Promote importance of evidence-driven problem definition in everyday work | Fail to recognise the value and importance of structured evidence-driven problem definition in everyday work. | Promote the importance of evidence-driven problem definition in everyday work. | 10. Assess the organisation's approach to problem definition and make recommendations for improvement. | |
| **S12. Voice of Customer(VOC):** Coach others on the importance of understanding VOC. Identify ways that an organisation can improve customer insight | Fail to recognise the value and importance of understanding Voice of Customer in everyday work. | Coach others on the importance of understanding VOC in everyday work. | 11. Develop and build a plan to enable the organisation to improve customer insight through feedback loops. | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| through feedback loops to enable improvement activities to be focused appropriately | | Identify ways that the organisation can improve customer insight through feedback loops to provide focus for improvement activities. | | |
| **S13. Process mapping and analysis:** Apply process thinking to identify opportunities to improve business and process performance and maintain ongoing process control | Fail to recognise the value and importance of process thinking in everyday work. | Apply process thinking and tools to identify opportunities to improve everyday business and process performance and to maintain ongoing process control. | 12. Assess the organisation's approach to mapping and analysing processes and make recommendations for improvement. | |
| **S14. Lean concepts and tools:** Easily translate and communicate fundamental Lean concepts for application to a wide range of business functions. Assess the effectiveness of a Lean strategy and make recommendations for improving outcomes | Fail to understand the principles and benefits of Lean in everyday work. | Clearly communicate fundamental Lean concepts and how Lean tools can be applied to deliver business benefits using completed Lean improvement projects as evidence, in at least two different business functions.<br><br>Assess the organisation's approach to Lean strategy and deployment and make recommendations for improving outcomes (or if | 13. Engage with the external enterprise to extend and strengthen the organisation's Lean strategy.<br><br>14. Benchmark approaches used by others to deploy Lean and identify opportunities to enhance the businesses Lean strategy. | |

| | | a strategy does not currently exist then develop a Lean strategy). Links to the business planning cycle <br> • Includes analysis of the current state and opportunities <br> • Considers development of an improvement culture <br> Includes deployment and communication plans. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **S15.Data acquisition for analysis:** Assess data acquisition conducted by others in terms of tool selection and application, conclusions and recommendations | Fail to recognise the value and importance of data-driven decision making in everyday work. | Accurately assess and provide constructive feedback on data acquisition conducted by others in terms of tool selection and application, conclusions and recommendations. | 15. Build the organisation's knowledge and skills in terms of data-driven decision-making. | |
| **S16. Statistics and graphical analysis:** Assess and guide graphical and statistical analysis conducted by others in terms of tool selection and application, conclusions and recommendations. Communicate opportunities | Fail to stay up to date with latest updates in the statistical software used by the organisation. | Accurately assess and provide constructive feedback on graphical and statistical analysis conducted by others in terms of tool selection and application, conclusions and recommendations. | 16. Build the organisation's knowledge and skills in terms of graphical and statistical analysis. <br> 17. Identify strategies for gathering and analysing life-cycle data in the | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| for robust application of basic data analysis methods and engage others to extend/embed the application of data-driven approaches. Investigate and evaluate measurement and analysis approaches that extend the capabilities of the organisation. Establish strategies for gathering and analysing life-cycle data | | Assess the organisation's approach to measurement and data analysis and make recommendations for improvement that extend the capabilities of the organisation. | context of a key product, process or service. |
| **S18. Root cause analysis:** Guide and coach others in planning to ensure efficiency of approach | Fail to recognise the value and importance of root cause analysis in everyday problem solving. | Guide and coach others in the selection and application of tools for root causes analysis to ensure efficiency of approach. | 18. Assess the organisation's approach to root cause analysis and make recommendations for improvement. | |
| **S19. Experimentation, optimisation and simulation:** Support the building of mathematical models and exploitation of these | Fail to recognise the value of building mathematical models to understand relationships within and between process inputs and outputs | Assess the organisation's approach to mathematical modelling and make recommendations for improvement. | 19. Build the organisation's knowledge and skills in terms of mathematical modelling. | |
| **S20. Identification & prioritisation:** Develop a Creative Thinking strategy to support improvements | Fail to recognise the value of Creative Thinking in the context of improvement projects. | Develop a Creative Thinking strategy to support improvement activities. | 20. Build the organisation's knowledge and skills in terms of Creative Thinking principles and tools. | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **S22. Data analysis – Statistical Process Control:** Make recommendation on how an organisation can drive sustained improvement through the application of Statistical Process Control | Fail to recognise the value and importance of on-going process control in everyday activities. | Assess the organisation's approach to on-going process control and make recommendations for improvement with reference to the application of Statistical Process Control. | 21. Build the organisation's knowledge and skills in terms of on-going process control with reference to Statistical Process Control. | |
| **S23. Benchmarking:** Develop a benchmarking strategy to support an improvement programme | Fail to recognise the value and importance of benchmarking in the context of improvement activities. | Develop a benchmarking strategy to support improvement activities. | 22. Build the organisation's knowledge and skills in terms of benchmarking. | |
| **B1. Drive for results:** Be a primary advocate for Improvement and Operational Excellence acting as a role model for others, focused on improving customer experience and delivering benefits | Fail to clearly communicate the value and importance of improvement and operational excellence. Fail to understand the key business drivers. | Deliver improvements that align to the organisation's key drivers. Guide others to identify enablers/barriers and to take actions to address these in the pursuit of improvements. | | |
| **B2. Team Working:** Actively seeks opportunities for improving team performance and coaches others to resolve under-performance issues | Fail to recognise under-performing teams. | Improve team performance and take steps to resolve under-performance issues. | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **B3. Professionalism:** Demonstrates personal resilience. Challenge, influence & engage seniors | Fail to demonstrate personal resilience.<br><br>Fail to identify all stakeholders. | Demonstrate effective influencing and stakeholder engagement techniques.<br><br>Demonstrate personal resilience in a changing environment. | 23. Challenge seniors in the pursuit of improvements. | |
| **B4. Strategic Thinking:** Drives future thinking for themselves and others. Actively seeks out new ideas, opportunities methods and tools. Build a knowledge and best practice sharing network | Fail to take steps to stay abreast of latest thinking in the area of improvement techniques and operational excellence.<br><br>Fail to participate in best practice sharing with others. | Actively seek out and research new ideas, opportunities, methods and tools.<br><br>Contribute to a knowledge and best practice sharing network. | 24. Set-up or lead new best practice sharing activities, with written aims, measures of success, scope and governance.<br><br>25. Actively contribute to latest thinking in improvement techniques and operational excellence. | |
| **B5. Safe Working:** Recognises opportunities to improve safe working practices | Fail to work safely at all times | Works safely at all times. | | |

**Dissertation and Presentation**

| | Fail Criteria<br>the Apprentice will display any of the following | Pass Criteria<br>the apprentice must demonstrate all of the following | Merit Criteria<br>In addition to the pass criteria the Apprentice must demonstrate 10 of the following | Distinction Criteria<br>In addition to the merit criteria the Apprentice must demonstrate an <u>additional 6 of the merit criteria</u> |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **K1. Strategy development:** Policy deployment principles and Hoshin Kanri, Porter's 5 forces, Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT)/Political Economic Social Technological Legal Economic (PESTLE), Ansoff's growth matrix, Boston Consulting Group growth share matrix, GE-McKinsey matrix | Fail to recognise the value and importance of having a strategic plan for continuous improvement. | Demonstrate knowledge of policy deployment principles and Hoshin Kanri, Porter's 5 forces, Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT)/Political Economic Social Technological Legal Economic (PESTLE), Ansoff's growth matrix, Boston Consulting Group growth share matrix, GE-McKinsey matrix. | 1. Application of at least 1 tool from the following list to support strategy development for the organisation:<br>• Policy deployment principles and Hoshin Kanri<br>• Porter's 5 forces<br>• Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT) and Political Economic Social Technological Legal Economic (PESTLE)<br>• Ansoff's growth matrix<br>• Boston Consulting Group. | |
| **K2&S2. Business benefits:** Net present value, activity based costing | Fail to fully and accurately identify, calculate and communicate business benefits in the context of | Demonstrate knowledge of net present value, activity based costing in the context of identifying and | 2. Application of net present value or activity based costing in the context of identifying and | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Identify, quantify and communicate financial and non-financial benefits | improvement programmes. | calculating business benefits associated with improvement programmes. | calculating business benefits associated with improvement programmes.<br><br>3. Assess the organisation's approach to calculating business benefits associated with improvement programmes and make recommendations for improvement. | |
| **K3&S3. Team formation & leadership:** Team types and constraints, dysfunctional teams, emotional intelligence, Neuro-linguistic programming techniques, reinforcement strategies<br><br>Use appropriate tools and techniques to identify, diagnose and resolve sources of under-performance and conflict within teams | Fail to consider team formation/performance and leadership as key elements in the improvement strategy. | Demonstrate knowledge of team types and constraints, dysfunctional teams, emotional intelligence, Neuro-linguistic programming techniques and reinforcement strategies. Apply appropriate tools and techniques to identify, diagnose and resolve sources of under-performance and conflict within teams | 4. Application of 1 of the following to support deployment of the organisation's improvement programme:<br>• Emotional intelligence<br>• Neuro-linguistic programming | |
| **K4. Self-development:** Latest thinking in Continuous | | Demonstrate knowledge of latest thinking in | 5. Assess the organisation's approach | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Improvement and Operational Excellence | | Continuous Improvement and Operational Excellence. | to staying abreast of latest thinking Continuous Improvement and Operational Excellence and make recommendations for improvement.<br><br>6. Establish or improve the organisation's approach to staying abreast of latest thinking Continuous Improvement and Operational Excellence. | |
| **K6&S10. Project selection and scoping:** Business performance metrics<br><br>Establish guidelines for project identification and prioritisation. Assess effectiveness of identification and prioritisation processes and implement counter-measures to enhance outcomes. Engage leadership team to identify improvement opportunities | Fail to consider process project selection and scoping as a key element in the improvement strategy.<br><br>Fail to demonstrate use of project selection guidelines and the prioritisation of improvement projects delivered. | Demonstrate knowledge of long-term organisational goals and business performance metrics and how these should be used to inform project selection and scoping.<br><br>Demonstrate development and use of approaches to identify and prioritise improvement opportunities that align | 7. Embed project selection methods across the organisation as part of the organisations long-term strategy for transformation.<br><br>8. Assess the organisation's approach to identifying, prioritising and scoping improvement projects and identify recommendations for improvement. | . |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | with the organisational strategy. | 9.Benchmark approaches used by others to identify, prioritise and scope improvement projects and identify opportunities to enhance the business improvement strategy | |
| **S1. Strategic deployment of continuous improvement:** Contribute to the business planning cycle and lead the development of improvement strategy. Analyse current state and identify opportunities. Develop deployment plans considering key enablers. Contribute to the development of an improvement culture. Maintain engagement through effective communication | Fail to consider the wider organisation in the context of improvement strategy development and deployment planning. | Develop an improvement strategy for the business which: <br> • Links to the business planning cycle <br> • Includes analysis of the current state and opportunities <br> • Considers development of an improvement culture <br> • Includes deployment and communication plans | 10. Integrate the improvement strategy into other business processes to drive continuous improvement through everyday activities. | |
| **S4. Capability Development:** Design, source and evaluate learning interventions. Facilitate multi-functional workshops. Advise on | Fail to consider capability development as a key element in the improvement strategy. | Design, source and evaluate learning interventions. | 11. Assess the organisation's approach to capability development and identify | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| selection of individuals for different levels of training | | Facilitate multi-functional workshops to build capability in improvement principles, methods and/or tools.<br><br>Assess needs and selection of individuals for different levels of training in improvement principles, methods and/or tools. | recommendations for improvement.<br><br>12. Benchmark approaches used by others to develop capability and identify opportunities to enhance the business improvement strategy. | |
| **S5. Project management:** Plan and manage an improvement programme with appropriate levels of governance. Apply processes for managing a portfolio of improvement projects including reporting, escalation, audit and risk management/mitigation | | Plan and manage an improvement programme with appropriate levels of governance.<br><br>Apply processes for managing a portfolio of improvement projects including reporting, escalation, audit and risk management/mitigation. | 13. Assess the organisation's approach to at least 2 of the following (in the context of improvement strategy/deployment) and identify recommendations for improvement:<br>• Programme management<br>• Governance<br>• Reporting and escalation<br>• Audit and risk management/mitigation | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 14. Benchmark project management approaches used by others and identify opportunities to enhance the business improvement strategy. | |
| **S8. Change management:** Assess the effectiveness of change and identify opportunities to improve outcomes, guiding and supporting others to deliver results | Fail to consider change management as a key element in the improvement strategy. | Assess the effectiveness of change and identify opportunities to improve outcomes, guiding and supporting others to deliver results. | 15. Assess the organisation's approach to change management and identify recommendations for improvement.<br><br>16. Benchmark approaches used by others to change management and identify opportunities to enhance the business improvement strategy. | |
| **S17. Process capability and performance:** Make recommendations on how an organisation can drive improvement through the selection of tools and metrics for process capability analysis | Fail to consider process capability metrics as a key element in the improvement strategy. | Assess the organisation's approach to analysing process capability and identify recommendations for improvement. | 17. Benchmark approaches to process capability analysis used by others and identify opportunities to enhance the business improvement strategy. | |

| S21. Failure Mode Avoidance: Communicate the business case, aims, methods & key tools. Identify opportunities for application within product and project life cycles including Lean Design | Fail to consider Failure Mode Avoidance as a key element in the improvement strategy. | Assess the organisation's approach to Failure Mode Avoidance and identify recommendations for improvement. | 18. Benchmark approaches to Failure Mode Avoidance used by others and identify opportunities to enhance the business improvement strategy. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**Annex C – Grading combinations**

| Professional discussion, underpinned by portfolio of evidence | Dissertation, presentation and questioning | Overall grade to be awarded |
|---|---|---|
| FAIL | ANY | FAIL |
| ANY | FAIL | FAIL |
| PASS | PASS | PASS |
| PASS | MERIT | PASS |
| PASS | DISTINCTION | MERIT |
| MERIT | PASS | PASS |
| MERIT | MERIT | MERIT |
| MERIT | DISTINCTION | MERIT |
| DISTINCTION | PASS | MERIT |
| DISTINCTION | MERIT | MERIT |
| DISTINCTION | DISTINCTION | DISTINCTION |