

End-point assessment plan for Orthoptist apprenticeship standard

Apprenticeship standard number	Level of this end-point assessment (EPA)	Integrated
ST1272	6	Statutory integrated degree

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Introduction and overview

Orthoptists are subject to statutory regulation by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). The HCPC sets the standards of proficiency required for entry to the professional register and these are the occupational standards for registered orthoptists. The HCPC also has the statutory duty to set requirements of programmes necessary to support the achievement of the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) set out in the standards of proficiency and the KSBs in the occupational standard. The apprenticeship standard and the delivery of the apprentices training must be aligned to all relevant HCPC standards to ensure that apprentices are eligible for entry to the HCPC register on completion. It is against the law for anyone to work as an orthoptist without being registered with the HCPC. The end-point assessment (EPA) assesses whether apprentices have also passed the apprenticeship, and is based on the same professional knowledge, skills and behaviours as the occupational standard.

This document sets out the requirements for EPA for the orthoptist statutory integrated degree apprenticeship standard. It is for the end-point assessment organisations (EPAO), that must be an HCPC Approved Education Provider, who need to know how EPA for this apprenticeship must operate. It will also be of interest to apprentices, their employers and HCPC Approved Education Provider.

Apprentices will typically spend 36 months on-programme working towards the occupational standard.

The EPA period should only start, and the EPA be arranged, once the employer and HCPC Approved Education Provider are satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard and all the pre-requisite gateway requirements for EPA have been met. It is expected that the gateway will be reached on completion of the final module and before the Approved Education Provider's examination board.

The apprentice must have achieved English and maths qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules.

The EPA period is expected to last a maximum of 1 month beginning when the apprentice has passed the EPA gateway.

The EPA will determine the overall apprenticeship standard and grades of:

- fail
- pass

This apprenticeship has a statutory integrated EPA. The EPA will use the assessment arrangements in use for other entry routes into this occupation and will be completed simultaneously, as outlined in this EPA plan. Alignment of the integrated EPA is permitted because the following criteria are met:

1. the occupation (profession) must be regulated by a statutory regulator that carries out a range of functions in relation to the occupations they regulate, including making sure individuals have the necessary qualifications and/or experience to practise the occupation and taking any necessary enforcement action

2. the occupational standard and statutory integrated EPA meet the apprenticeship requirements

EPA summary table

On-programme (typically 36 months)	Training to develop the occupation standards knowledge, skills and behaviours (aligned to the HCPC standards of proficiency for Orthoptists 2023)
End-point assessment gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprentice has met the knowledge, skills and behaviours • Employer and HCPC Approved Education Provider are satisfied the apprentice has consistently demonstrated they meet the KSBs of the occupational standard • Achieved all required modules from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BSc (Hons) degree in Orthoptics Level 6 or Level 7 Orthoptics (pre-registration) MSc approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) where the apprentice already holds a Level 6 degree • The apprentice must have achieved English and maths qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules. • Achieved all required modules, taking into account any recognition of prior learning (RPL) of the Orthoptist degree but before the Approved Education Provider's examination board
End-point assessment (which would typically take place with 1 month)	<p>The EPA starts with the examination board and finishes when the Approved Education Provider submits the required documentation to HCPC. The apprentice is not required to carry out any additional assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration by the examination board and notice of the decision of pass or fail to HCPC • Apprentice separately applies for registration once awarded the pass
Professional recognition	<p>Registration with:</p> <p>Health and Care Professions Council</p>

Gateway

The EPA period should only start once the employer and the HCPC Approved Education Provider are satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard.

The EPA starts with the examination board and finishes when the Approved Education Provider:

- makes a decision on pass and fail
- emails secure pass list to HCPC which includes required personal details of apprentices who have received a pass

The apprentice separately applies for registration once they have achieved a pass.

HCPC use the pass list to verify successful completion of the apprenticeship programme. The apprentice must have completed and achieved the following gateway requirements prior to beginning EPA:

- Achieved English and mathematics qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules

Apprentices must complete all required modules, taking into account any recognised prior learning, of the following approved qualification, as mandated in the standard:

- BSc (Hons) degree in Orthoptics Level 6 or Level 7 Orthoptics (pre-registration) MSc approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) where the apprentice already holds a Level 6 degree

EPA

The EPA is:

Examination Board

The examination board will be constituted in line with the HCPC Approved Education Provider's academic assessment regulations and must have an external examiner present when considering achievement of the Orthoptist degree.

Independence of the EPA will be assured through:

- the examination board, which will include the external examiner, being responsible for the final decision on the award of the qualification that confirms the apprentice has met the education outcomes required for registration with the HCPC.
- the end-point assessment organisation (HCPC Approved Education Provider) will conduct the EPA.

Grading

Name of grade	Grade descriptor
Pass	Has met the HCPC standards for proficiency for Orthoptists (2023)
Fail	Does not meet the HCPC standards for proficiency for Orthoptists (2023)

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Apprentice	As a minimum, the apprentice should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete the constituent parts of the programme successfully • meet all apprenticeship gateway requirements • understand the structure and requirements of the apprenticeship
Employer	As a minimum, the employer should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the apprentice to achieve the KSBs outlined in the occupational standard • determine when the apprentice is working at or above the level of occupational competence outlined in the occupational standard and has met all apprenticeship gateway requirements, taking account of the advice of the HCPC Approved Education Provider
The EPAO (HCPC Approved Education Provider)	As a minimum the EPAO (HCPC Approved Education Provider) should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be a HCPC Approved Education Provider for the orthoptist apprenticeship • conform to the requirements of the apprenticeship provider and assessment register • work with the employer to ensure that the apprentice is given the opportunities to develop the KSBs outlined in the standard and monitor their progress during the on-programme period • confirm to the employer that gateway requirements have been met • appoint an external examiner • use appropriate recording documentation to ensure a clear and auditable mechanism for recording the decision of the examination board • maintain robust internal quality assurance (IQA) procedures and processes, and conduct these on a regular basis

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submits required documentation to the HCPC • conform to the requirements of the nominated external quality assurance body • conduct standardisation events and activities in accordance with HCPC and external quality assurance (EQA) providers requirements • have, and operate, an appeals process • arrange for apprenticeship certification
External examiner/ Independent Assessor	<p>There will be one individual with the following responsibilities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. External Examiner in line with QAA Guidance on External Examiners/ Expertise for HE programmes 2. Independent Assessor who as a minimum should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the occupational standard and end-point assessment plan • be a Registered Orthoptist • comply to the requirements of the EPAO (HCPC Approved Education Institution) • be independent of the apprentice, and the employing organisation who are involved in delivering the apprenticeship • not have been involved in the teaching or on-programme assessment of the apprentice other than in their role under point 1 above 3. External Examiner for the end-point assessment who will carry out required activities on behalf of the EQA provider

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

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

- appoint external examiners who:
 - meet QAA Guidance on External Examiners/ Expertise for HE programmes
 - meet the EQA provider's recommendations for external examiners
 - meet the Approved Education Provider's requirements as set out in their 'Assessment, Progression and Awarding' or similar guidance

Re-sits and re-takes

In line with the EPAO's (HCPC Approved Education Provider) procedures.

Professional body recognition

This apprenticeship is aligned to the Health and Care Professions Council standards of proficiency and education programme standards for orthoptists. This means that those who successfully complete the apprenticeship will be eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC.

Reasonable adjustments

The EPAO (HCPC Approved Education Provider) must have in place clear and fair arrangements for making reasonable adjustments 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 decisions outlined in this EPA plan.