

Process for Recognising External Quality Assurance (EQA) Providers

Where the Trailblazer chooses either the employer-led or professional body option, the Institute will contact the nominated body to request details of the body and its approach to EQA. The potential EQAP will be asked to provide a plan which answers each of the questions outlined in Annex A.

The EQA proposal will be reviewed by the Institute. Once approved an approval letter will be issued.

Annex A - Making Proposals for External Quality Assurance of End Point Assessment

The Framework and Guidance for External Quality Assurance (EQA) is published as Annex F to the ['How to' guide for trailblazers](#) published in April 2017. This sets out the requirements for making proposals for EQA. This note summarises the questions which these proposals need to answer. There is not necessarily a need to answer each question/bullet individually given that a narrative or other format may answer a number of bullets at once. However, it would be helpful if the headings set out below are used.

All trailblazers need to select one of four options for how EQA will be provided for each apprenticeship standard. These are:

- An employer-led approach
- A professional body
- Ofqual
- The Institute for Apprenticeships

Section 1 of this note covers what trailblazers should cover in the assessment plan. Where either the employer-led or professional body option are chosen by the trailblazer to conduct EQA, the Institute will contact the nominated body to request details of the body and its approach to EQA. The potential EQA provider will be asked to provide a plan which answers the questions outlined in **Section 2**.

Section 1

The Trailblazer employer group needs to include the following in the End Point Assessment Plan:

1. Choosing the Approach to EQA
 - For standards other than Degree Apprenticeships which of the four options for EQA do you intend to operate?
 - For non-integrated Degree Apprenticeships who will provide the EQA for the non-Degree components of the training? (e.g. a Professional Body).
 - If you are choosing either the Employer-led or Professional Body option then which organisation will deliver EQA (this must be a legal entity)?
Please include with the EPA Plan a letter from that body which includes a commitment to delivering the EQA and a date by which the EQA service is expected to be in place

If you are choosing the Institute or Ofqual option, these organisations will offer a common approach across all standards.

- If you choose Ofqual you will need its agreement to provide EQA. Ofqual's approach can be found here:
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604833/Apprenticeship_Guidance_March_2017.pdf
- If you are choosing the Institute option, you need to name the Institute in the assessment plan and provide a brief rationale explaining why other options are not suitable.

Section 2

The questions below apply to all apprenticeship standards for which the Employer-led or Professional Body options (including those expecting to work with Ofqual as a partner rather than operating under the Ofqual option itself and including non-integrated Degree Apprenticeships) have been chosen. The answers should be provided by the EQA provider to the Institute for Apprenticeships.

2. The EQA Body

- Is the Body or its officers or directors in any way involved in or connected to any organisation expected to deliver End Point Assessment (EPA) or training for this standard and if so what is this connection?
- Who will be the senior nominated officer responsible?
- Please set out the capabilities of the Body related to the delivery of EQA and the current or expected capacity to do so?
- Please set out the Governance structure you will be operating under e.g. will you be reporting into any Boards or Committees.
- Please give details on your conflict of interest policy with regard to this work

3. Monitoring and Evaluation

How will the monitoring and evaluation be carried out to ensure that:

- **Internal quality assurance processes** prescribed in the assessment plan are being carried out, operating effectively and achieving the desired outcomes in each registered AAO?
- All **requirements** of the standard in terms of achievement of gateways, qualifications and maths and English are achieved prior to sign off by the employer for EPA?
- **Access** to assessment is fair?
- How is it intended that information be gathered on the **occupation and standard** over time in order to assist the Institute in ensuring apprenticeship occupations have sufficient skill and breadth and that standards are effectively written?

4. Validity, Reliability, Comparability and Independence

What methods do you intend to use in order to monitor and ensure that:

- The Assessment plan is **valid** in practice?
- The Assessment process is **cost effective** in practice?
- There is use of a suitable range of **assessment methods**?
- Assessment instruments and assessments are **valid** across a range of real work settings and for employers of any size and in all relevant sectors? Assessment methods should be clearly aligned to the application of specific skills, knowledge and behaviours
- Assessment is carried out as far as is practicable **synoptically** and that this applies to at least one method of assessment of skills and knowledge?
- Assessments are **reliable and comparable** across different AAOs, employers, places, times and assessors?

- Assessment is carried out **independently** in practice? This means that both the organisation and the individual assessors are independent of the delivery of training or employer.
- Is it intended to co-ordinate the development of assessment instruments e.g. tests, practical assessments, and, if so, how?
- Do you intend to sign-off assessment instruments developed by the individual AAOs?

5. Assessor Competence

- How will you monitor and ensure that AAOs have robust processes in place to ensure that **assessors** are fully **occupationally competent** and up to date?
- How will you monitor and ensure that the AAOs have sufficient assessors available and that their **assessment competence** is acceptable and meets the assessment plan requirements?

6. Delivery of the EPA

How will you check:

- AAOs' arrangements for feedback from apprentices and employers on end point assessment and the standard?
- AAOs and assessors remain independent from training delivery?
- Choice of AAO is clearly made by the employers?
- Employers are signing off apprentices as ready for end point assessment?
- The AAO directly employs or has appropriate contractual relationships with assessors when they deliver and make decisions concerning end point assessment?
- Information provided and fees charged are clear and transparent?
- Retakes, resits, appeals and complaints handling are operated effectively?
- Delivery of end point assessment by the AAOs is efficient and effective including:
 - Booking and management of assessment?
 - Marking/remote assessment?
 - Resources for assessment?
 - Evidence gathering?
 - Issue of results and feedback?
 - Confidentiality?
- Certification including its timeliness and sign off of all requirements for entry to end point assessment?

7. Costs

- Please explain the costings for the EQA service
- What fee does this result in and how do you intend to charge it?
- How will the finances be operated transparently in terms of income and expenditure?

(EQA needs to be a non-profit making service)