

Level 4 Policy Officer

Innovate Awarding Assessment Specification





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Innovate Awarding

Meet our Managing Director



Welcome to the Level 4 Policy Officer Apprenticeship. Our Innovate Awarding EPA Journeys are designed to ensure the employer, provider, assessor and apprentice have the appropriate support and guidance to allow successful completion of an apprenticeship, providing further confidence and assurance having chosen us as an End-Point Assessment Organisation.

We are an Ofqual approved End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO), experienced in operating within a regulated market. Driven by the employers we work in partnership with, we deliver End-Point Assessment (EPA) in the Health, Care, Education, Leadership, Management, Leisure, Customer Service, Creative, Hospitality, Retail, Transport and Logistics sectors.

Delivering an apprenticeship is an extremely rewarding role. We recognise the need for a clear specification, resources and support, so more valuable time can be spent delivering to an apprentice.

At Innovate Awarding we stand by our 'no surprises' approach to assessment, making an apprenticeship journey as simple as possible, ensuring the best chance of success for every apprentice who undertakes EPA with us.

Charlotte Bosworth



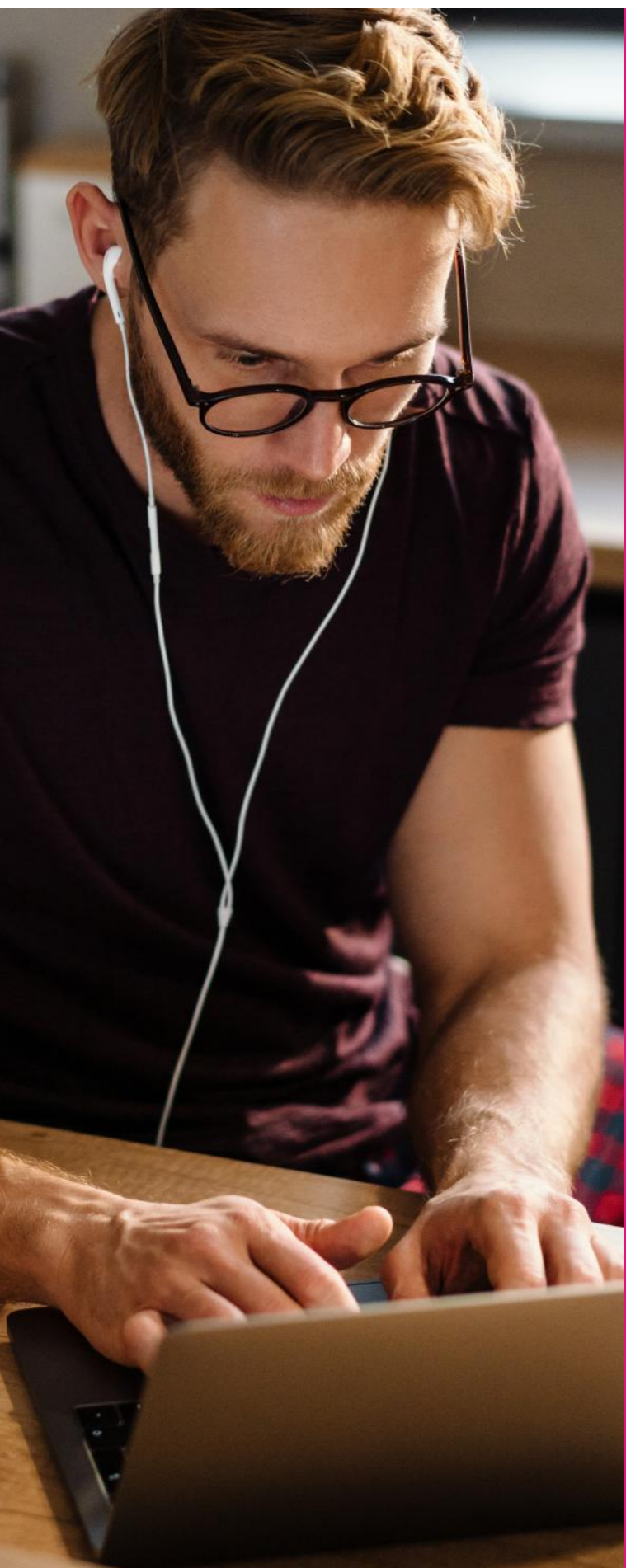
About Innovate Awarding

We are an EPAO approved by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) with a collaborative approach to doing business. We work with providers to deliver fit for purpose EPA, providing assessments for a wide range of apprenticeship standards, certificating thousands of apprentices, continuing to learn and improve with each experience.

We have experienced and responsive teams to ensure the EPA experience is smooth and efficient, working closely with our provider partners ensuring a 'no surprises' approach to EPA for all apprentices.

Please see our website for the range of Standards we are approved to deliver:

<https://innovateawarding.org/end-point-assessment/apprenticeship-standards/>



Our EPA Journeys

We have created four bespoke EPA Journeys tailored to the individual needs of the employer, provider, assessor and apprentice to enable a cross functional approach to EPA.

The Level 4 Policy Officer EPA Journeys are available to download on EPAPro.

EPAPro

EPAPro is our EPA platform, streamlining the process including:

- Apprenticeship registration
- Assessment scheduling to results and certification
- Policy and guidance documents
- Reporting

The platform increases efficiency and reduces administration to support every step of EPA.

EPAPro:

<https://innovate.epapro.co.uk/login>

The Apprenticeship Standard and Assessment Plan

An Apprenticeship Standard details the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be occupationally competent:

- **Knowledge** - the information, technical detail, and 'know-how' that someone needs to have and understand to successfully carry out the duties. Some knowledge will be occupation-specific, whereas some may be more generic.
- **Skills** - the practical application of knowledge needed to successfully undertake the duties. They are learnt through on and/or off-the-job training or experience.
- **Behaviours** - mindsets, attitudes or approaches needed for competence. Whilst these can be innate or instinctive, they can also be learnt. Behaviours tend to be very transferable. They may be more similar across occupations than knowledge and skills. For example, team worker, adaptable and professional.

Apprenticeships are an invaluable tool for upskilling in areas that matter most to employers. They are a highly effective route to recruit and train future talent, address skills shortages and develop careers across core parts of the business.

The Level 4 Policy Officer apprenticeship has been developed by employers working in the sector detailing the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be occupationally competent and outlining the training and assessment journey for an apprentice.

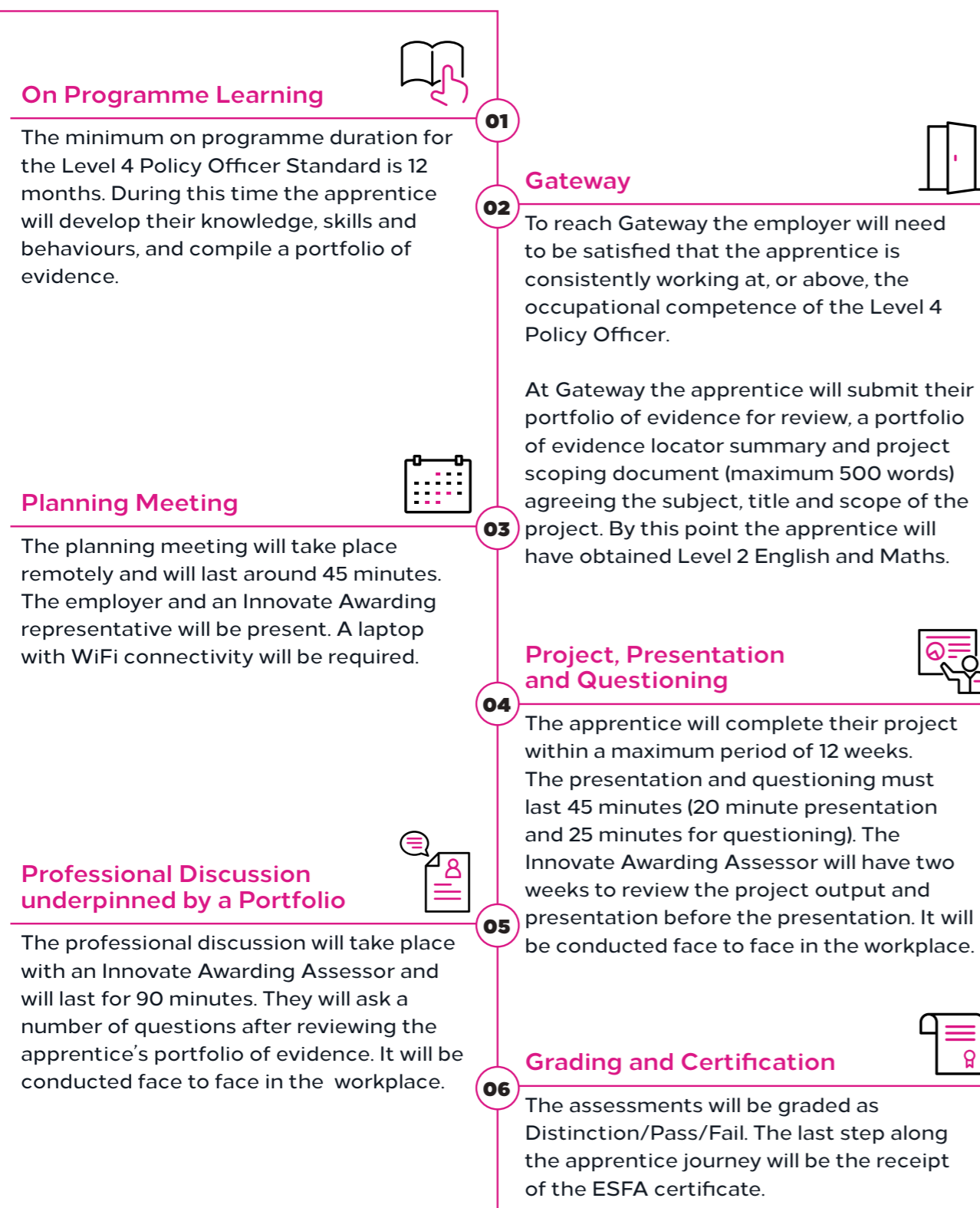
The apprentice will typically spend 12 to 18 months on-programme, working towards the Level 4 Policy Officer Standard, combining practical training in a job with study. The extent of the on-programme time should be decided for each apprentice based on their prior learning, skills and experience. If employers are using this Standard for an existing employee, it is important to be aware that the role must represent new learning. Providers should support employers with this.

It is vital the apprentice is prepared and fully ready before they commence their EPA period, which is detailed in the Assessment Plan.

The EPA period will last four months, consisting of:

- Project proposal, presentation and questioning
- Professional discussion underpinned by portfolio of evidence

Assessment Journey



The Apprentice

A Policy Officer will work in public, private and not-for-profit sectors, across a range of different types of organisations and employers, such as the Civil Service, Local Authorities, non-governmental organisations, charities, unions and private businesses.

Policy Officers work in varied environments including in an office, onsite, or remotely. On occasion they may work with other stakeholders at their sites or overseas.

The role of a Policy Officer is to help shape or influence public policy. Public policy involves enacting solutions to improve the health, welfare, and prosperity of citizens.

Policy Officers are responsible for the development, implementation or evaluation phases of policymaking. They also develop and implement strategies to shape and influence public policy within the remit of their organisation. They may specialise in a specific policy area, such as healthcare, housing, employment, transport, trade, the environment, national security or international relations, or work across several policy areas.

In their daily work, a Policy Officer will interact with a range of internal stakeholders including members of their own team and other departments such as IT, legal, HR, marketing, senior management, and the board of directors

They will interact with external stakeholders such as subject matter experts or specialists (e.g. in communications, public affairs, finance, legal or operations), customers, members of the public, service providers, the media, think tanks or research institutes, local and central government, regulators and international bodies.

Policy Officers work with their stakeholders towards joint goals. They build partnerships with other organisations and bodies with similar interests, facilitate conferences, forums, roundtable discussions and events to discuss policy issues, strengthen their own knowledge and build their network.

A Policy Officer will be responsible for providing support and advice to decision-makers, such as senior managers, board members, ministers, or other stakeholders. They assist them in developing options for responding to an issue or creating a change. They work to implement policy interventions by creating a set of actions and working with partners to deliver them.

Policy Officers research the political or organisational environment in order to support the development of a policy, or to influence policy decisions. They gather evidence to contribute to policy making processes such as policy formulation or monitoring policy developments and lobbying accordingly.

They manage sensitive information and keep accurate records of policy history that will inform the evaluation of past and present policies. Policy Officers obtain input from key stakeholders whilst they prepare and draft submissions, reports, briefings, or options papers for senior managers. They may deal with external customer, stakeholder and formal correspondence, working within set deadlines and adhering to processes, escalating issues not within the

remit of their role. They support the development and delivery of training or coaching on new or existing policies to their stakeholders.

Policy Officers work on their own and in a range of team settings. They work within agreed budgets and available resources. On occasion they may work without high levels of supervision, for example, when conducting research and analysis. They will work as part of the wider policy team on other duties, for example, when gathering information and providing briefings to senior colleagues and managers. They may occasionally be responsible for decision making, but more often will guide or influence the decisions of others. Policy Officers may manage a small team and contribute towards budget management.



Off-the-Job Training

Off-the-job training is a statutory requirement for an English apprenticeship. It is training, which is received by the apprentice during the apprentice's normal working hours, for the purpose of achieving the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the approved apprenticeship the learner is completing.

It is an important aspect of apprenticeship training, as it gives the learner time to properly develop knowledge and skills from the programme. At the same time, it can develop a deeper understanding of the wider business, giving a learner insight into the supply chain or different departments.

Off-the-job training allows the learner to take full advantage of the programme, improving the return on investment in training costs for the employer. A developed and upskilled apprentice will lead to an increase in productivity, a clear benefit to the business.

Examples of off-the-job training include:

- Learning new skills at work through shadowing other members of the team, where this activity has been agreed and documented as part of the agreed training plan
- In-house training programmes relevant to the apprenticeship
- Coaching sessions
- Attendance at workshops, training days and webinars relevant to the apprenticeship
- Completion of online learning
- Self-study that includes reading or watching videos
- Training in new working practices or new equipment
- Role-playing or simulation exercises
- Industry visits/conferences relevant to apprenticeships
- Writing assessments, assignments and completing projects or activities
- Practical training or training in the workplace relevant to the apprenticeship

The minimum volume of off-the-job training is six hours per week, irrespective of the hours worked by the apprentice.

Gateway



Gateway is the entry point to EPA, and it is vital that all parties understand its importance. It is the point at which the apprentice has completed their learning, met the requirements of the Level 4 Policy Officer Apprenticeship Standard, and the provider and employer have reviewed the apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviours to confirm they are satisfied that the apprentice is competent and ready to enter their EPA.

Employers are ultimately responsible for deciding when their apprentice is competent as a Policy Officer and ready to enter EPA. This decision should be taken after conversation with the provider and the apprentice. It is vital this decision is based on each individual apprentice's readiness and not because they have reached the end of the initially agreed training period.

✧ Pre-Gateway Checks ✧ What happens during Gateway?

Knowing when an apprentice is Gateway-ready is much more than simply checking the apprentice has completed their learning and obtained all the mandatory requirements outlined in the Level 4 Policy Officer Assessment Plan. Although this is important, it is about the provider, the apprentice and employer being convinced that the apprentice is at the level of competence set out in the Standard and that they are prepared for EPA, so they can claim competency.

To pass through Gateway, typically the apprentice will have been training for 18 months. They must also have:

- Achieved Level 2 English and Maths
- Satisfied their employer that they are consistently working at, or above, the occupational competence of the Level 4 Policy Officer
- Compiled, and ready to submit, a portfolio of 18 discrete pieces of evidence towards the professional discussion
- Completed project proposal
- A signed declaration
- Declared any reasonable adjustments and special considerations

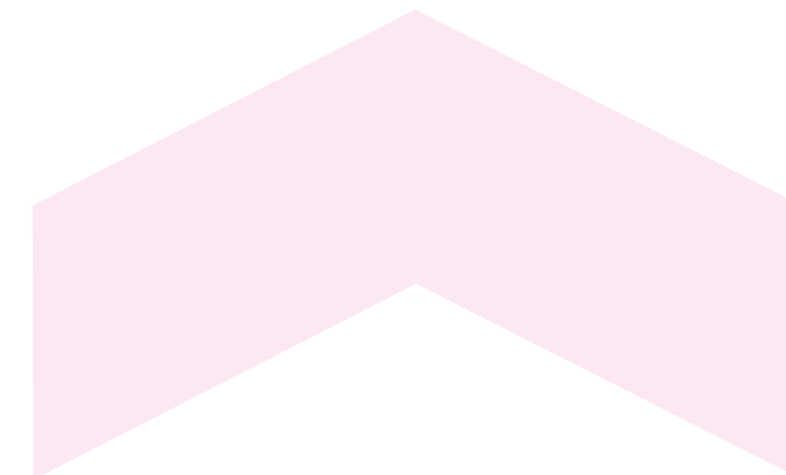
Readiness for Gateway includes confirming that the apprentice's portfolio of evidence meets the requirements of the knowledge, skills and behaviours set out within the Level 4 Policy Officer Standard. This will be confirmed at Gateway and documented on EPAPro. This notifies us that the apprentice is ready for their assessment and the EPA planning meeting will be organised.

We will confirm the apprentice's Project Proposal at Gateway to confirm it is suitable, ensuring the project allows the apprentice to meet the KSBs mapped to this EPA method to the highest available grade.

The Project Proposal will contain:

- A project introduction of the scope of the project including key performance indicators
- A project plan
- A project research and findings of project outcomes and how these outcomes were achieved
- Recommendations and project conclusions

The apprentice will complete and submit their project within 12 weeks of Gateway.



✧ Assessment Booking

Applications for any reasonable adjustments and/or special considerations should be submitted prior to Gateway, to allow time to review the request before the planning meeting.

Providers can book a planning meeting on EPAPro once Gateway has been submitted.

The purpose of the meeting is to allocate an Innovate Awarding Assessor, discuss assessment dates, confirm assessment timings, assessment requirements and assessment preparation. During the meeting we will discuss what happens if assessments are cancelled/rescheduled and how this could impact the EPA period, as well as providing information on certification and appeals.

The Level 4 Policy Officer 45 minute planning meeting will book assessment timeslots for the:

- Project proposal, presentation and questioning
- Professional discussion underpinned by portfolio of evidence

The provider will incur a charge for non-attendance of a planning meeting.

After the planning meeting, the apprentice will receive an email confirming everything discussed in the meeting and a calendar invite for all booked assessments. The apprentice will then prepare for EPA.



✧ Portfolio of Evidence Guidance

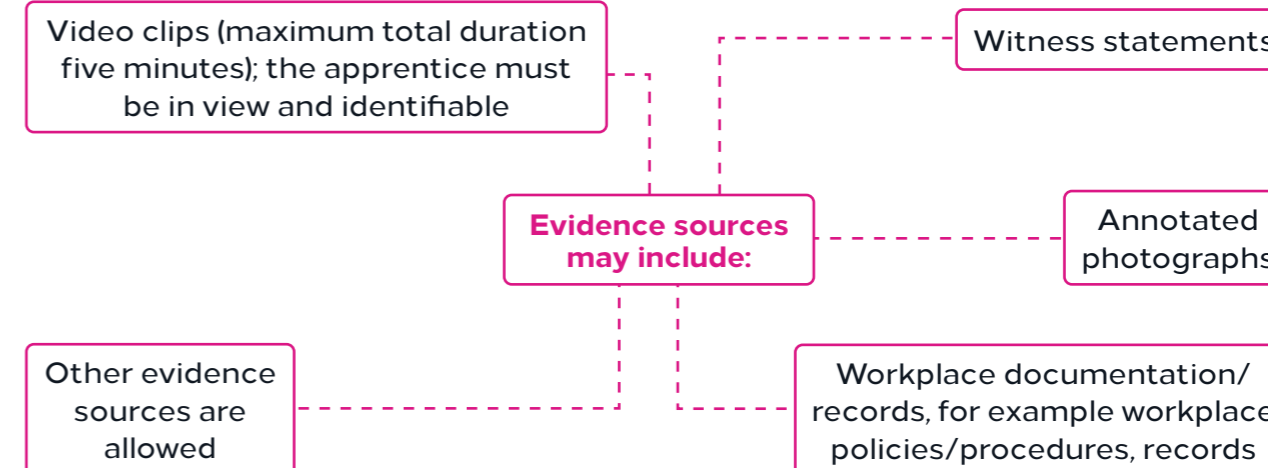
Employers will ensure their apprentice has compiled a portfolio of evidence during the on-programme period of the apprenticeship, which will be submitted at Gateway. It underpins the professional discussion but will not be assessed by us.

We will review the portfolio of evidence in preparation for the professional discussion prior to Gateway. Feedback is not required, although generally if Gateway is rejected due to the portfolio of evidence being inadequate, a courtesy email will be sent with an explanation, including the rejection reason on EPAPro.

Portfolio of evidence content and format are typically Word documents, presentations, video or audio recordings. The provider will upload the portfolio of evidence to EPAPro at Gateway, either by inserting a link to a SharePoint or including a zip file.

Portfolio of evidence requirements:

- The apprentice must compile a portfolio of evidence during the on-programme period of the apprenticeship
- It must contain evidence related to the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) that will be assessed by the professional discussion
- The portfolio of evidence will typically contain 18 discrete pieces of evidence
- Evidence must be mapped against the KSBs
- Evidence may be used to demonstrate more than one KSB; a qualitative as opposed to a quantitative approach is suggested



End-Point Assessment

✧ Assessment Methods

Assessment Method 1

Project proposal, presentation and questioning

The project involves the apprentice completing a significant and defined piece of work that has a real business application and benefit. The project will start after the apprentice has gone through Gateway.

The project proposal, presentation and questioning will be structured to give the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method to the highest available grade.

The project must meet the needs of the employer's business and be relevant to the apprentice's occupation and apprenticeship. We will confirm that the project proposal provides the apprentice with the opportunity to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method to the highest available grade.

This assessment method includes two component's:

- Project with a project output
- Presentation with questioning

The project and any components will be holistically assessed by the innovate Awarding Assessor when they are deciding the grade for this assessment method.

The project proposal is designed to demonstrate the application of knowledge, skills and behaviours as they would occur in occupational practice. Producing a proposal reflects normal practice in the workplace for a Policy Officer, so this assessment method is appropriate. It is a significant and relevant piece of work that thoroughly tests both higher and lower order knowledge, skills and behaviours, demonstrating the apprentice's understanding of their organisation and policy area supporting policy solutions for the organisation.

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

Assessment Method 1, Component 1

Project with a project output

The apprentice will complete a project which may be based on:

- A specific problem
- A recurring issue
- An idea or opportunity

The project proposal may be based on one or a combination of:

- A current or completed policy initiative
- A new policy initiative
- A significant change to an existing policy initiative
- A policy influencing strategy
- An implementation plan
- A post implementation review
- A strategy for consultation

To ensure the project allows the apprentice to meet the KSBs mapped to this EPA method to the highest available grade, we will agree the project's title and scope at Gateway to confirm it is suitable.

The apprentice may work as part of a team which could include technical internal or external support. However, the project output must be the apprentice's own work and will be reflective of their own role and contribution. The apprentice and their employer must confirm that the project output(s) is the apprentice's own work when it is submitted.

The Project proposal must include at least:

- A project introduction the scope of the project (including key performance indicators)
- A project plan
- Project research and findings project outcomes and how these outcomes were achieved recommendations and project conclusions

The project proposal must be undertaken after the apprentice has gone through Gateway, apart from the initial research to inform the project proposal scope. The apprentice will prepare and deliver a presentation that, along with the proposal, appropriately covers the KSBs assigned to this method of assessment. It will be followed by questioning from the Innovate Awarding Assessor.

The proposal will be a detailed project implementation proposal that will enable the project to be fully implemented. The project proposal does not need to be fully implemented during the EPA period.

The apprentice and their employer must confirm that the project proposal output is the apprentice's own work when it is submitted and a signed confirmation by the employer that the proposal will be progressed to benefit the business.

In order to ensure the project proposal is robust it should contain evidence of evaluation of previous policy, data research and analytical techniques used with the collected data, and problem solving and evidence-based decision making.

The project proposal has a maximum word count of **3000 words (+/-10%)**.

Appendices, references and diagrams are not included in this total. The project proposal must map, in an appendix, how it evidences the relevant KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

The apprentice must complete and submit the project proposal and presentation at the same time, after a **maximum period of 12 weeks**. The Innovate Awarding Assessor will need a further two weeks (not included within the EPA period) to review these documents to prepare questions for the presentation and professional discussion.



Assessment Method 1, Component 2 Presentation with questioning

The apprentice will prepare and deliver a presentation of an overview of the apprentice's project followed by questioning from the Innovate Awarding Assessor.

The presentation and questioning will last 45 minutes (+/- 10%). This will include a presentation of 20 minutes and questioning lasting 25 minutes. The Innovate Awarding Assessor will ask at least eight questions with follow up questions where clarification is required.

The presentation must include at least:

- An overview of the project
- The project scope (including key performance indicators)
- Summary of actions undertaken by the apprentice
- Project outcomes and how these were achieved

The apprentice will be given at least two week(s) notice of the date and time of the presentation and question and answer session.

Assessment Method 2 Professional discussion, underpinned by a portfolio

The professional discussion will be structured to give the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and behaviours mapped to this assessment method to the highest available grade.

The purpose of the Innovate Awarding Assessor's questions will be to draw out examples and further clarify skills demonstrated in a portfolio of evidence.

The apprentice must have access to their portfolio of evidence during the professional discussion and can refer to and illustrate their answers with evidence from their portfolio of evidence, however the portfolio of evidence is not directly assessed.

The professional discussion must last for 90 minutes (+/-10%). The apprentice will be asked at least eight questions and follow-up questions are allowed.

Annex 1

✧ Assessment Plan and Occupational Standard

The Level 4 Policy Officer Apprenticeship Standard and the latest version of the Assessment Plan can be accessed using this link:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/policy-officer-in-revision?view=epa>

**Level 4 Policy Officer ST0526/AP03
Version 1.0**

**Sector: Business and Administration
EQA Organisation: Ofqual**



Annex 2

Additional Information

✧ Results and Certifications

All final assessment component results are published on EPAPro within **7 working days** of the assessment taking place.

We will submit a certificate claim with the ESFA within 15 working days after the final result has been uploaded to EPAPro. The ESFA will send the certificate directly to the employer.

For replacement certificates a request must be emailed to epa@innovateawarding.org. Within two days of receiving the email, a replacement certificate will be requested from the ESFA.

✧ Re-sits and Re-takes

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be offered the opportunity to take a re-sit or a re-take. A re-sit does not require further learning, whereas a re-take does.

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

An apprentice who fails an assessment method, and therefore the EPA in the first instance, will be required to re-sit or re-take any failed assessment methods only. In the event of a re-sit/re-take the apprentice must use a different project but can use the same portfolio of evidence.

Any assessment method re-sit or re-take must be taken during the maximum EPA period, otherwise the entire EPA must be taken again, unless, in the opinion of us, exceptional circumstances apply outside the control of the apprentice or their employer.

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

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

✧ Reasonable Adjustments, Special Considerations and Appeals

Information on reasonable adjustments, special considerations and the appeals process can be accessed by using this link:

<https://innovateawarding.org/end-point-assessment/apprentice-information>

Level 4 Policy Officer

Innovate Awarding Assessment Specification

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