

Quality Manual: Apprenticeships

University Procedures and Guidance for Apprenticeship Courses

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Apprenticeships are backed by the government and encourage collaboration between employers and universities in a wide range of industries. The aim is to train a highly skilled workforce to drive economic development across the UK, benefiting the employer through the ability to upskill and retrain their workforce.
- 1.2 This chapter provides information on the University's quality procedures for developing and managing Higher and Degree Apprenticeship courses.

2. What is an Apprenticeship?

- 2.1 Apprenticeships are defined by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) as, a job with training to industry standards. The exact definition is located on their website along with further information for providers.
- 2.2 Degree apprenticeships, or apprenticeships which include higher levels of learning are in place to meet the need for higher-level skills, technical, graduate and professional occupations across the country.
- 2.3 Degree Apprenticeship Standards are therefore set in order for specific occupational competence requirement to be measured throughout the apprenticeship and finally in End Point Assessment (EPA).
- 2.4 Information about current CCCU Degree Apprenticeships is available on the University's Apprenticeship Unit website.

3. Degree Apprenticeship Standards

- 3.1 The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) oversees the development of Standards.
- 3.2 When checking the IfATE website for existing standards for Degree Apprenticeships, or whether there are standards in development, it is important to consider following:
 - Level of the Standard
 - Fee band
 - Specified entry-requirements
 - Qualification / Certification associated with the apprenticeships

4. University Apprenticeship Framework

- 4.1 The [University's Apprenticeships Framework](#) sets out the main operating principles by which the University will offer and manage its Apprenticeship Courses within its academic portfolio.
- 4.2 The Framework is in place to enable apprenticeships to complete the requirement components of the Apprenticeship Standard as well as complete the End Point Assessment as approved in the Apprenticeship Standard.
- 4.3 This quality procedures outlined in this guidance have been directly informed by the University's Apprenticeship Framework.

5. Course Design and Approval

- 5.1 All new apprenticeship courses will be approved through the University's normal course approval procedures, which includes award and non-credit bearing apprenticeship courses at all levels.
- 5.2 As per the Apprenticeship Framework, the University will approve an Apprenticeship course one of two ways:
 - 5.2.1 It may utilise an existing course of study that does not integrate Apprenticeship Standards and approve the additional Apprenticeship training requirements and assessment methods and strategies that enable the Apprenticeship Standard to be awarded.
 - 5.2.2 It may approve a fully integrated degree course specifically for apprentices. It may validate a fully integrated degree course specifically for apprentices, which delivers and assesses both the Academic Course and the Apprenticeship Standards (where the underlying academic qualification is awarded as part of the End-Point assessment).
- 5.3 In accordance with the University's course approval procedures, all new apprenticeship proposals will be submitted to the University's approval panel for apprenticeship courses, using the required forms for new course approval.
- 5.4 All new apprenticeship courses should be designed in line with the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy principles, which should consider how the apprentice will develop full occupational competence and satisfy the end point assessment requirements.
- 5.5 Proposers of new apprenticeship courses are required to establish connections with appropriate employer organisations either before or at the same time as they develop the apprenticeship course so that those employers can inform the development of the course. Course teams should be prepared to confirm that they have agreed the roles and responsibilities of the employer and the university to the Standing Approval Panel, as part of the approval process.
- 5.6 When establishing connections with employers, it is the responsibility of the proposer of the new apprenticeship course to ensure that the employer is fully aware of both parties' obligations with respect to the University's approach to managing apprenticeships and the employer's responsibility to provide 20% off-the-job training time to enable the apprentice to engage effectively with their learning.

6. Developing Apprenticeship Standards

Trailblazer Groups

- 6.1 The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) project manages and supports different Trailblazer groups, which are responsible for developing apprenticeships.
- 6.2 Trailblazer groups are typically employer led from organisations that represent the occupation, along with representatives from HE. The intention from those employers is to employ the apprentice(s) within the occupation.
- 6.3 The role of the group is to develop and propose draft Standards for approval by the IFA, which includes:
 - writing the occupational and End Point Assessment (EPA) plan
 - collating funding evidence

- collating funding evidence to inform our funding band recommendation, for an agreed occupation proposal
- revise the apprenticeship as needed. This may result from a route review or change request
- monitor performance of the apprenticeship

Gateway Requirements

- 6.4 Every apprenticeship standard has gateway requirements, which are the minimum requirements the apprentice must have met before they undertake any kind of end point assessment.
- 6.5 Prior to the end point assessment, the employer and University will review the apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviours to assess whether they have met the minimum requirements of the apprenticeship standard and are therefore ready to undergo the end point assessment.

7. End Point Assessment (EPA)

- 7.1 All apprenticeship courses are assessed by an End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO). All EPAO's are formally registered on the Government's Register of End Point Assessment Organisations. (RoEPAO)
- 7.2 An End Point Assessment is required for every apprenticeship course in order for the University and/or relevant employer to confirm that the apprentice has completed all of the requirements of the course and has met the apprenticeship standard.
- 7.3 Where the University is the EPAO, it is the responsibility of the Apprenticeship Unit to organise the gateway qualification and notify the relevant Faculty Dean, Course Director and relevant faculty quality members so that arrangements for External Examiner and Independent Assessor can be made. The Apprenticeship Unit will also notify the Quality and Standard Office to enable appropriate monitoring of Independent Assessors at university-level.
- 7.4 End Point Assessment can vary, but strategies and methods employed must be appropriate to enabling the apprentice to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and behaviours required by the relevant apprenticeship standard.
- 7.5 A fundamental part of nearly all End Point Assessments is the apprentice's Portfolio and Learning Log. The apprentice will typically be asked to talk through their portfolio with an independent assessor and explain how they have developed their skills, knowledge and behaviour over the duration of the course.

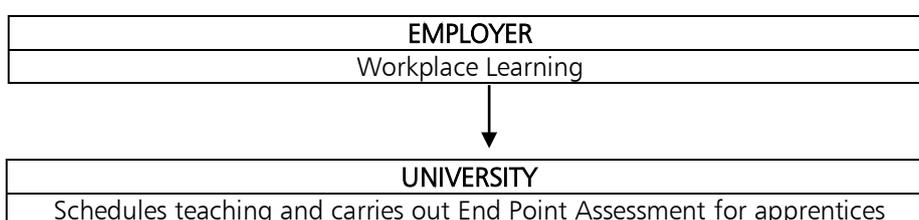
Types of End Point Assessment (EPA)

- 7.6 End Point Assessment can vary in nature depending on the apprenticeship course. The determining factor for each end point assessment model is whether the University operates as the End Point Assessment Organisation, or whether an independent end point assessment body is required.

Integrated End Point Assessment

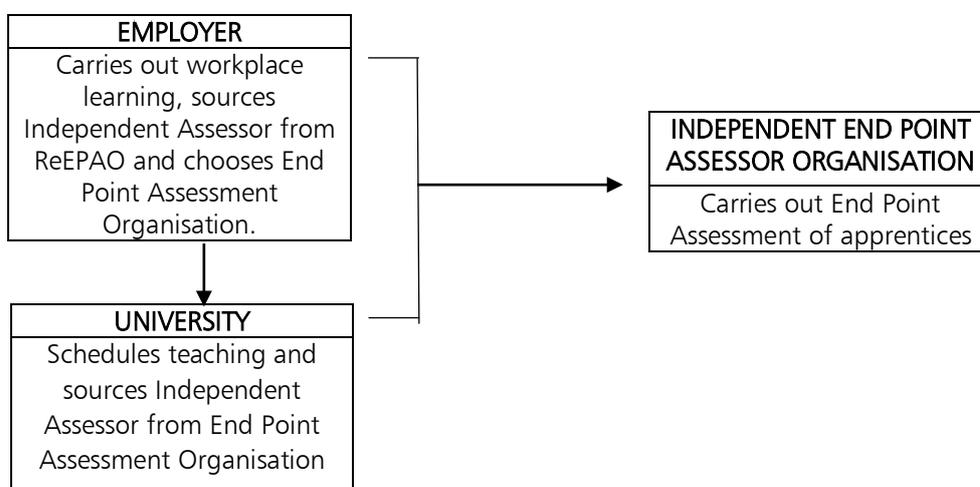
- 7.7 All of the University's apprenticeship courses with an integrated End Point Assessment (including those regulated by PSRB courses) are assessed by the University in its capacity as the lead End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) for the course.

- 7.8 Apprenticeship courses (either degree or higher) can integrate the end point assessment into the degree, with completion taking place at the end of the course within a specific module designed to assess the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the apprenticeship standard.
- 7.9 Some apprenticeship courses (either degree or higher) with integrated EPA are not required to carry out EPA using a specific module as described in 7.8. These apprentices will not be required to undertake additional assessments, as the PAB takes into account the gateway requirements and overall achievement of the apprentice upon completion.
- 7.10 For all apprenticeship courses with an integrated end point assessment (including PSRB courses) the University's Progression and Award Board of Examiners (PAB), along with the employer and an Independent Assessor appointed by the University, will confirm whether the apprenticeship standard has been met.
- 7.11 The following diagram illustrates the University model for Integrated End Point Assessment:



Non-Integrated End Point Assessment

- 7.12 Where the University is unable to act as the lead End Point Assessment Organisation then the End Point Assessment will not be integrated within the higher or degree apprenticeship course and will instead be carried out and confirmed by an independent EPAO.
- 7.13 Employers search for a suitable EPAO on the government Register of End Point Assessor Organisations (ReEPAO) to provide the End Point Assessment. Some apprenticeship standards have specific Providers that can be used. The employer then informs the University who will provide the funding for the independent organisation.
- 7.14 The following diagram illustrates the model for Non-Integrated End Point Assessment:



- 7.15 More guidance for developing an apprenticeship standard, including developing an end point assessment plan can be found on the Institute for Apprenticeship and Technical Education webpages.

8. Independent Assessors

- 8.1 Apprenticeship courses require external oversight to ensure the procedures for progression, award and classification are being observed and that the gateway requirements for the apprenticeship and its threshold standard, are being maintained.
- 8.2 For apprenticeship courses with an integrated EPA (including PSRB's) where the University is the End Point Assessment Organisation, external oversight is provided by an Independent Assessor appointed by the University and by the External Quality Assurance body for the relevant apprenticeship
- 8.3 For apprenticeship courses with a non-integrated EPA, external oversight is provided by an Independent Assessor appointed by the relevant employer and the External Quality Assurance body for the relevant apprenticeship

Nomination and Appointment

- 8.4 Independent Assessors appointed by the University follow the same procedures as those of External Examiners appointments. It is the responsibility of the apprenticeship course Primary Contact to nominate the Independent Assessor and carry out the required conflict of interest checks.
- 8.5 Independent Assessor nominations should be submitted using the standard University Progression and Award External Examiner / Independent Assessor form.
- 8.6 Independent Assessors appointed by the University follow the same rights and term of office as those of External Examiners and are also subject to the same conflict of interest checks. Full details of which, including the Independent Assessor criteria, are located in the External Examiners section of the Quality and Standards website.

Roles and Responsibilities

- 8.7 Independent Assessors appointed to apprenticeship courses with an integrated EPA may also work as External Examiners for the University. However an Independent Assessor cannot operate as the External Examiner for the same apprenticeship course.
- 8.8 The roles and responsibilities of the Independent Assessor vary in accordance with the apprenticeship course to which they have been appointed and the subsequent nature of the EPA.
- 8.9 For apprenticeship courses with an integrated EPA where End Point Assessment takes place directly within the Progression and Award Exam Board, the Independent Assessor must undertake the following:
- Attend the Progression and Award Board of Examiners and sign off the EPA for each apprentice.
 - Provide brief report to Progression and Award Board on apprentices who have not met the required gateway including feedback as to why.
 - Attend the University induction for External Examiners and Independent Assessors.
 - Attend a local course induction delivered by the Course Director.

- Liaise with the Course Director at the beginning of each academic year to identify the expected number of apprentices and the timing of the Board of Examiners.
- Scrutinise the Apprentice profile prior to the Board of Examiners, making sure that the Gateway requirements have been met. Seek clarification from the Course Director where required.
- Review all profiles as a result of re-submitted within specified time scales.

8.10 Independent Assessors appointed to other apprenticeship courses with an integrated EPA, must undertake the following:

- Act as first marker for all elements of the End Point Assessment, including work from any element of the EPA submitted by the apprentice as a resit.
- Provide quality assessment feedback to apprentices via Turnitin in line with the 15-day turnaround.
- Attend the Module Achievement Board of Examiners (MABs) in order to present marks awarded for the End Point Assessment.
- Identify and respond to concerns regarding apprentice progress and communicate in a timely fashion with academic colleagues to ensure that course processes can be followed.
- Work with the course team to develop assessment materials for the End Point Assessment.
- Work flexibly with Course Director to agree assessment dates based on projected apprentice numbers.
- Attend CCCU training on the assessment procedures, and the regulation and credit framework.
- Contribute to bi-annual standardisation meetings and regional moderation events. Participate in the periodic inspections by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE).
- Attend the University induction for External Examiners and Independent Assessors.
- Attend a local course induction delivered by the Course Director.

Induction Arrangements

Course Specific Briefing and Primary Contact

8.11 Every Independent Assessor will have a Primary Contact for the course. The process for nominating and/or amending duties for Independent Assessors follow that of the University's External Examiner appointment procedures outlined in the External Examiner Handbook. It is the responsibility of the Primary Contact to nominate the Independent Assessor following these procedures and carry out the required due diligence checks to ensure they are suitable for the role.

8.12 The main responsibilities for Primary Contacts inducting Independent Assessors to the apprenticeship course includes:

- Ensuring the Independent Assessor has the relevant Progression and Award Board of Examiner meeting date(s)
- Provide the Independent Assessor with access to apprenticeship work and make arrangements for them to meet with apprentices, which includes relevant demonstrations of Blackboard and Turnitin.
- Act as the main point of contact for the Independent Assessor to answer any of their questions in relation to the University's operations, policies and procedures for Board of Examiner meetings, regulations, right to work checks and sampling apprentices work.
- Provide apprenticeship course briefing to ensure the Independent Assessor is familiar with the EPA strategies for the standard they are assessing as well as have the necessary information about the apprentices.
- Provide information about the University's regulations and assessment procedures.

- Ensure Independent Assessors acting as first marker attend the University's Learning and Teaching induction for new staff as they will be required to understand the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy as part of their responsibility as first marker.

University Briefing

- 8.13 As well as the course specific briefing, Independent Assessors will be invited to attend the University briefing for new External Examiners run by the Quality and Standards Office for information on the University's procedures for Boards of Examiners.

Attending Boards of Examiners

- 8.14 Independent Assessors are expected to attend the relevant Boards of Examiner meetings in line with the apprenticeship course to which they have been appointed.
- 8.15 Independent Assessors must provide in writing in advance of the Board, details of apprentices who have not met the apprenticeship requirements and why. This information should be detailed on the *End Point Assessment Non-Completion Annual Report* form. The Progression and Award Board will use this information to make suitable referral recommendations for reassessment in line with the University's academic regulations. This information will also be used as feedback to those apprentices in the event of resit or appeal.
- 8.16 The employer does not need to attend the University Boards of Examiners but instead, confirm prior to the Board that the apprentice has met the apprenticeship gateway requirements.

Reporting

- 8.17 The Independent Assessor should receive a copy of the minutes of the Board and confirm in writing that they are in agreement that the minutes represent an accurate record of decisions made. This confirmation will serve as an annual progression and award report confirming the outcomes for the relevant apprentices.
- 8.18 The relevant Module Achievement External Examiners will be expected to comment on the quality and standards of the apprenticeship course within their annual report.

Fees and Expenses

- 8.19 Independent Assessors will be paid an hourly rate of £43.93 to complete all activity associated with the End Point Assessment, including attendance at Boards of Examiner meetings.
- 8.20 The Course Director or Primary Contact will calculate the number of hours based on the type of the EPA and the amount of work involved. The number of hours should be agreed with the Independent Assessor prior to the start of the role.
- 8.21 As a guide, for apprenticeship courses where EPA takes place in the Progression and Award Board only, the University assumes that Independent Assessors will need 45 minutes to assess the gateway evidence for each apprentice.
- 8.22 Independent Assessors will be required to submit a signed timesheet each year of their contracted term confirming the number of hours worked.
- 8.23 Payment of Independent Assessors will be authorised by the Quality and Standards Office.

- 8.24 All Independent Assessors will be required to have completed a right to work check with the University prior to any payment being made.
- 8.25 All expenses incurred by the Independent Assessor will be paid by the relevant school using the University's Expenses Claim form.

9. Apprentices Support

- 9.1 Schools are expected to ensure apprentices are fully supported, which includes working with employers to ensure the necessary arrangements are in place to enable the apprentice to succeed in the work-based elements of their course.
- 9.2 It is the responsibility of the Course Director to ensure apprentices are provided with a personal academic tutor (PAT) as the main point of contact and support for the apprentice throughout their course. Depending on the number of apprentices, the Course Director may want to be the main point of contact for all apprentices directly, or they may wish to appoint specific Apprenticeship Personal Tutors. In addition to the traditional PAT duties, the below additional support requirements should be fulfilled:
- Meeting the apprentice during induction and undertaking a baseline assessment of their knowledge, skills and behaviours to inform their learning plan at the start of the course.
 - Maintaining regular contact with the Employer to any issues identified with individual apprentices or across the cohort
 - Maintaining up to date records of all meetings between Employers and apprentices (an Ofsted requirement)
 - Prepare and agree progress reports as required
 - Monitoring apprentice progress and identifying any risks or raising any fitness to practice concerns with the apprentice and University wellbeing support teams.
 - Assist apprentices with their personal, professional and career development by:
 - Developing a learning plan and encouraging apprentices to keep this up to date
 - Signposting apprentices to appropriate academic skills and career advice
 - Providing support and advice on the development of a portfolio (if required for EPA).

10. Quality Monitoring

Continuous Monitoring and Improvement

- 10.1 All apprenticeship courses follow the University's arrangements for continuous quality monitoring and periodic review.
- 10.2 Board of Studies, Course Performance Plans (CPPs) and SSLC's (or equivalent for apprentices) should be in place to monitor and enhance the quality of teaching, workplace learning and apprentice experience within the course and individual modules. The Board of Study will report to the Faculty Quality Committee and the University's Quality Monitoring Review Sub-Committee.
- 10.3 Employers and apprentices must be involved in the review and evaluation of all aspects of the apprenticeship provision and schools must ensure that they give employers the opportunity to provide feedback on the apprenticeship course design and delivery.
- 10.4 Module External Examiner annual reports should also be used to inform enhancements and improvements to the apprenticeship course, where appropriate.

Periodic Review

- 10.5 All apprenticeship courses are part of the school's portfolio which is considered under the University's course periodic review processes.
- 10.6 If an employer contract agreement is due to expire, the school should undertake a review of the provision and course delivery with the employer prior to any renewal/extension of the agreement.

11. Ofsted Review

- 11.1 External quality review and oversight of all apprenticeship courses in the UK is managed by Ofsted. As part of reporting requirements to Ofsted, the University is required to submit a Self-Assessment Report (SAR) on the apprenticeship provision. Schools with apprenticeship courses within their portfolio are expected to contribute to the SAR with this work being overseen by the University's Apprenticeship Quality Group. The SAR includes data on:
 - Student cohort details broken down by employer
 - Details of individual student progress which includes, records of all meetings and contact with the apprentice, review of progress, student feedback and details of any specific learning and achievement targets
 - All employer details
 - Progression, assessment, graduate data broken down by cohort, employer and the individual apprentice
 - Statistics on cohort cultural characteristics for equality and diversity purposes
- 11.2 It is the responsibility of Heads of Schools to ensure that all apprenticeship provision aligns with the Ofsted benchmark statements as identified in the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework.

12. Useful links:

- [Office for Students degree apprenticeship guidance](#)
- [Ofsted Education Inspection Framework](#)
- [Characteristics Statement – Higher Education in Apprenticeships](#)
- [Institute for Apprenticeships \(IfA\)](#)
- [Apprenticeship funding information](#)
- [Register of End Point Assessment organisations](#)
- [Find apprenticeship standards](#)
- [Quality assuring Higher Education in Apprenticeships](#)
- [Education and Skills Funding Agency \(ESFA\)](#)
- [University Vocational Awards Council \(UVAC\)](#)
- [Department for Education](#)