



## **Specification**

**Level 4 Learning and Skills Mentor v1.3**

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## Welcome to Innovate Awarding

Welcome to the Level 4 Learning and Skills Mentor Apprenticeship. Our Innovate Awarding Specifications are designed to ensure the employer, provider 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.

### About Innovate Awarding

We are an EPAO 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.

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

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

## The Apprenticeship Standard and Assessment Plan

An Apprenticeship Standard details the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) 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 Learning and Skills Mentor 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 months on-programme, working towards the Level 4 Learning and Skills Mentor 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 three months, consisting of:

- Observation with questioning
- Professional Discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

## The Apprentice

A Learning and Skills Mentor is found in the public, private and voluntary sectors in national and multi-national organisations. This role can be found in all sectors where training and development is required. For example, but not limited to, healthcare, military, manufacturing, production, business and professional, education, leisure, construction, creative, technology.

The purpose of the Learning and Skills Mentor occupation is to support individuals and groups with their learning and development towards agreed goals. They will do this by working within ethical and legal frameworks to ensure a high standard of mentoring practice. They will work collaboratively with stakeholders to inclusively meet the individual needs of the mentee. They will be committed to their own professional development and reflective practice as a mentor and within their sector.

They will typically work in an environment in their organisation where they are the knowledgeable other. They will work in a variety of locations and environments where mentoring activity may be undertaken face to face or remotely.

In their daily work, an employee in this occupation may interact with other professionals at any level of seniority in the organisation such as: supervisors, managers, trainees, other experienced practitioners and where necessary, internal/external professionals to support meeting the individual mentee needs.

The Learning and Skills Mentor will be responsible for the mentor relationship with the mentee working within ethical and legal frameworks and organisational boundaries to support the progression of the mentee. They may work with a wide range of stakeholders to support the progression of the mentee and ensure best practice is developed and maintained. The mentor may be responsible for completing their own work to specification, with minimal supervision, ensuring they meet set deadlines.

## 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.

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

## 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 Learning and Skills Mentor Apprenticeship Standard, and the provider and employer have reviewed the apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviours to confirm they satisfied the provider and employer that they are competent and ready to enter their EPA.

Employers are ultimately responsible for deciding when their apprentice is competent as a Learning and Skills Mentor and ready to enter EPA. This decision should be taken after conversation with the provider and 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

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 Learning and Skills Mentor Assessment Plan.

Although this is important, it is about the provider, 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 the EPA, so they can claim that competency.

To pass through Gateway, typically the apprentice will have been training for a minimum of 12 months. They must also have:

- Achieved Level 2 English and Maths, if applicable
- Satisfied their employer that they are consistently working at, or above, the occupational competence of the Level 4 Learning and Skills Mentor
- Compiled, and be ready to submit, a portfolio of 10 to 16 discrete pieces of evidence towards the professional discussion
- A signed declaration
- Declared any reasonable adjustments and special considerations

Readiness for Gateway includes confirming that the apprentice's portfolio meets the requirements of the knowledge, skills and behaviours set out within the Level 4 Learning and Skills Mentor 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.

Readiness for Gateway requires confirmation from the employer, provider and apprentice, that the apprentice has met all the mandatory requirements.

## Assessment Booking

The planning meeting will be booked on epaPRO once the apprentice has been allocated to an Innovate Awarding Assessor, and the Gateway documents have been reviewed and approved. The planning meeting will take place between the apprentice and an Innovate Awarding representative (in most cases this will be the allocated End-Point Assessor). Unless specified in the Assessment Plan, there is no requirement for the employer to attend, however some employers may wish to be present for this meeting

The purpose of the meeting is to 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 end-point assessment (EPA) period, as well as providing information on certification and appeals.

The Level 4 Learning and Skills Mentor minute planning meeting will book assessment timeslots for the:

- Practical Observation
- Professional Discussion

After the planning meeting, the apprentice will receive an email confirming everything discussed in the meeting and a calendar invitation for all booked assessments. The apprentice will then prepare for their end point assessment.

## 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.

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.

The portfolio of evidence must be uploaded 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 contain 10 to 16 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
- The evidence provided must be valid and attributable to the apprentice; the portfolio of evidence must contain a statement from the employer and apprentice confirming this

Evidence sources may include:

- Workplace documentation/records, for example
- workplace policies/procedures,
- records
- Witness statements
- Annotated photographs

- Video clips (maximum total duration 10 minutes); the apprentice must be in view and identifiable

## End-Point Assessment

### Assessment Methods

#### Assessment Method 1: Observation with questioning

The observation with questioning will take two hours (90 minutes observation and 30 minutes of questioning). The Innovate Awarding Assessor can increase the time by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete a task or respond to a question if necessary.

The apprentice must be given 14 days' notice of the observation.

The Innovate Awarding Assessor must explain to the apprentice the format and timescales of the observation before it begins. This does not count towards the assessment time.

The observation may be split into discrete sections held on the same working day.

The apprentice will provide two 30 minute recordings of mentoring sessions, that will be viewed as part of the observation on the day of the assessment. The recorded mentoring sessions must take place and be recorded post Gateway. The recorded mentoring sessions may be with the same, or different mentees and this must be a visible recording. Audio only recordings will not be accepted.

Recorded and observed mentoring sessions may be one to one mentoring or group mentoring, reflecting the apprentices typical practice.

The Innovate Awarding Assessor must observe one live 30 minute mentoring session, and this will take place in their normal place of work. The apprentice will complete their day-to-day duties under normal working conditions. This allows the apprentice to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method through naturally occurring evidence to the highest available grade.

The questioning following the observation will allow the Innovate Awarding Assessor to gather additional evidence against the knowledge, skills, and behaviours and for apprentices to demonstrate a deeper level of understanding and skill and to clarify aspects of mentoring practice observed.

The questions must be asked after the observation. The Innovate Awarding Assessor must ask at least five questions. Follow-up questions are allowed.

The Innovate Awarding Assessor must ask questions about KSBs that were not observed to gather assessment evidence. These questions are in addition to the set number of questions for the observation and should be kept to a minimum. Questions can be asked to clarify answers given by the apprentice.

The questioning that occurs after the observation should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence.

Additional venue requirements that must be in place include:

- The location must reflect normal practice for the apprentice and their mentee, this may include remote mentoring where the apprentice meets their mentee online.
- The Innovate Awarding Assessor may observe and complete the questioning remotely

The observation and responses to questions must be assessed holistically by the Innovate Awarding Assessor when they are deciding the grade.

Please see Annex 3 for Assessment Method Grading Descriptors.

## **Assessment Method 2: Professional discussion, underpinned by a portfolio**

The professional discussion will last for 60 minutes. The Innovate Awarding Assessor can increase the time of the professional discussion by up to 10%. This time is to allow the apprentice to respond to a question if necessary.

Innovate Awarding will give an apprentice 14 days' notice of the professional discussion and the Innovate Awarding Assessor will have at least two weeks to review the supporting documentation.

The apprentice must have access to their portfolio of evidence during the professional discussion.

The portfolio of evidence is not directly assessed.

The apprentice can refer to and illustrate their answers with evidence from their portfolio of evidence. It gives the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate their competency across the KSBs mapped to this assessment method to the highest available grade.

The discussion allows KSBs which may not naturally occur in every mentoring session, and therefore may not be observable, to be assessed.

The purpose of the questions will be to assess the following four themes:

- Professional practice
- Communication
- Assessment
- Monitoring

The Innovate Awarding Assessor must ask at least eight questions. Follow-up questions are allowed where clarification is required.

The professional discussion should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence.

The professional discussion can be conducted remotely.

Please see Annex 3 for Assessment Method Grading Descriptors.

## Grading

Performance in the EPA determines the apprenticeship grade of:

- Distinction
- Merit
- Pass
- Fail

The Innovate Awarding Assessor must individually grade the observation with questioning and professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

The Innovate Awarding Assessor must combine the individual assessment method grades to determine the overall EPA grade.

To achieve an overall pass, the apprentice must achieve at least a pass in all the assessment methods.

To achieve an overall merit, the apprentice must achieve a pass in one assessment method and a distinction in the other.

If the apprentice fails one or more assessment method, they will be awarded an overall fail.

Grades from individual assessment methods must be combined in the following way to determine the grade of the EPA overall.

<b>Observation with Questioning</b>	<b>Professional Discussion underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence</b>	<b>Overall Grading</b>
<b>Distinction</b>	<b>Distinction</b>	<b>Distinction</b>
<b>Distinction</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>Merit</b>
<b>Pass</b>	<b>Distinction</b>	<b>Merit</b>
<b>Pass</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>Pass</b>
<b>Any grade</b>	<b>Fail</b>	<b>Fail</b>
<b>Fail</b>	<b>Any grade</b>	<b>Fail</b>

## Grading Descriptors

### Assessment Method 1: Observation and questioning

Assessed Criteria	Pass Grading Descriptor	Distinction Grading Descriptor
<b>Theoretical Concepts</b>		
<p><b>K4</b> Mentoring theory and models, including maintaining good practice and protocols within the mentoring relationship.</p> <p><b>K12</b> Theories and models of evaluation and reflection.</p> <p><b>S12</b> Apply theories and models of evaluation and reflection to support mentee development.</p>	<p>Uses relevant communication, questioning and listening techniques to support mentee progression towards agreed outcomes. Delivers non-judgemental feedback to support mentee progression towards agreed outcomes. <b>(K7 K8 K9 S8 S9 S10)</b></p>	<p>Adapts communication and questioning techniques to accommodate changing mentee needs and to overcome barriers to mentee reflection and progression. <b>(K7 K8 S8 S9)</b></p>
<b>Communications</b>		
<p><b>K7</b> Methods of communication to maintain the mentoring relationship and review progress towards agreed outcomes.</p> <p><b>K8</b> Questioning and listening techniques.</p> <p><b>K9</b> Methods for providing feedback to inform progression.</p> <p><b>S8</b> Maintain mentoring relationship through a non-judgemental and objective approach.</p> <p><b>S9</b> Use questioning techniques to encourage reflection and progression.</p>	<p>Uses relevant communication, questioning and listening techniques to support mentee progression towards agreed outcomes. Delivers non-judgemental feedback to support mentee progression towards agreed outcomes. <b>(K7 K8 K9 S8 S9 S10)</b></p>	<p>Adapts communication and questioning techniques to accommodate changing mentee needs and to overcome barriers to mentee reflection and progression. <b>(K7 K8 S8 S9)</b></p>

<p><b>S10</b> Provide feedback to the mentee to inform progression.</p>		
<p><b>S11</b> Inform, advise and guide the mentee to support development toward agreed outcomes.</p>	<p>Applies empathic listening skills to inform, advise and guide the mentee towards agreed outcomes. <b>(S11)</b></p>	
<b>Implementation</b>		
<p><b>K13</b> Approaches to sustainable mentoring practice.</p>	<p>Demonstrates sustainable practices within organisational and professional boundaries, legal and ethical requirements. <b>(K13 S1 B1)</b></p>	<p>Adapts the use of mentoring tools and techniques, and the planned approach to the mentoring session, to accommodate changing mentee needs while considering equality and diversity requirements. <b>(S3 S4 B4)</b></p>
<p><b>S1</b> Conduct sustainable mentoring practice within organisational and professional boundaries, and legal and ethical requirements, including safeguarding.</p>	<p>Implements relevant mentoring tools and techniques to support progress towards agreed outcomes within ethical and legal standards and professional boundaries. <b>(S3 S4 B2)</b></p>	
<p><b>S3</b> Conduct mentoring sessions according to agreed plans.</p>		
<p><b>S4</b> Implement established mentoring tools and techniques to help the mentee work towards agreed outcomes.</p>	<p>Demonstrates mutual respect displaying a deep understanding of equality and diversity, with and between learners, colleagues and appropriate agencies. <b>(B4)</b></p>	
<p><b>B1</b> Demonstrate and promote sustainable practices with mentee.</p>		
<p><b>B2</b> Work to ethical and legal standards within professional boundaries.</p>		
<p><b>B4</b> Demonstrate and encourage mutual respect, displaying a deep understanding of equality and diversity, with and between learners, colleagues and appropriate agencies.</p>		

Monitoring		
<b>S7</b> Assess and review progress and achievement of agreed outcomes and revise action plans as appropriate.	Reviews the progress and achievement of agreed outcomes and implements revisions as appropriate. <b>(S7)</b>	N/A

## Assessment Method 2: Professional Discussion

Assessed Criteria	Pass Grading Descriptor	Distinction Grading Descriptor
Professional Practice		
<b>K1</b> The roles and responsibilities of a mentor, understanding the organisational and professional boundaries, legal and ethical requirements, including safeguarding.	Explains the roles and responsibilities of a mentor identifying opportunities for continual professional development in own practice and identifies the organisational and professional boundaries, legal and ethical requirements of mentoring. <b>(K1 K14 B5)</b>	Analyses own values, beliefs and behaviours with regard to mentoring practice, how they have adapted when dealing with challenge and change, and the potential impact of these on the agreed outcomes for mentees. <b>(K10 B3)</b>
<b>K3</b> How to plan for mentoring sessions and review and revise action plans.	Explains how to plan for mentoring sessions to ensure they are prepared and explains how they review, and revise action plans on an ongoing basis. <b>(K3)</b>	Analyses the impact of CPD on their own practice. <b>(K14)</b>
<b>K10</b> The impact of their own values, beliefs and behaviours on mentoring practice.	Explains the impact of own values, beliefs and behaviours on mentoring practice. <b>(K10)</b>	Analyse the impact of evidence-based practice on outcomes for mentees. <b>(K16 S14)</b>
<b>K14</b> Opportunities for continuing professional development.	Explains the importance of personal resilience and adaptability when dealing with challenge and change, maintaining focus and self-control. <b>(B3)</b>	
<b>K16</b> Evidence-based practice informed by own research.		
<b>S14</b> Apply evidence based mentoring practice informed by own research.		
<b>B3</b> Be resilient and adaptable when dealing with challenge and change, maintaining focus and self-control.		

<b>B5</b> Committed to improving their own professional practice in relation to mentoring.	Illustrates how they apply evidence-based practice informed by research to their mentoring planning and delivery. <b>(K16 S14)</b>	
<b>Communication</b>		
<b>K2</b> How to establish and manage a mentoring contract.	Describes how to establish and manage the mentoring contract and explains ways in which this can be managed, and where relevant including other stakeholders. <b>(K2 S2)</b>  Explains how to provide accurate and relevant vocational/pastoral advice and guidance to meet mentee needs, including points of referral to other professional services. <b>(K11)</b>	Evaluates the methods of establishing and managing the mentoring contract for the mentor, mentee and other stakeholders considering the impact on the practice of themselves and others. <b>(K2 S2)</b>
<b>K11</b> How to provide accurate and relevant vocational/pastoral advice and guidance to meet mentee needs, including points of referral to other professional services.		
<b>S2</b> Establish and maintain mentoring contracts with mentees and where relevant, other stakeholders.		
<b>Assessment</b>		
<b>K6</b> Strategies to assess starting points of the mentee, including potential barriers to development.	Describes strategies to assess starting points of mentee, including potential barriers to development. <b>(K6)</b>  Explains ways in which starting points can be established and how assessed starting points can be used to establish agreed outcomes of the mentoring process. <b>(S6)</b>	Analyses strategies to assess starting points and ways in which these can be used to establish agreed outcomes of the mentoring process. <b>(K6 S6)</b>
<b>S6</b> Establish and use assessed starting points to establish agreed outcomes of the mentoring process.		

## **Annex 1: Assessment Plan and Occupational Standard**

The Level 4 Learning and Skills Mentor v1.3 Apprenticeship Standard and the latest version of the Assessment Plan can be accessed using this link:

<https://skillsengland.education.gov.uk/apprenticeships/st1379-v1-3>

**Level 4 Learning and Skills Mentor ST1379**

**Version 1.3**

**Sector: Education and Early Years**

**EQA Organisation: Ofqual**

## Annex 2: Additional Information

### Results and Certifications

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

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

For replacement certificates a request must be emailed to [epa@innovateawarding.org](mailto:epa@innovateawarding.org) Within two days of receiving the email, a replacement certificate will be requested from the DWP.

### 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 Innovate Awarding, 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 Innovate Awarding determines 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>

## Support Materials

All the support materials for this apprenticeship can be found on epaPRO including the Assessment Key Verbs Document.

## Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and referencing

Apprentice submissions such as reports, presentations, business projects and portfolios must be produced by themselves. Correctly cited quotes and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be used to enhance and support the document, but the document itself must be the apprentice's own work and not generated by AI.

Innovate Awarding expects all forms of plagiarism to be treated very seriously by staff at centres, and centres should have in place their own plagiarism policy and process for handling suspected cases of plagiarism.

## Version Record

Innovate Awarding continuously review all support material to ensure its accuracy. All amendments will be recorded in the Version Record.

Version Number	Effective From	Reason for Change	Location

Please ensure that you use the current version.

All enquiries relating to the version change of the document should be directed to [epa@innovateawarding.org](mailto:epa@innovateawarding.org)



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