



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

Higher and Degree Apprenticeship End-Point Assessment (EPA) Policy and Procedure

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Quality Management Office

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Summary of what this policy covers:

See also the Glossary for information about definitions and abbreviations and for internal staff and students see the University's extensive [online glossary](#).

End-Point Assessment (EPA) responsibilities	This policy sets out the University's approach to delivering and managing the quality of End-Point Assessments (EPAs) for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships (HDAs). It ensures compliance with the Department for Education (DfE) funding rules (formerly Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and Skills England). It clarifies roles and responsibilities in relation to EPAs.
Choosing an Apprenticeship End Point Assessment Organisation for University staff who are apprentices	Where our staff are studying an HDA and the EPA is not integrated, the University, as the employer, is required to choose an independent third-party End-Point Assessment Organisation to deliver EPA. The policy explains how we approach this. See section 4.
Supporting employers seeking an End-Point Assessment Organisation	Where the EPA is non-integrated, we provide employers with information about End-Point Assessment Organisations that are on the APAR. The employer chooses the EPA Organisation. See section 4.
Recruiting and maintaining records of Independent Assessors	The University ensures that appropriate Independent Assessors (IAs) are appointed where an integrated EPA requires this role. The IAs can be permanent University staff or individuals recruited by the University specifically as an IA. As part of the HDA approval by the University, the School states which of these two approaches it intends to follow. The policy explains the process for recruiting staff for an IA role. See section 7.
Training and ensuring the CPD of Independent Assessors	For integrated EPAs, the University is required to ensure IAs keep their occupational expertise up to date. Schools are responsible for ensuring their IAs understand the specific requirements of the EPA and that evidence of this is logged with the IA records maintained by QMO. Further information can be found in section 9.
Ensuring potential conflicts of interest are identified and managed	EPAs must be conducted impartially with a clear separation between the teaching on the programme and those carrying out the EPA. Section 8 explains how we manage and mitigate any potential or real conflict of interest in the delivery of EPAs.
Conducting EPAs and applying for Completion Certificates	The University carries out EPAs ensuring adherence to internal and external quality assurance requirements. Section 11 addresses the issues that arise due to some EPAs being slightly different to the University's more traditional assessments.

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the University of Salford's (University) approach to delivering and managing the quality of End-Point Assessments (EPAs) for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships (HDAs). HDAs are structured training programmes where the main learning is at level 4 or above (including higher education qualifications).

EPAs are a synoptic assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that have been learnt throughout the apprenticeship. The purpose of the EPA is to make sure the apprentice meets the standard set by employers and is fully competent in the occupation.

EPAs can be integrated or non-integrated. An integrated EPA is incorporated into the University qualification. There are two types of integrated EPAs:

1. **Integrated Apprenticeship:**
The integrated EPA will operate as set out by Skills England and meet the typical requirements of EPAs (including the recruitment of Independent Assessors).
2. **Fully/ Statutory Integrated Apprenticeship:**
This type of apprenticeship covers occupations that are regulated by law. Statutory regulators usually prescribe how new entrants to the occupation should be assessed. They will set out the level of competence needed to be able to practise the occupation. The assessment prescribed by a statutory regulator can constitute the apprenticeship's EPA. Thus, achieving the apprenticeship leads to attainment of the regulator's requirements. The apprenticeship is then referred to as being a 'statutory integrated apprenticeship' or 'fully integrated apprenticeship'.

A non-integrated (or independent) EPA is a separate assessment carried out by a third-party organisation after the apprentice has completed the University qualification.

The policy ensures the University's approach to EPAs complies with compliance with the Department for Education (DfE) funding rules (formerly Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and Skills England). It clarifies roles and responsibilities in relation to EPAs for University staff, apprentices, employers and Independent Assessors (IAs).

There are sometimes differences in terminology and language used at the University compared to Skills England documentation and language. A summary of the differences can be found below:

- **'Resit' 'reassessment' and 'retakes':**
As per the University's academic regulations, students have a first attempt at passing a module, followed by a reassessment (second attempt), followed by a module retake (this requires payment because the student must attend lectures, seminars etc again as part of the module retake).

Skills England language refers to a 'resit' when the apprentice is resitting one or more of the assessments without further training. Skills England refers to a 'retake' when the apprentice requires further training before they do the assessment again.

Further details can be found in the Resits and Retakes section of this policy.

- **‘Special Considerations’ ‘Reasonable Adjustments’, ‘Extenuating Circumstances’ and ‘Personal Mitigating Circumstances’**

Whilst Skills England refers to Special Considerations, the University uses the term ‘Reasonable Adjustments’. Similarly, whilst Skills England refers to ‘Extenuating Circumstances’ the University refers to ‘Personal Mitigating Circumstances’.

- **‘Exam Board’ and ‘Assessment Board’.**

The University uses the term ‘Assessment Board’ to refer to the ratification of EPA marks. However, the legacy term used was ‘Exam Board’ so you may see this terminology in some documentation.

2. Scope

This policy covers the following scenarios:

- Apprentices who are employed by other organisations and are on a University of Salford apprenticeship with a non-integrated EPA (see section 4)
- Apprentices who are employed by the University and are on an apprenticeship either delivered by the University or by another provider, with a non-integrated EPA (see section 4)
- Apprentices who are employed by the University and are on an apprenticeship either delivered by the University or by another provider, with an integrated or fully integrated EPA (see section 4)
- Apprentices who are employed by other organisations and are on a University of Salford apprenticeship with an integrated or fully integrated EPA (see section 4)

The policy does not cover the scenario whereby a School wishes to act as a third-party EPA Organisation for other institutions. The University Leadership Team considers the business case for any proposals for such activity on a case-by-case basis.

3. Planning for End Point Assessment at Programme Approval Stage

- 3.1 The End Point Assessment is one of the University’s Six Fundamentals and is embedded in the programme from the programme approval stage. Programme teams plan how the programme will prepare apprentices for the EPA. For integrated EPAs, this includes completing an End Point Assessment Operational Plan (EPAOP), see Appendix 1d, which sets out details of the EPA including its delivery plan. For integrated programmes, programme teams also develop an End Point Assessment Handbook to be used as a resource for apprentices, employers, Independent Assessors and internal staff.

4. Appointing a third-party End-Point Assessment Organisation (Non-integrated EPAs)

- 4.1 This section applies to apprentices who are employed by other organisations and are on a University of Salford apprenticeship with a non-integrated EPA. It relates to the University’s obligations as the training provider.

The apprentice's employer decides which EPA Organisation they wish to use. The University, as training provider, ensures that employers are informed about the possible End-Point Assessment Organisations that are on the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR). In addition, where we have knowledge of End Point Assessment Organisations and the quality of their EPA delivery, we may highlight to employers those which we consider particularly suitable.

Where possible, the choice of EPA Organisation is included in the initial contract with employers. This may not be possible at the point of agreeing the initial contract because there is no appropriate EPA organisation on the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register. In such cases the University liaises with employers to ensure that they appoint the EPA Organisation as soon as practicable, so as not to delay the EPA being delivered to apprentices.

The School will initiate and manage the contracting process with the EPA organisation working with the Legal and Compliance Team.

All contracts with EPA Organisations are logged on the University's HDA contracts database. Contracts are monitored by the Apprenticeships Services Unit (ASU) in liaison with other relevant professional services, schools and employers. If concerns are raised, the Apprenticeships Services Unit (ASU) liaises with the third-party EPA Organisation. If concerns persist, the University may terminate the contract with the EPA Organisation. In such cases, the ASU, employer and school will develop and implement continuity arrangements to transfer the EPA to another organisation and to support apprentice learners.

- 4.2 This section applies to apprentices who are employed by the University and are on an apprenticeship either delivered by the University or by another provider, with a non-integrated EPA. It relates to the University's obligations as the employer of the apprentices in relation to the EPA.

The process is led and coordinated by the University's Human Resources (HR) division which acts as "the employer". HR is responsible for selecting the EPA Organisation, regardless of whether the apprenticeship is delivered by the University or by a third-party organisation. If the HDA is delivered by UoS the School will lead on the contract with the EPAO on behalf of HR. If the HDA is delivered by a third-party organisation the external training provider will lead on the contract with the EPAO, however HR ensures that the ASU is informed about proposed contracts with third-party EPA organisations.

If concerns are raised about third-party EPAOs, the ASU liaises with the third-party EPA Organisation. If concerns persist, the University may terminate the contract with the EPA Organisation. In such cases, the ASU, HR (acting as the employer) and the apprenticeship provider – which may be a school or another organisation – will develop and implement continuity arrangements to transfer the EPA to another organisation and to support apprentice learners.

See Appendix 1a for a breakdown of the process to appoint a third-party End Point Assessment Organisation.

5. The role of External Examiners during End Point Assessment

For both integrated and fully integrated End Point Assessments, the External Examiner is required to comment on how well apprentices had been prepared for EPA, the completion of gateway requirements and employer involvement in gateway decisions.

For integrated End Point Assessments, the External Examiner must complete an additional report which comments on the quality of EPA delivery.

Please refer to the External Examining for Taught Programmes Policy and the Assessment Board Policy for further details of the External Examiner role for apprenticeship programmes.

6. The role of the Independent Assessor (Integrated EPAs)

The functions of an Independent Assessor (IA) vary depending on the EPA but include:

- Carrying out the EPA as set out in the EPA plan for the programme. This involves ensuring national comparability of academic standards, that the assessment processes are reliable, fair and transparent, and operate in line with:
 - University regulations, policies and procedures.
 - UK Quality Code for Higher Education.
 - Office for Students' guidance on the external quality assurance (EQA) of apprenticeship End Point Assessment
 - Characteristic Statement for Apprenticeships.
 - Department of Education (DfE) Funding rules.
 - Relevant Apprenticeship Standard and End-Point Assessment Plan.
 - Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body requirements (where applicable).
- Understanding the assessment plan for the assessment of the apprenticeship.
- Participating in annual assessment training and assessment standardisation events.
- Annually submitting evidence of relevant CPD records completed in the last two years to enhance knowledge of specialist subject and/or higher education to QMO within the agreed timescale.
- Annually reviewing their conflicts of interest declaration within the agreed timescale and declaring any actual or potential conflicts to the Assessment Board. (See section 8 below)
- Completing and submitting reports within University timescales.

The University appoints as IAs those who demonstrate appropriate evidence of the following:

- Knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality.
- Competence and experience in the fields covered by apprenticeship.
- Relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience, where appropriate.
- Competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures.
- Sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic and, where appropriate, professional peers.
- Familiarity with the EPA performance expected of apprentices to achieve the award being assessed.
- Fluency in English.
- Meeting applicable criteria set by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies, where applicable.

- Understanding of skills assessment either through a minimum of one year work-based assessment experience or through an appropriate assessor or teaching qualification.
- Appropriate and up to date occupational and assessment skills and any specific requirements as set out in the EPA plan.
- Awareness of the standard to be expected of apprentices to achieve the award that is to be assessed and have the capability to assess the apprentice at this level.
- An awareness of current industry standards, developments and practice and the design and delivery of relevant curricula.
- Preparedness to use the University's online systems for training, assessments and reporting.

7. Recruiting and maintaining records of Independent Assessors (Integrated EPAs)

Where the EPA is integrated (but not fully integrated), the University ensures it has suitable Independent Assessors who meet the requirements described in section 6. IAs can either be permanent University staff or individuals recruited by the School specifically for an IA role. The School should inform the QMO which of these two approaches it intends to follow a year in advance of the EPA. To ensure independence, the University's Head of Academic Quality Management makes the final decision on the appointment of IAs.

For every Integrated EPA there shall be at least two IAs to support the moderation and calibration of marks. The total number of IAs for any EPA must be enough to cover the number of EPAs expected. Case-by-case basis advice is provided by QMO.

QMO maintains records for six years (or longer, if required by the University's Data Retention Schedule) of:

- The approved assessments for integrated EPAs on apprenticeships delivered by University.
- Independent Assessors (both permanent University Staff and staff recruited specifically for the role).

Schools appointing existing full-time, fractional or hourly-paid staff to be IAs

- Schools log the details of existing full-time, fractional or hourly-paid staff who will act as IAs with QMO.
- The IA must not engage with any aspect of the programme (including teaching, assessment verification, marking, moderation) apart from conducting the EPA.

Recruiting temporary staff specifically for the Independent Assessor role

QMO coordinates the process for recruiting temporary staff specifically for the IA role, working closely with the School to ensure the IA has appropriate knowledge and skills.

The appointment of IAs should be informed by the principle of "balance" e.g. to avoid a high proportion of independent assessors from a single institution or type of institution or to avoid an imbalance between the numbers of academic and practitioner independent assessors on a particular apprenticeship. To take account of the balance of appointments, Schools should consult the University's list of current IA appointments.

A nomination form is used to ensure that IAs have appropriate academic and, where relevant, other professional expertise, and that potential conflicts of interest are identified and

resolved prior to appointment. The nomination form covers the criteria for appointment set out in section 6.

The length of an IA appointment will vary in accordance with the needs of the programme. Initial appointments are usually four years, however IAs appointed under the Hourly Paid Route (see below) will have an annual engagement contract. The University Skills Sub-Committee has oversight of the IA role, reporting to the University Quality and Standards Committee.

Remuneration of IAs

IAs can be employed through Fees and Expenses or as Hourly Paid Academics (HPAs). The employment pathway depends on the number of instances of engagement per year. See the IA flowchart for further information about the process (Figure 1).

IA hourly rates for Fees and Expenses are published annually by the QMO in liaison with School Finance Managers. Remuneration rates for IAs appointed as HPAs are to be agreed between QMO, the programme team and the School Finance Manager prior to roles being advertised. Hourly remuneration rates should align to University grades and be in line with EPA budgets. When using hourly paid contracts for IAs, the ZH6 free rate may be used. The QMO deals with IA claims via the fees and expenses and recharges the School. The School deals with IA claims submitted via the HPA rate pathway.

Independent Assessor Sickness and Last-Minute Absence

Independent Assessors should notify both QMO and the programme lead as soon as possible if they cannot assess EPA due to sickness or other circumstances outside of their control. Where an apprenticeship programme has employed several Independent Assessors, EPA planning should include contingency measures to mitigate the impact of last-minute sickness (e.g. back-up assessors on standby). Where an EPA can no longer take place due to Independent Assessor absence, programme teams should inform QMO and the School Head of Apprenticeships as soon as possible.

Termination of appointment of temporary staff recruited as IAs

Where an IA wishes to terminate their contract of appointment early, a minimum of three months' notice is required. The Dean of School considers the request and reports terminations to QMO. A new IA must be appointed as swiftly as possible.

Where the University wishes to terminate the appointment early, for example where a programme is due to close, a minimum notice period of three months will be given to the IA.

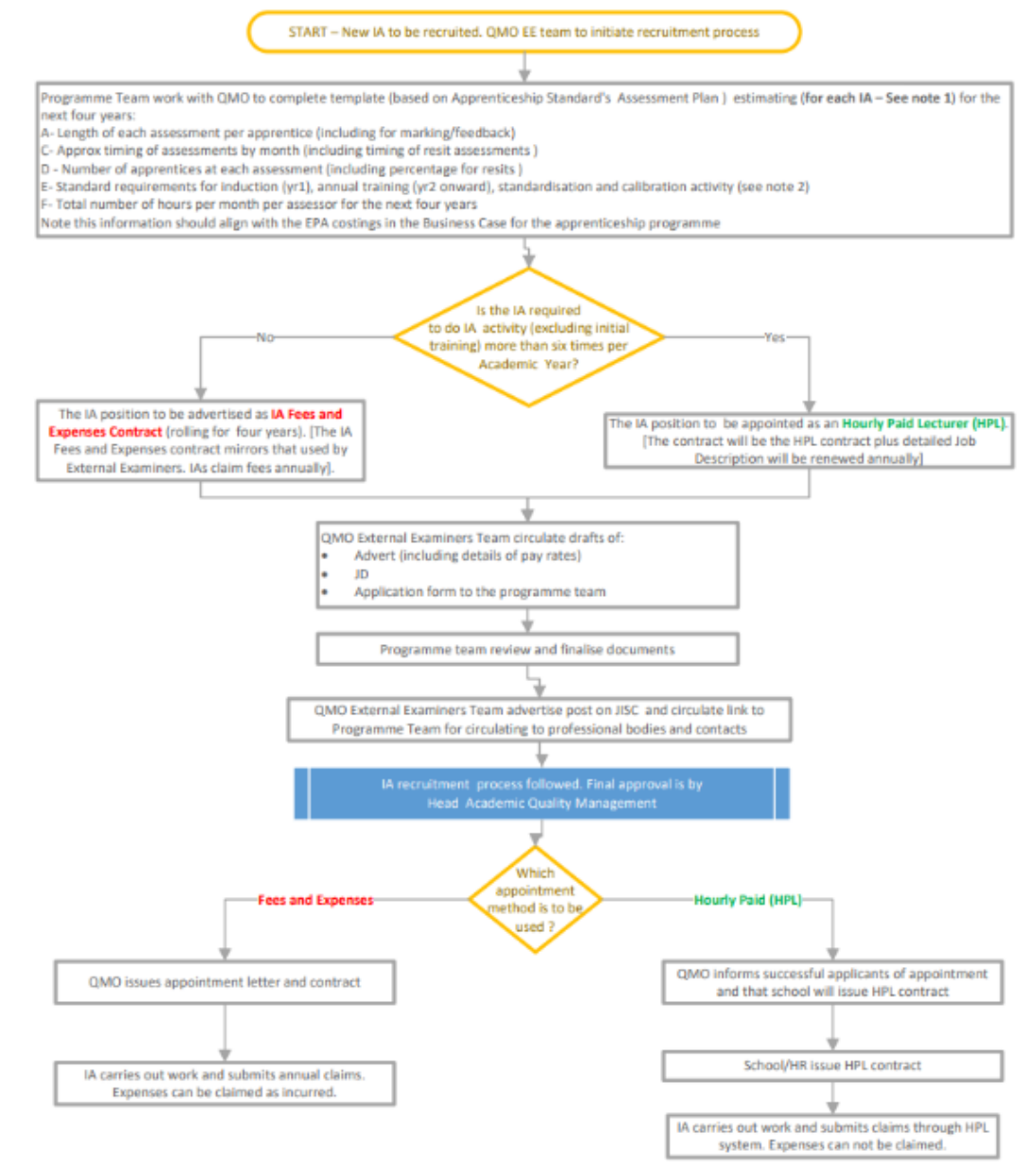
Where a School considers an IA has failed to fulfil their obligations satisfactorily this must be reported to the Dean of School. The Dean will take appropriate steps to contact the IA and resolve the matter. If it is felt necessary to terminate the appointment, then this shall be formally undertaken by the Dean and reported to the School Executive.

Examples of an IA failing to fulfil their obligations include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to take part in required training;
- Failure to update their records of CPD and conflicts of interest annually;
- Failure to carry out EPAs in line with expectations;
- Failure to provide any marking, moderation or standardisation reports required by the school as part of EPA delivery.

Where a conflict of interest arises during the IA's employment, and where the conflict cannot be resolved satisfactorily, normal practice is that the IA resigns. However, as a last resort the University will terminate the IA's contract.

Figure 1: Flowchart showing the Independent Assessor recruitment process how to determine which employment route should be taken



8. Conflicts of Interest

The University's Register of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Policy (Declaration and Management of Conflicts of Interest) applies to all aspects of Higher and Degree Apprenticeships. The University makes every effort to manage and mitigate any potential or real conflict of interest in the delivery of EPAs.

All IAs are required to declare any real or potential conflicts of interest at the time of their nomination. In addition, approximately 3 months prior to the EPA, the IA will be given a list of the names of apprentices (and their employers) that they are due to assess, and the IA must declare any real or potential conflict of interest (see Appendix 2). If real or potential conflicts of interest are declared and they cannot be resolved, the School, with advice from QMO, will

decide how they should be dealt with. In some situations, it may be appropriate to appoint a different IA. Schools retain copies of the conflicts of interest declarations and make them available to the QMO. As part of Gateway the apprentice completes the End Point Assessment and Gateway Declaration form and indicates if there is a conflict of interest with the named Independent Assessors.

To ensure IAs are impartial in judgement and “do not personally benefit from any student outcomes, nor have any connection to any student being assessed” (UK Quality Code for HE, Advice and Guidance: External Expertise) the University does not appoint as IAs any individuals in the following categories or circumstances:

- Anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with an apprentice on the HDA in question.
- Anyone with a close personal relationship with a member of staff involved with the HDA in question.
- Anyone required to assess colleagues who are recruited as apprentices to the HDA.
- Anyone who is, or knows they will be, in a position to significantly influence the future of apprentices on the HDA in question.
- Anyone significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the HDA in question.
- Anyone involved in a reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at another higher education provider.

The University also avoids appointing more than one IA for an HDA from the same department of the same higher education or apprenticeship provider.

During the Assessment Board, External Examiners are required to declare any conflicts of interest with apprentices as part of the Assessment Board agenda, which is formally logged in the minutes. Further details can be found in the Assessment Boards for Taught Programmes Policy.

Programme teams are responsible for checking the detail of Internal Moderation requirements in the Assessment Plan. Some Assessment Plans require Internal Moderators not to have been involved in the on-programme teaching of the apprenticeship and not to have any conflict of interest with the apprentices going through EPA.

Where an assessment plan requires EPA Panel Members to be involved in the assessment, all panel members must ensure that they have not been involved in on-programme teaching of apprentices and that there is no conflict of interest with the apprentices going through EPA.

9. Training and ensuring the CPD of Independent Assessors

To ensure consistency of approach and in-depth understanding of the Apprenticeship Standards and EPA, all IAs are required to undertake training to support them in the assessor role.

At induction, the University ensures that all IAs are informed about relevant institutional procedures, practices and regulations, the expectations of the IA role and the apprenticeships to which they are appointed.

Ongoing training is provided jointly by Schools and QMO, with input from the ASU as needed, to ensure that all requirements are met and to ensure that all assessments conducted are valid, fair and reliable and in line with the relevant EPA plan.

All IAs are expected to participate in briefings, verification, standardisation, moderation and calibration activity as directed by the School. These events are to ensure the fair, consistent and reliable grading of all assessments. They also allow the School to update the IAs on any changes to the apprenticeship or standard. Programme teams are expected to communicate with IAs during the year and provide updates as appropriate.

QMO ensures that the CPD and training records of IAs are updated annually and retained for six years.

10. EPA gateway (Integrated and Non-integrated EPAs)

For integrated end-point assessments, the School, as the End-Point Assessment Organisation, verifies that the apprentice has completed any prerequisites to end-point assessment, including any mandatory qualifications. The School liaises with the employer to determine whether the apprentice has met the gateway requirements. The gateway refers to the requirements that need to be met for the employer to put forward their apprentice for the EPA. It ensures that all apprentices have completed the mandatory aspects of the occupational standard and that employers believe an apprentice is occupationally competent at the point they enter the gateway. The Apprenticeships Services Unit are responsible for ensuring apprentices have appropriate learner status within the University during the EPA period in collaboration with the registration team. The ASU liaises with Schools to keep the employer informed of attempts and outcomes in respect of each EPA.

For non-integrated apprenticeship programmes, the ASU in liaison with the school gather EPA gateway evidence to submit to the End Point Assessment Organisation. The School submit this to the EPAO as evidence that the EPA can go ahead for each individual.

The role of External Examiners in relation to EPAs and the Gateway process is described in the External Examining for Taught Programmes Policy. The Assessment Board policy describes the documentation requirements for Assessment Boards considering Gateway and, where applicable, for integrated and fully-integrated EPAs.

The School carries out Internal Quality Assurance checks on EPA gateway documents.

Further details of EPA Gateway processes and responsibilities for integrated and fully integrated apprenticeships can be found in Appendix 1c and 1e.

There is useful information for employers on the [Apprenticeship Employer Hub](#).

10.1 Support Post Gateway

For integrated apprenticeship programmes, where the University is both the training provider and the EPAO, it is important that the independence of EPA is maintained. The University upholds a clear separation between training and assessment, and therefore support post-gateway is carefully considered.

The EPA team is not involved in any tutorial support post-gateway. Tutorial support means any support relating to the actual End Point Assessment content. The EPA team includes those who have knowledge of the EPA questions/ structure, those who make grading judgements/ decisions and those who are involved in standardisation, calibration and moderation.

The EPA team can, however, provide logistical support e.g. confirming EPA locations, what to bring, how to access systems etc.

The EPA team can provide clarification on EPA feedback from Independent Assessors, but this does not include coaching apprentices to pass their EPA on the second attempt.

Learning & Development Coaches (LDCs) continue to provide pastoral and wellbeing support post-gateway. This could include signposting apprentices to services when welfare concerns arise or checking that apprentices understand what is required if they fail an element of the EPA.

10.2 EPA Mocks

When developing a new apprenticeship programme, programme teams should consider where EPA mocks should sit within the programme structure.

In principle, all EPA mocks should take place before gateway, unless they logically (due to the specifics of the EPA assessment component) need to be after the gateway. Generally, mocks take place before gateway to help determine that the apprentice is ready for EPA.

Those involved in assessing the mocks must be independent from those doing the EPA. Depending on the specific standard's EPA requirements, this may require careful staff planning **to avoid** for example:

- LDCs and academics doing mocks for an apprentice then also being involved in the EPA for that apprentice.
- Colleagues involved in EPA standardisation, moderation and calibration events having previously been involved in mocks.

If there are concerns about the logistics of maintaining separation between the programme team involved in mocks and those linked to EPAs, please seek QMO advice.

Please be advised that the time apprentices spend doing the mocks (or any examination) cannot be used in the planned OTJ hours calculation. However, preparation/ revision for mocks can be included (but not after gateway as OTJ hours are complete by this point).

11. Conducting End Point Assessments and applying for Completion Certificates (integrated EPAs)

Schools maintain records for six years (or longer, if required by the University's Data Retention Schedule) of the integrated EPA for the apprenticeships that they deliver. Where delivery is across more than one School, the lead School maintains the records.

A minimum of two IAs are appointed to each apprenticeship to ensure independence in assessment verification and moderation. Verification and moderation are undertaken in line with University's Assessment and Feedback Policy. Details of internal moderation are set out in the apprenticeship's End-Point Assessment Operational Plan (EPAOP).

Reassessments and re-takes are undertaken in line with the University's Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes and the Assessment and Feedback Policy except where the Apprenticeship Assessment Plan sets out specific procedures, in which case the Assessment Plan takes precedence.

Each apprenticeship End-Point Assessment Plan stipulates the procedure to be followed where an apprentice fails the End-Point Assessment.

Apprenticeship EPA grades must be translated into University module percentages using a robust EPA grade translation scheme in line with the Skills England assessment plan rules. A template is available from QMO.

Apprentices are issued with a transcript of their performance in line with standard University procedures. Transcripts for apprentices completing the EPA are not an Apprenticeship Certificate.

The School, as the End-Point Assessment Organisation, is responsible for claiming the apprenticeship certificate from the Government Apprenticeship Service within 20 days of the apprentices' grade being confirmed at Assessment Board.

12. Applying Reasonable Adjustments at End-Point Assessment

When an apprentice has a Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP) in place, the adjustments outlined in the RAP will be applied to the End-Point Assessment. Further details about Reasonable Adjustments can be found [here](#).

13. Feedback in relation to EPAs and EPA Organisations

To develop the University's understanding of the experience of EPAs from a range of perspectives and use this information to improve provision of services, the ASU coordinate a confidential post-EPA survey, where appropriate for that standard, to capture feedback from the apprentice and their employer. The post-EPA survey collects data on both non-integrated programmes where there is an external EPAO and integrated programmes where the University is the EPAO.

The results of the survey are redacted and shared with the relevant School (i.e. the training provider/ EPAO). If the survey highlights poor quality in EPA provision for non-integrated programmes, the University may use this as evidence as to why an EPA Organisation should not be used in future. If the survey highlights issues in EPA provision for integrated programmes where the University is the EPAO, the feedback will feed into internal EPA quality assurance processes (see section 17). A summary of the results of this survey will be included in the Apprenticeships Annual Report to the Quality and Standards Committee.

14. Complaints and Appeals

Apprentices wishing to appeal their EPA grade should follow the University's Academic Appeals procedure.

Apprentices wishing to make a complaint about the EPA process should follow the University's Student Complaints Procedure.

Apprentices wishing to submit Personal Mitigating Circumstances should follow the University's Personal Mitigating Circumstances Procedure.

Employers wishing to make a complaint about the EPA process should follow the University's Complaints Policy and Procedure for Employers of Apprentices.

Independent Assessors who have concerns about the EPA process should reach out to the programme leader in the first instance. If the IA does not feel comfortable raising concerns with the programme leader, they should contact the Quality Management Office (email QMO@salford.ac.uk).

Colleagues working on the programme team/ EPA team who have concerns about the EPA process should contact the programme leader or the Quality Management Office,

Programme leaders who have concerns about the EPA process should contact the Quality Management Office in the first instance.

External Examiners who have concerns about the EPA process should follow the procedure outlined in the External Examining for Taught Programmes Policy.

All concerns raised will be escalated through the University's apprenticeships governance structure as appropriate.

Individuals can also contact the Department for Education or the Office of the Independent Adjudicator to raise complaints externally.

15. Assessment Software

When assessment software is used for End-Point Assessment, the software is thoroughly tested and used in line with the University's Information Security Policy and Data Protection Policy. Detailed guidance is made available for apprentices, internal staff, Independent Assessors and External Examiners on how to use the assessment software and what to do if something goes wrong.

16. Equality and Diversity

The appointment of IAs is monitored in relation to protected characteristics and reported annually as part of the Apprenticeships Annual Report to the Education and Student Experience Committee and to the Quality and Standards Committee.

The University ensures that apprentices with protected characteristics or learning support needs are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged in EPAs, in order that all achievements in EPAs are fair. Data in relation to the outcomes of EPAs and apprentices with protected characteristics will be monitored.

17. Internal Quality Assurance Strategy for Integrated End Point Assessment

The University has developed rigorous quality assurance processes to ensure the integrity of End Point Assessment for integrated programmes. Internal Quality Assurance approaches are underpinned by the University's High Quality Apprenticeships Project.

The University's Internal Quality Assurance Strategy for integrated EPA consists of the following processes:

- School-led verification, standardisation and moderation of EPA results to ensure all learners are assessed accurately, fairly and consistently.
- ASU compliance checks prior to gateway on Level 2 qualifications (where required) and off-the-job hours completed.
- Quality Management Office oversight of individual programme EPA processes and documentation, to ensure that EPA is delivered in line with and OfS requirements and University policies.

Internal monitoring of EPA outcomes underpinned by OfS guidance.

- Operational oversight of EPA delivery across the University by the University Apprenticeship Operations Group (UAOG).
- Feedback from post-EPA surveys for employers and apprentices, which are reviewed by UAOG and used to inform Programme Action Logs (PALs) as part of the University's Programme Monitoring and Enhancement Procedure.
- Feedback from Independent Assessors on their experience of conducting EPAs, including conflict of interest management, assessment conditions, training materials and standardisation/ moderation processes. This is used to inform Programme Action Logs (PALs).

18. External Quality Assurance for End Point Assessment

External Quality Assurance for integrated apprenticeship programmes is undertaken by the Office for Students.

External Quality Assurance for non-integrated EPA apprenticeship programmes is normally undertaken by Ofqual.

The University also appoints External Examiners to assess the quality of End Point Assessment provision for both integrated and fully integrated programmes. More details can be found in the External Examining for Taught Programmes Policy.

19. Related Documentation

The following documents can be found on the [University of Salford Core and Organisational Governance page](#)

- Register of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Policy (Declaration of Management of Conflicts of Interests)

The following documents can be found in University Academic Handbook pages <https://www.salford.ac.uk/QMO/academichandbook>

- Programme Design, Approval, Amendment, Review and Withdrawal Policy
- Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes
- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- Assessment Boards for Taught Programmes
- External Examining for Taught Programmes Policy

20. Glossary

Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR)

The register of organisations eligible to receive government funding to train apprentices and organisations from which an employer can select an organisation to deliver the end-point assessment as part of the apprenticeship programme.

Assessment Plan

A detailed document that accompanies each Apprenticeship Standard setting out each element of the Gateway requirements and the methods of synoptic assessment to be used in the End-Point Assessment.

Training Plan

A statement held by the main provider, the apprentice and their employer. The Training Plan sets out how the apprentice will be supported to successful achievement of the apprenticeship. It must be signed by the apprentice, their employer and the main provider, and all three parties must retain a current signed and dated version.

Department for Education

The agency, which is accountable for funding education and skills for children, young people and adults. The DfE administers contracts for funding and the Digital Apprenticeship Service for Levy payments to Apprenticeship Providers. Note formerly the **Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) carried out this function.**

Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs)

The elements of competence that the apprentice will gain during the apprenticeship and needs to evidence at the End-Point Assessment to complete the apprenticeship.

Main Provider

The organisation that is delivering the training and award to meet the knowledge requirements of the Apprenticeship Standard and the majority of off-the job learning.

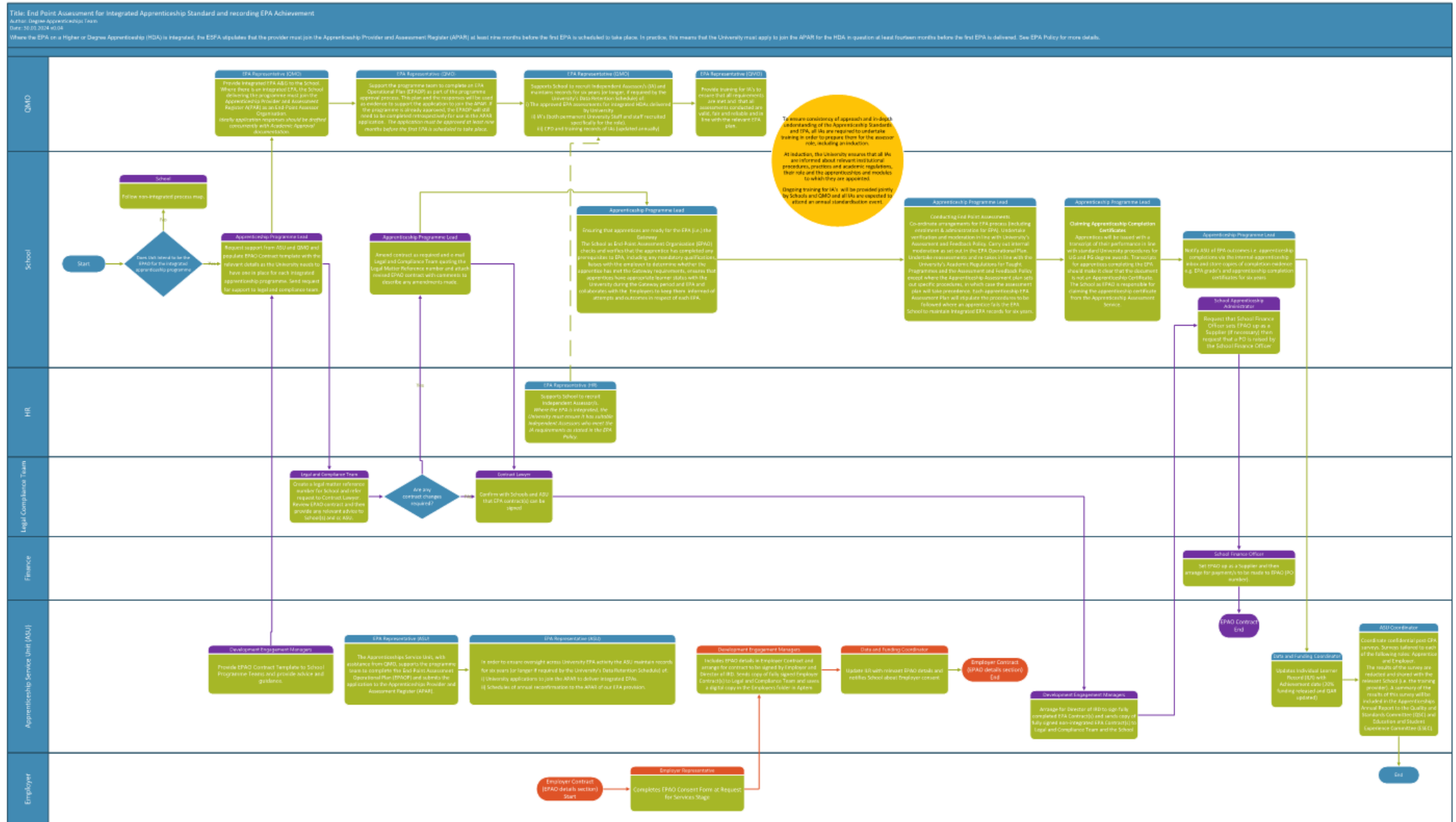
Programme Validation Panel (PVP -formerly PARP)

The University panel that considers the academic case approval of new programmes. PVP reports to the University's Quality and Standards Committee.

Skills England

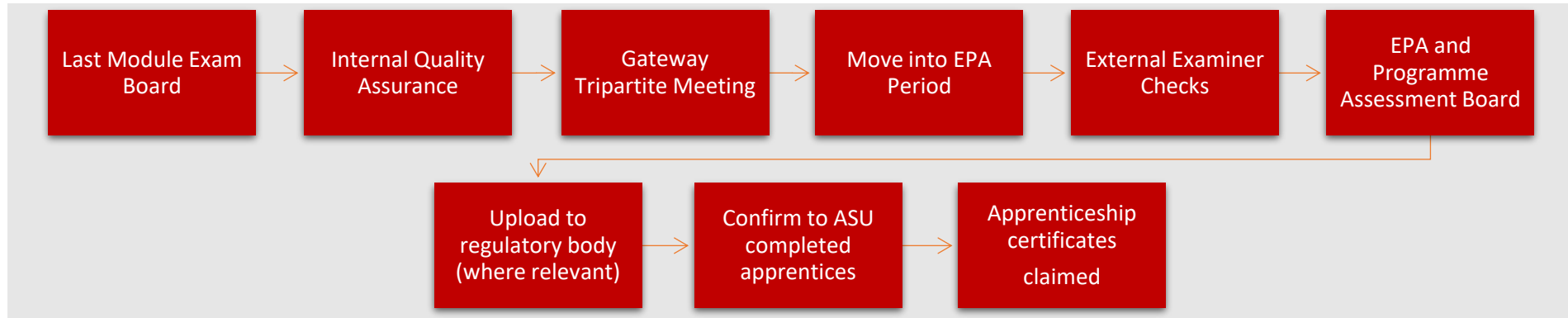
The Government body overseeing the skills landscape in England including apprenticeships and the Growth and Skills Levy.

Appendix 1b Process flowchart showing how we apply to join the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR) as an EPAO

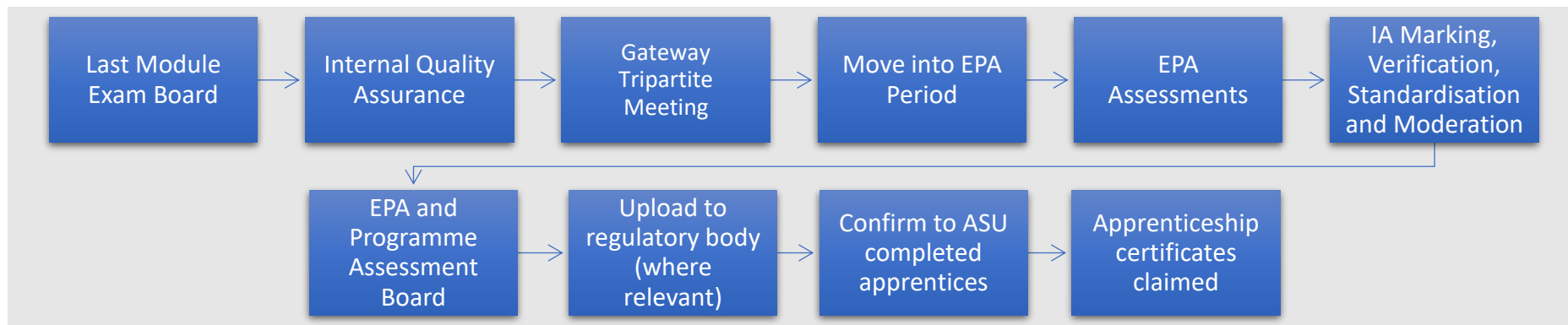


Appendix 1c Integrated EPA Programme Process

Fully Integrated EPA Process – Assessment Board



Integrated EPA Process – with Assessment



Appendix 1d End Point Assessment Operational Plan Template

End Point Assessment Operational Plan

Document Control Information – Revision History (most recent first)

Author	Summary of Changes	Version	Approved and Date	Notes

Apprenticeship Standard:

Standard Version:

EPA Integration: Integrated

End Point Assessment Date Projections

Estimated EPA Dates	Estimated Cohort Size	Total IA Hours Per Cohort	Number of IAs Required	Number of Senior IAs Required

EPA Delivery Schedule

Day	Activity

Independent Assessor Time Commitment

All Independent Assessors Regardless of Group Size:

- Participate in annual training activity including calibration activity (normally around 3.5 hours per year plus an additional 5.5 hours in the first year)
- Participate in moderation and standardisation activity (2 hours per cohort)
- Add additional 'per cohort' activity including resit contingency plans

Per Apprentice:

End Point Assessment Element Breakdown	Time Per Apprentice (Hours)

Total	

Employment & Contract Information for Independent Assessors

Employment Method (HPA/ Fees & Expenses):

Contract Terms/ Notice Period:

Appendix 1e showing EPA process responsibilities and accountabilities for integrated and fully integrated apprenticeship programmes.

Process Step	Action/Documents required	Responsible	Accountable
After last Module Assessment Board	Prepare DRAFT programme completion document and send to EPA/Programme Lead evidencing achieved credit requirement.	Programme Admin	Programme Lead
Collate Gateway evidence (IQA)	Collate documentation into teams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exam board documents as above - Programme/PSRB requirements (varies by apprenticeship standard) - Off the Job Hours - Practice Assessment Document and/or Portfolio - Maths & English certificates verified by checking spreadsheet owned by the ASU (where required) - Complete spreadsheet of completion for each programme 	EPA/Programme Lead	Programme Lead
Gateway Tripartite Meeting	Meeting with employer, apprentice and university representative Discuss and agree the apprentice is competent and met all requirements. ➤ Gateway form is signed by all parties within Onefile/Aptem	CE/LDC/LT	Programme Lead
External Examiner Quality Assurance of Gateway Requirements	Externally verify 10 or 10% of apprentices per cohort going through gateway to EPA (select using an online random number calculator). 10 apprentices or 10% of the cohort (whichever is larger) will be chosen at the start of the gateway period. If any of these apprentices do not progress to assessment board at this time, additional apprentices will be chosen to meet the sampling thresholds. The external examiner reserves the right to request checks of more apprentice records if they wish to. Checks: 1) All apprentices have a gateway form signed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check all Gateway requirements are met e.g., Maths and English certificates (where required), PAD and/or portfolio (where relevant), required credits are achieved. 2) Programme specific checks (if required) e.g., Hours completed	EPA/Programme Lead	Programme Lead
Move into EPA Period	For programmes with Fully Integrated EPAs where assessment board is EPA. Ensure access is given to EE to verify the data as per the programme specific EPA requirements.	EPA/Programme Lead and EE	Programme Lead
	For programmes with integrated EPA ensure assessments are completed and marked in line with EPA and within deadlines ready for exam board	EPA Lead and IA	Programme Lead
External Examiner Checks	Any queries raised by the External Examiner can be directed to the Programme Lead.	Programme Lead and LDC	Programme lead

Exam Board (EPA and Progression)	<p>EPA results presented at the board. Must have an EE (check Programme EPA) Confirmation by the IA or EE at the board verification checks completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sign Assessment board verification sheet (PL, EE/IA/Chair) <p>Programme progression results presented at the board. EPA results to be presented at the board (ensure calculated as per assessment plan) Programme and if applicable EPA result letters sent</p>	Programme Administrator	Programme Lead
Upload to regulatory body	Where required upload apprentices to PSRB	Programme administrator/Apprentice	Programme Lead
Confirm to ASU and SAT Manager completion	<p>Programme administrator to email apprenticeships-finance@salford.ac.uk and school apprenticeship admin lead apprentices who have completed.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Date of assessment board 2) Results 3) Employer – <p>ASU to update ILR and finance. SAT Manager to claim certificates and record result within 20 days of Assessment Board.</p>	<p>Programme Admin</p> <p>Compliance co-ordinator (ASU)</p> <p>SAT Manager</p>	SAT Manager

Appendix 2 Higher and Degree Apprenticeships Integrated End-Point Assessment Conflict of Interest Declaration Template

The template is used for apprenticeships with integrated end-point assessments.

The template is completed by each Independent Assessor approximately two months before the planned EPA date. Schools are responsible for ensuring the template is completed prior to the EPA taking place. The completed templates are retained by the School and QMO for six years after the EPA takes place.

The University's Higher and Degree Apprenticeship End-Point Assessment (EPA) Policy and Procedure recognises the importance of managing and assuring independence and preventing conflicts of interest in accordance with DfE funding rules and the Assessment Plan for each Apprenticeship Standard. The following University policies inform the management of conflicts of interest:

- [Register of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Policy](#) (Declaration of Management of Conflicts of Interests)
- [Whistle Blowing Policy](#)
- [Risk Management](#)
- [Personal Relationships Policy](#)

Part A: University of Salford to complete	
Apprenticeship standard	
University award	
Date of the End Point Assessment	
Assessor Organisation	University of Salford
Planned date of first End Point Assessment	
Details of apprentices (and their employer) to be assessed for their EPA by this Independent Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apprentice 1• Apprentice 2• Apprentice 3• Etc
Part B: Independent Assessor (IA) to complete	
IA first name	
IA second name	
<i>IAs should select either Option 1 or Option 2</i>	
Option 1 (for the IA): To the best of my knowledge, I confirm there are no known potential or actual conflicts of interest (including those listed above) between me (the Independent Assessor) and the Apprentice(s) named above.	
Option 1 - Signed and dated:	
Option 2 (for the IA): I wish to raise a concern that there may be a conflict of interest between me (the Independent	

Assessor), and the Apprentice(s) named above.	
Please describe relationship:	
Option 2 Signed and dated:	
School Office Use:	
Office notes:	

Document Control Information

Revision History incl. Authorisation: (most recent first)			
Author	Summary of changes	Version	Authorised & Date
Helen Sharman/ Emily Armstrong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated to reflect new committee names. Updated to reflect the change from ESFA to DfE and IfATE to Skills England. Updated to remove APAR application process for integrated apprenticeships (EPAO role). Updated to clarify rules around support post-gateway including EPA mocks. Updated to clarify appeals and complaints procedures relating to EPA. Updated to clarify how feedback on EPA is gathered and processed. 	V2.4	14 May 2025 Quality and Standards Committee
Emily Armstrong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor updates to ensure the University adheres to the IfATE EQA manual for apprenticeship end point assessment. 	V2.3	Emma French Chair's Action on behalf of the Quality and Standards Committee Approved 19/09/24
Helen Sharman/ Emily Armstrong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor updates to reflect new OfS requirements for the External Quality Assurance of EPA. IA rates and remuneration. Internal quality assurance strategy for EPA. External Quality Assurance of EPA. 	V2.2	14 February 2024 Quality and Standards Committee
Helen Sharman	Minor updates to reflect the requirements of the Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education, changes to university terminology and practice within Schools in delivering the EPA.	V2.1	10 May 2023 ULTC
Helen Sharman	Initial version of the document "Higher and Degree Apprenticeship End-Point Assessment (EPA) Policy and Procedure" incorporating earlier "Higher and Degree Apprenticeships – Integrated End-Point Assessment Policy and Procedure"	V1.0 V2.0	6/5/20 ASQAC 03/05/2023 ULTC

Helen Sharman	Initial version of the document focused solely on Integrated EPAs and was called “Higher and Degree Apprenticeships – Integrated End-Point Assessment Policy and Procedure”	NA	10/12/19 Chair of ASQAC, Sam Grogan, following e-consultation of ASQAC members
Policy Management and Responsibilities:			
Approval:		This Policy is issued by the Chair of the University Learning & Teaching Committee, who has the authority to issue and communicate policy on Higher and Degree Apprenticeships and has delegated day to day management and communication of the policy to the Quality Apprenticeship Manager and School Apprenticeship Leads.	
Others with responsibilities (Please specify):		All subjects of the Policy will be responsible for engaging with and adhering to this policy.	
Author to complete formal assessment with the following advisory teams:			
Equality Analysis (E&D, HR) <u> </u>			

Review:	
Review due:	3 Years – May 2026 – May 2029
Document location:	University Policy & Procedure Pages and Academic Handbook
Governance and Management University of Salford	
The owner and author are responsible for publicising this policy document.	