



Specification

Level 4 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care v1.2

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Innovate Awarding

Welcome to the Level 4 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care 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 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care 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 18 months on-programme, working towards the Level 4 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care 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 of Practice
- Professional discussion, underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

The Apprentice

The Lead Practitioner in Adult Care will guide and inspire team members or colleagues to make positive differences to someone's life when they are faced with physical, practical, social, emotional, psychological or intellectual challenges. They will have achieved a level of self-development to be recognised as a lead practitioner within the care team, contributing to, promoting and sustaining a values-based culture at an operational level.

A Lead Practitioner has achieved a greater depth of knowledge and expertise of particular conditions being experienced by the user of services. They will have specialist skills and knowledge in their area of responsibilities which will allow them to lead in areas such as care needs assessment, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, rehabilitation and enablement, telecare and assistive technology. They may be a coach and mentor to others or have a role in assessing performance and quality of care delivery.

Lead Practitioners in Adult Care may work in residential or nursing homes, domiciliary care, day centres, a person's own home or some clinical healthcare settings. As well as covering Lead Practitioners in Adult Care this standard also covers Lead Personal Assistants who can work at this senior level but they may only work directly for one individual who needs support and/or care services, usually within their own home.

Examples of job roles include Dementia Lead, Re-ablement Worker, Physiotherapy Assistant, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Public Health Associate Worker, Keeping in Contact Worker, Community Care/Support Officer, Social Care Assessor, Care Assessment Officer, Social Services Officer, Brokerage Worker, Rehabilitation and Reablement Assistant, Independence Support Assistant, Reablement Support Workers/Officer, Telecare Assistant and Assistive Technology Co-Ordinator/Officer.

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 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care 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 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care 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 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care 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 18 months. They must also have:

- Achieved Level 2 English and Maths, if applicable
 - Achieved Level 4 Diploma in Adult Care
 - Satisfied their employer that they are consistently working at, or above, the occupational competence of the Level 4 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care
 - Compiled, and be ready to submit, a portfolio of 6 discrete pieces of evidence towards the professional discussion
 - A signed declaration
 - Declared any reasonable adjustments and special considerations
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- 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 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care 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.

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 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care 45 minute planning meeting will book assessment timeslots for the:

- Observation of Practice
- Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio.

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. You 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 contain 6 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 policies and procedures
- Witness statements and observation records from training providers, managers, and peer observations
- Case records, SEND records, and safeguarding records
- Risk assessments
- Records of continuous professional development

This is not a definitive list; other evidence sources can be included.

The portfolio of evidence should not include reflective accounts or any methods of self-assessment. Any employer contributions should focus on direct observation of performance (for example, witness statements) rather than opinions.

End-Point Assessment

Assessment Methods

Assessment Method 1: Observation of Practice

In the observation with questions, the Innovate Awarding assessor observes the apprentice in their workplace and asks questions. The apprentice completes their day-to-day duties under normal working conditions. Simulation is not allowed. It gives the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

The Innovate Awarding assessor must only observe one apprentice at a time to ensure quality and rigour. They must be as unobtrusive as possible.

Innovate Awarding must give the apprentice a minimum of 2 weeks and a maximum of 4 weeks to prepare for this activity following Gateway.

The observation will last for 75 minutes and comprise of two parts: The observation of the leadership activity will last for 60 minutes and will be followed by a post observation question session during which the assessor will ask open ended questions on any aspect of the activity requiring clarification. This will last for 15 minutes, observation with questioning can take place in person or remotely. This must be agreed at the planning meeting.

The Innovate Awarding assessor can increase the time of the observation with questions by up to 10%. This time is to allow the apprentice to complete a task or respond to a question if necessary.

The observation with questioning may be split on the same working day, to allow for a break between the observation element and the questioning element. This is to support the employer to ensure there is adequate cover within the setting. The assessment method should typically be completed within a total time of 2 hours.

The Innovate Awarding assessor will observe the following during the observation:

- Preparing for a best interest meeting through consultation with the care staff team. This should include the rationale around the need to trigger the meeting, the roles and responsibilities of who should be involved and the potential implications for the service.
- Leading a meeting where they guide and support colleagues around how to implement the required care delivery within the service to support people that use the services regarding their identified care needs, goals and required outcomes.
- A response to regulatory and legislative requirements that specifically impact upon how the needs of people that use the services are being met. For example, this could be communicating the outcomes of working with external partners and stakeholders so as to deliver positive change to the people being supported by the service.
- Development of service provision so that it can improve service delivery to more effectively meet the needs and aspirations of the people that use the services. For example, this may be in the form of presenting some information or analysing data in relation to evidence based practice to develop or improve the service provision.

The observed session should form part of a normal working day for the apprentice, and should reflect their typical working practice.

Questions must be asked after the observation. The total duration of the observation with questioning assessment method is 75 minutes and the time for questioning is included in the overall assessment time. The total time for the observation element is 60 minutes. The time allocated for questioning is 15 minutes. The Innovate Awarding assessor must ask an open ended question on any aspect of the activity requiring clarification. Follow-up questions are allowed where clarification is required.

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 with questions and should be kept to a minimum.

Assessment Method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by portfolio

The professional discussion will be appropriately structured to draw out the best of the apprentice's competence and cover the KSBs assigned to this assessment method. It will involve questions that will focus on coverage of prior learning or activity and problem solving.

This method was judged to be the most appropriate for the KSBs being assessed. It allows a range of KSBs which may not occur in every workplace to be assessed. The apprentice can draw upon supporting evidence in the portfolio and can affectively confirm the authenticity of their supporting evidence.

The professional discussion must last for 90 minutes, and the Innovate Awarding Assessor will ask at least one question for each of the areas of knowledge, skills and behaviours mapped to this method of assessment. The assessor may ask follow-up questions where further clarification is required. The professional discussion can take place in person or remotely. This must be agreed at the planning meeting.

Grading

Performance in the EPA determines the apprenticeship grade of:

- Distinction
- 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 EPA distinction, the apprentice must achieve a pass in the professional discussion and distinction in the observation.

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

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.

Assessment Method 1: Observation of Practice	Assessment Method 2: Professional Discussion underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence	Overall Grading
Fail	Fail	Fail
Pass	Fail	Fail
Fail	Pass	Fail
Fail	Distinction	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Distinction

Annex 1

Assessment Plan and Occupational Standard

Level 4 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care Occupational Standard and the latest version of the Assessment Plan can be accessed by following this link:

<https://skillsengland.education.gov.uk/apprenticeships/st0007-v1-2>

Level 4 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care ST0007

Version 1.1, 1.2

Sector: Care Services

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 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.

There should only be one further attempt at an EPA assessment permitted, after the initial failed attempt. 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. In these circumstances the assessment instruments used for re-sits/re-takes must have:

- A different focus for the Observation of Leadership
- Different discussion points used in the Professional Discussion

An individual EPA method re-sit/re-take must be taken within a period of three months from the fail notification of the original assessment method, otherwise the entire EPA must be retaken, 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 the EPAO determines there are exceptional circumstances requiring a re-sit or re-take.

Innovate Assessors must ensure apprentices complete a different Observation of Practice activity and have a Professional Discussion which includes different questions, when taking a re-sit/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>

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
V1	April 2025	Document created for v1.1	Throughout
V2	January 2026	Document updated for v1.2, new sector subject area (Care Services)	Page 13

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



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