

Destination EPA: Begin with the end in mind.

A guide and training resource to support the interactive online support session

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Introduction

Ensuring that apprentices achieve high success rates is a critical goal for any training provider. This resource accompanies the online training support session and delves into the importance of focusing on End-Point Assessment (EPA) from the start of an apprenticeship.

By following the steps outlined, you can improve your apprenticeship programmes and ultimately achieve better outcomes for your learners

Understanding the Significance of EPA in Apprenticeship Planning

Why Focus on EPA Early?

Focusing on the EPA from the beginning of the apprenticeship process is essential for several reasons:

- 1.Establishing Clear Goals:** By integrating EPA considerations early, you set clear goals and expectations for both apprentices and trainers
- 2.Building Preparation into Training:** Incorporating EPA preparation into the training curriculum helps apprentices develop the necessary skills and confidence to excel in their assessments.
- 3.Maximising Feedback Value:** Utilising the feedback from EPAOs effectively allows you to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- 4.Analysing Results for Insights:** Analysing the results from EPAs provides valuable insights into how your training is meeting its objectives.
- 5.Reflecting on Intent:** Regular reflection on your curriculum intent ensures that your training remains aligned with your educational goals and the needs of your apprentices
- 6.Striving for Excellence:** By setting high expectations and striving for excellence, you move beyond merely achieving a pass.

In this session, you will explore each of these aspects in detail. By the end, you'll have a comprehensive understanding of how to integrate EPA focus into your apprenticeship planning and delivery, ensuring you achieve your goal of exceptional outcomes for all apprentices.

Watch the video, pause this when prompted and complete the activities to get the most out of the training.

Mastering EPA Planning & Results – Why is it important?

Activity interaction- reflect and answer the following questions:

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Your experience and journey so far with EPA?

Think about your experiences up to this point. What have been your major milestones? What challenges have you overcome? Reflect on how these experiences have shaped your current approach to continuous improvement.

Where do you feel you are now?

Assess your current position in your continuous improvement journey. Are you just beginning, or are you well into the process? Identify your strengths and areas where you feel there is room for improvement.

Start with the EPA in mind – Information, Advice and Guidance

Consider how you are integrating End-

Point Assessment (EPA) into your Information, advice and guidance process. (IAG).

Are you aligning your processes and training with the EPA requirements from the start?

Do you concentrate on EPA or on embedded qualifications?

Reflect on whether your focus is more on preparing for the EPA or on embedding the qualifications and skills throughout the learning process.

Which approach do you believe offers more long-term benefits?

What about finance, reputation, QAR Data, OFSTED results?

Finally, think about the broader impact of your continuous improvement efforts. How do financial considerations, your institution's reputation, QAR data, and OFSTED results influence your decisions and strategies?

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What are your learner EPA plans? Activity interaction- reflect and answer the following questions:

What is/are the EPA(s) plan you use?

Think about your current EPA plans. What are their key components?

What are the assessment methods required? Identify the specific assessment methods mandated by your EPA. Are they practical exams, project-based assessments, written tests or any others?

Reflect on how deeply you understand the assessment methods. Do you focus more on the general requirements or the detailed criteria of each assessment method? How can you improve your focus to ensure a thorough understanding?

Do you obtain guidance from your End-Point Assessment Organisation

Evaluate the level of support you receive from your End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO). Are you utilising their guidance and resources effectively? When did you last check the EPA kits they provide? What additional support could you seek to enhance your EPA process?

Encouragement:

As you ponder these questions, aim to identify areas where you can make tangible improvements. Think about practical steps you can take to align your training Methods more closely with EPA requirements and record in the space below. Your insights

will be crucial as you move forward with your training programme.

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TIPs: Understand Your EPA Plan - Focus on Detailed Requirements

To ensure you make the most of your EPAO (End Point Assessment Organisation) resources, follow these essential steps:

- Deep Dive into KSB Criteria:** Understand the detailed criteria of each assessment method, not just the top-level requirements.
- Utilise Resources:** Access all the materials and guidance your EPAO offers. These resources are designed to support your success, so take full advantage of them.
- Regular Updates:** Stay proactive by frequently checking for updates or new materials from your EPAO. Keeping up to date ensures you are always prepared with the latest information and tools.
- Seek Additional Support:** Whenever you need extra support or clarification, don't hesitate to ask. Reaching out can provide valuable insights and help address any uncertainties you may have.
- **Reflect and Act:**
Identify Improvement Areas: Reflect on your current practices and identify specific areas where you can

Are you preparing your apprentices? Activity interaction- reflect and answer the following questions:

Is EPA Covered in IAG, Initial assessment and Reviews?

The first opportunity to give full clarification about the EPA process is during your Information, advice and guidance, induction and launch sessions. So, how well do you integrate EPA requirements and support available into your

Take a few moments to think about and answer the following questions. This activity aims to help you to identify areas for improvement and ensure that our EPA preparation is comprehensive and effective.

For each of the following areas score your organisation on a scale of 1 (we rarely do this) to 5 (this is fully included, and we cannot do any more to improve for the following areas:

Information, advice and guidance process: Score:

What can you do to improve this score?

Is EPA Covered in IAG? -Reflect on whether the End-Point Assessment is adequately covered in the Information, Advice, and Guidance we provide. Are there any gaps or areas that need more focus? “

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Initial Assessment: Score:**What can you do to improve this score?**

Consider if your initial assessment effectively evaluates the learner's confidence in presenting and conducting professional discussions, interviews, writing projects etc. – whatever is in your EPA plan. How could this process be improved to better support their development in these areas? “

Quarterly Reviews: Score:**What can you do to improve this score?**

Do you Include EPA Preparation in the Review Process? Think about the review process you have in place. Are you sufficiently preparing them for the EPA through regular reviews and feedback? What additional support or resources might be beneficial?

Tips: Preparing Apprentices from the beginning - Initial Assessment, Curriculum and Reviews

To ensure your learners are fully prepared for their End Point Assessment (EPA), follow these key strategies:

- **Improve Support Where Required in the Curriculum IAG process:**
 - Include the EPA process right from the start.
 - In your curriculum, integrate ample opportunities and resources for EPA practice.
 - Ensure learners have lots of practice to develop the confidence and skills necessary to achieve Distinction criteria.
- **Effective Initial Assessment:**
 - Ensure the initial assessment process accurately evaluates the learners' confidence and readiness for the EPA.
 - Identify where they need support with project writing, preparing presentations and presenting, conducting professional discussions, interview techniques and taking mock exams that meet the highest-grade requirements (Distinction).
- **Include EPA Preparation in the Review Process:**
 - Regular Reviews: During review sessions, monitor learners' confidence levels for the EPA and provide additional support or resources as needed and involve the employer
 - Utilise EPA kits, practice tests, and feedback sessions as SMART targets to help learners stay on track and meet their goals.

Do you get value from feedback? Activity interaction- reflect and answer the following questions:

Think about the feedback you've received from the EPAO reports for your apprentices. Consider both the positive aspects and areas where they have suggested improvements. How has this feedback been gathered, analysed and tracked to influence your training experience so far?

Evaluate Feedback Strength:

Ask yourself whether the feedback is detailed and actionable enough for you to make meaningful changes to your training content. Are there specific examples where the feedback has directly led to improvements?

Identify Areas for Improvement:

Identify any gaps in the feedback you've received. What additional information or insights would be helpful in further developing your training content? How can you encourage EPAOs to provide more comprehensive and constructive feedback?

TIPS: Leveraging EPAO Feedback

To improve the effectiveness of your training based on feedback, consider these important steps:

- **Evaluate Feedback Strength:**
 - Assess whether the feedback you receive is detailed and actionable enough to facilitate meaningful changes.
 - Reflect on specific examples where feedback has highlighted your weaknesses in your training content.
- **Identify Gaps in Feedback:**
 - Identify any gaps in the feedback you've received. Determine what additional information or insights would be helpful in further developing your training content.
- **Encourage Comprehensive Feedback:**
 - Consider how you can encourage EPAOs to provide more comprehensive and constructive feedback. This can help you make targeted improvements and enhance the overall quality of your training programme.

By following these steps, you can ensure that the feedback you receive is effective, comprehensive, and actionable, leading to continuous improvement in your training content.

Can you analyse your results? Activity interaction- reflect and answer the following questions:

Step1: Reflect on Feedback Review Practices

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First, reflect on your current practices when you receive your EPA grades. Do you take the time to read the specific feedback in detail, or do you primarily focus on the grade? Consider the following questions:

How often do you go beyond the grades to understand the feedback provided?

Are there any specific instances where detailed feedback has helped you improve your processes or practices?

Step 2: Analyse Feedback for Continuous Improvement

Next, think about how you can better analyse grades to aid in continuous improvement. Consider these points:

What specific actions can you take to systematically review and analyse the feedback?

How can you use the insights gained from this analysis to enhance your future training delivery?

What tools or methods could you implement to make this analysis more effective?

TIPS: Effective Analysis

To enhance the quality of your training programme through effective feedback analysis, follow these steps:

- **Detailed Review:**
 - Always delve into the detailed feedback provided by EPAOs, going beyond just the grades to understand the underlying insights.
- **Identify Patterns:**
 - Look for recurring themes or issues in the feedback to pinpoint specific areas needing improvement.

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- **Document Insights:**
 - Keep a thorough record of all feedback received and the actions taken to address each point. This helps in tracking progress and making informed decisions.
- **Regular Meetings:**
 - Hold regular meetings with your training team to discuss feedback and grades, ensuring everyone is aligned and aware of necessary improvements.
- **Action Plans:**
 - Develop clear action plans based on feedback analysis to enhance your training content and delivery methods.
- **Use Tools:**

Implement tools such as spreadsheets or specialized software to systematically track and analyse feedback. This ensures a structured approach to managing and utilizing feedback effectively.

Do you reflect on your intent? Activity interaction- reflect and answer the following questions:

The intent of your program is a foundational element that guides your educational approach and objectives. It's essential that you regularly reflect on this intent to ensure it aligns with the standards set by OFSTED and meets the needs of your learners. Reflecting on your intent involves analysing how well your curriculum and training activities support your stated goals and outcomes relating to the EPA requirements.

Think about the stated intent of your training programme. Consider the following questions:

What is the Intent of your curriculum?

Do your End Point Assessment results show the required impact against the Intent of your Curriculum? (Expectations set by OFSTED in the Education Inspection Framework)

Are there any gaps or areas for improvement that you've identified through your analysis that could positively impact on the Intent of your Curriculum?

What specific changes or adjustments can you make to ensure your curriculum intent is effectively supporting your learners and meeting OFSTED's standards?"

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TIPS: Reflect on the Curriculum Intent

To ensure your EPA outcomes align with your curriculum intent and support continuous improvement, follow these strategies:

- **Regular Review:**
 - Schedule regular reviews of your EPA outcomes to ensure they reflect your curriculum intent and meet expected standards.
- **Documentation:**

Document all changes and adjustments made based on your reflections and feedback analysis

 - This provides clear evidence during OFSTED inspections and ensures transparency.
- **Continuous Improvement:**
 - Implement a continuous improvement cycle, regularly updating and refining your curriculum intent based on new feedback and evolving standards.
- **Collaborative Reflection:**
 - Involve your training team in the reflection process. This collaborative approach ensures diverse insights and a comprehensive strategy for curriculum improvement.
- **Learner-Centric Approach:**
 - Ensure that all changes and adjustments to the curriculum intent prioritise the needs and success of your learners. Keep their goals and experiences at the forefront of any modifications.

By following these practices, you can maintain a high-quality curriculum that adapts to feedback and consistently supports your learners' success

Are you exceptional? Activity interaction- reflect and answer the following questions:

Being exceptional means continuously striving for excellence and setting high standards for yourselves and your apprentices. It's crucial to reflect on whether you are truly aiming for outstanding results or if you are settling for just meeting the minimum requirements. This reflection will help you identify areas where you can push beyond a pass and achieve higher levels of success.

Reflect on Expectations

Consider the expectations you set for yourselves and your apprentices. Ask yourself:

Are you aiming for excellence in your training programs, or are you satisfied with just passing?

What does it mean to be exceptional in the context of your training and assessments?

Analyse Barriers to Excellence

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Do you understand why you often don't get beyond a pass?

Are there specific barriers or challenges that prevent you from achieving higher grades?

Evaluate Responsibility and Solutions

Evaluate whether your expectations are high enough. If not, consider whether this is due to your approach as trainers or the efforts of your apprentices. Reflect on these points:

Are you providing enough support, resources, and encouragement to help your apprentices excel in their EPA's?

How can you raise your expectations and standards to inspire higher performance?

What changes can you implement to move beyond just passing and towards achieving exceptional results?

Tips - Achieving Top EPA Grades

- **Set Clear, High Standards**
 - Define and communicate the specific criteria for distinction-level performance. Provide examples of apprentices who achieved top grades.
- **Personalised Goal Setting:**
 - Set ambitious, personalised targets for each apprentice to achieve distinction. Regularly review and adjust these targets to maintain challenge.
- **Enhanced Support and Resources:**
 - Provide advanced resources like distinction-level practice tests, mock exams, and specialised workshops focused on top-grade requirements.

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- **Regular Performance Reviews:**
 - Conduct frequent, detailed reviews with actionable feedback to help apprentices improve and reach distinction levels.
- **Create a Culture of Excellence:**
 - Celebrate apprentices who achieve top grades, share best practices, and foster a supportive environment where aiming for the highest grades is encouraged and expected.

What can you do next? Activity interaction- reflect and answer the following questions:

Reflecting honestly on your current practices is essential for growth and improvement. Now, hold a mirror to yourselves and ask:

Where Are You Now? Consider your current practices and outcomes. Are you meeting your own expectations and those of your learners?

Where Do You Need to Be? Think about the 67% achievement target which has been set by the Government for 2025. What changes are necessary to reach this goal?

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Action Plan: To bridge the gap between where you are and where you need to be, it's essential to complete the action plan provided. Here are some practical steps to consider:

1. **Set Clear Goals:** Define specific, measurable goals for improvement.
2. **Gather and Analyse Feedback:** Continuously seek and analyse feedback from EPAOs, apprentices, and other stakeholders.
3. **Enhance Support and Resources:** Provide additional support and resources to apprentices to help them exceed expectations.
4. **Engage Stakeholders:** Involve all stakeholders, including tutors, apprentices, and EPAOs, in the improvement process.

Encouragement to Act: Take some time now to complete the action plan with these practical steps in mind. Reflect on your current practices, identify areas for improvement, and outline the actions needed to achieve your targets.

Point which needs attention	What action is needed	Who should be involved in this	When should this action be completed	Further notes and actions

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