

## STAFFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY

### APPRENTICESHIP END-POINT ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

#### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The primary rationale for Staffordshire University's End-Point Assessment (EPA) Procedure is to set out the University's approach to delivering and managing the quality of EPAs for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships.
- 1.2 To achieve their apprenticeship, all apprentices must undertake EPA. The EPA is a synoptic assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that have been acquired throughout the practical period of learning. The purpose of the EPA is to ensure the apprentice has mastered the breadth of occupational competencies, recognised by employers, as outlined in the Apprenticeship Standard.
- 1.3 Staffordshire University's End-Point Assessment (EPA) Procedure safeguards the relevance and reliability of our EPA, in accordance with the following pertinent regulation, through well-defined roles and responsibilities:
  - The Apprenticeship Standard End-Point Assessment Plan (EPAP)<sup>1</sup>
  - Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Conditions for End-Point Assessment Organisations on the Register<sup>2</sup>
  - Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) External Quality Assurance (EQA) Framework<sup>3</sup>
  - Office for Students (OfS) Conditions<sup>4</sup>
  - The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Quality Assuring Higher Education in Apprenticeships<sup>5</sup>
  - The Designated Quality Body (DQB) External Quality Assurance (EQA) of EPA Handbook for Providers<sup>6</sup>
- 1.4 Where the EPA is integrated, the School/ Institute delivering the apprenticeship must apply to join the Register of End-Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO) as part of the apprenticeship approval process, this must be at least 14 months prior to commencement of EPA. See section 4 for further detail.
- 1.5 Where our staff are participant in the apprenticeship and the EPA is not integrated, the University, as an employer provider, is required to appoint a third-party EPAO to deliver and assure the EPA. See section 3 for further detail.

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<sup>1</sup> IfATE: [End Point Assessment Plans](#)

<sup>2</sup> ESFA: [Conditions for being on the RoEPAO](#)

<sup>3</sup> IfATE: [EQA Framework](#)

<sup>4</sup> OfS: [Condition B4](#)

<sup>5</sup> QAA: [Quality Assuring Higher Education in Apprenticeships](#)

<sup>6</sup> DQB: [EQA of EPA Handbook for Providers](#)

- 1.6 Where the EPA is not integrated, we actively signpost our employers to appropriate EPAOs registered on the RoEPAO to enable their informed selection of a suitable organisation. See section 4 for further detail.
- 1.7 Where the EPA is integrated, the University ensures capability and capacity through competent Independent Assessors (IAs). IAs may be permanent employees of the University directly in this or in another capacity, or individuals recruited on a flexible basis specifically as an IA. As part of the apprenticeship approval, the School/ Institute must make clear their chosen human resourcing resolution to ensure high quality EPA. This procedure outlines recruitment principles. See section 7 for further detail.
- 1.8 Where the EPA is integrated, the University as the registered End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) is required to ensure IAs maintain their occupational and assessment competence in line with Assessment Plan specification. Schools/ Institutes are responsible for ensuring their IAs understand the requirements of the specific EPA and that evidence of this is logged with the IA records maintained by the central Apprenticeship Team. See section 9 for further detail.
- 1.9 EPAs are required to be conducted impartially with clear delineation between those teaching on the apprenticeship and those carrying out the EPA. This procedure outlines how the University manages and mitigates perceived or actual conflict of interest in the delivery of EPA. See section 8 for further detail.
- 1.10 The University carries out EPA ensuring adherence to both internal and external quality assurance arrangements. Whilst apprenticeship policy and practice is embedded within wider University protocol, there is a necessity to recognise the impact on this broader practice of EPA regulation. See section 11 for further detail.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1 This procedure applies to the following circumstances:
  - Apprentices who are employed by another organisation and are participant in a Staffordshire University Apprenticeship with a non-integrated EPA (See 3.1)
  - Apprentices who are employed by Staffordshire University and are participant in an apprenticeship delivered either by Staffordshire University or another educational institution registered on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP) with a non-integrated EPA (See 3.2)
  - Apprentices who are employed by Staffordshire University and are participant in an apprenticeship delivered either by Staffordshire University or another educational institution registered on the RoATP with an integrated EPA (See section 4)
  - Apprentices who are employed by another organisation and are participant in a Staffordshire University Apprenticeship with an integrated EPA (See section 4)
- 2.2 This procedure does not cover the scenario whereby a School/ Institute wishes to act as a third-party EPAO for other educational institutions.

### **3. Appointing a third-party EPAO for non-integrated EPAs**

3.1 This section applies to apprentices who are employed by another organisation and are participant in a Staffordshire University Apprenticeship with a non-integrated EPA, relative to the University's obligations as the training provider.

The apprentice's employer selects the EPAO they wish to engage. The University, as the training provider, ensures that the employer is well-informed about the potential EPAOs on the RoEPAO.

Where we have knowledge of EPAOs and the quality of their EPA delivery, we may highlight to employers those we consider particularly relevant and/ or reliable.

Where possible, the choice of EPAO is incorporated within the initial contract with the employer. It is acknowledged that this may not be possible where there is no appropriate EPAO on the RoEPAO at the outset of the apprenticeship. In this situation, the University maintains communication with the employer to ensure appointment of an EPAO as soon as is practicable to safeguard the apprentice's progressive readiness for EPA.

The Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function) will initiate and manage the contracting process with the EPAO, working with the Legal Services Team. All contracts with EPAOs are logged on the Apprenticeship Team Management Information System (MIS). Contracts are monitored by the Apprenticeships Team in liaison with other relevant professional services, schools/ institutes and employers.

If concerns are raised, the Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function) liaise with the third-party EPAO. If concerns persist, the University may terminate the contract with the EPAO. In such cases, the Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function), employer and School/ Institute will develop and implement continuity arrangements to transition the EPA to another organisation and to support apprentices.

3.2 This section applies to Apprentices who are employed by Staffordshire University and are participant in an apprenticeship delivered either by Staffordshire University or another educational institution registered on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP) with a non-integrated EPA, relative to the University's obligations as the employer.

The process is led and coordinated by the University's Human Resources (HR) Team, representative of the employer. HR decides which EPAO they wish to engage regardless of whether the apprenticeship is delivered by the University or a third-party organisation.

If the apprenticeship is delivered by Staffordshire University, the Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function) will lead on the contract with the EPAO on behalf of HR.

If the apprenticeship is delivered by a third-party organisation, the external training provider will lead on the contract with the EPAO, with HR ensuring the Apprenticeships Team are informed of contracts with third-party organisations as they mature.

If concerns are raised about third-party EPAOs, the Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function) liaise with the third-party EPAO. If concerns persist, the University may terminate the contract with the EPAO. In such cases, the Apprenticeships Team

(Operational Function), HR as the employer and apprenticeship provider, which may be a Staffordshire University school/ institute or another training provider, will develop and implement continuity arrangements to transition the EPA to another organisation and to support apprentices.

#### **4. Applying to join the RoEPAO for integrated EPAs**

4.1 This section applies to apprentices who are employed by Staffordshire University or other organisations and are participant in an apprenticeship delivered by Staffordshire University with an integrated EPA.

In accordance with ESFA rules, the School/ Institute delivering the apprenticeship must join the RoEPAO as an EPAO.

The Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function) co-ordinate applications to the RoEPAO, working with the School/ Institute, and where appropriate with support from the Quality Service. Applications must be drafted concurrently with apprenticeship approval documentation. Application must be made at least 14 months in advance of commencement of EPA and entry onto the RoEPAO must be approved at least 9 months prior to commencement of EPA.

The Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function) will submit the application to the RoEPAO.

4.2 Applications to the RoEPAO include the following evidence:

- Mapping of the apprenticeship Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) to the University award and the delivery method to support the learner through the apprenticeship to EPA
- Explanation of how the academic team, with their employer, will confirm that each apprentice can enter the Gateway to EPA
- End-Point Assessment Operational Plan (EPAOP), drafted during the apprenticeship approval, providing detail of the EPA and its implementation plan
- Explanation of how the elements of the EPA will be assessed and graded in line with the EPA for the Apprenticeship Standard
- Plans for how the elements of each EPA will be moderated
- Explanation of the methods that will be used by the School/ Institute to document and store assessment records
- Evidence that any existing staff who will be designated as IAs have the occupational competence, experience and assessment expertise for the specified standard
- Commitment from the school that existing staff designated as IAs will not be involved in any aspect of the delivery of the programme
- Draft Job Descriptions and Person Specifications for the IAs that will be recruited specifically for the role
- Information about how IAs will be adequately briefed and trained
- Confirmation that the School/ Institute will comply with the external quality assurance arrangements set out in the assessment plan for the standard and in accordance with the applicable external quality assurance body for EPA.

- 4.3 To ensure oversight across University EPA activity, the Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function) maintain records for 6 years (or longer if required by the University's Data Retention Schedule) of:
- University applications to join the RoEPAO to deliver integrated EPA
  - Schedules of annual reconfirmation to the RoEPAO of our EPA provision
- 4.4 Proposed changes to EPAOP are regarded as minor programme amendments in relation to the Course Amendment Procedure.
- 4.5 The School/ Institute are responsible for delivering and assuring EPA in accordance with the detail submitted within their initial RoEPAO application. Any deviation from this intent must be promptly reported to the Apprenticeship Team who will co-ordinate notification of change to the ESFA. Schools/ Institutes are required to factor and manage implications to their EPAOP as a result of any notification of change, including potential time delay incurred for re-registration.

## **5 Readiness checks and on-going monitoring for integrated EPAs**

- 5.1 OfS will carry out EQA on behalf of IfATE for all integrated degree apprenticeships, OfS have nominated QAA through their role as the DQB to operationally implement their EQA commitments.
- 5.2 When the ESFA has approved Staffordshire University as an EPAO on the RoEPAO for an Integrated-Degree Apprenticeship Standard, DQB will undertake further 'readiness checks' at least 8 – 12 weeks prior to commencement of EPA, consisting of the following 5 lines of enquiry:
- i. Assessment materials
  - ii. Support materials
  - iii. EPA delivery plan
  - iv. Assessor recruitment and training
  - v. Policies and procedures (including Internal Quality Assurance)
- 5.3 The School/ Institute as the EPAO is responsible for engaging with the DQB to carry out the readiness checks, with the support and oversight of the Apprenticeship Team. Prior to their documentation submission to DQB, the School/ Institute submit documentation requested to the Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function) for approval.
- 5.4 DQB will judge providers readiness against each line of enquiry as follows:
- Exceed expectations - go
  - Ready to deliver – go, minor action plan
  - Ready to deliver – go, major action plan
  - Not ready to deliver – no go, major action plan and/ or re-assessment
- 5.5 DQB will conduct on-going 'monitoring checks' on a minimum triennial frequency for each distinct apprenticeship standard. Performance, on a per provider per standard basis, will result in a grading based on the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) four-point scale of outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate. On-going monitoring will result in application of a low,

medium or high-risk rating by DQB which will inform frequency and direction of intervention. The School/ Institute will retain on-going responsibility for implementing any actions to address DQB feedback where improvement is needed, with support and oversight from the Apprenticeship Team.

- 5.6 Interim monitoring has been delegated by DQB to the University's External Examining system. See section 13 for further detail.
- 5.7 The School/ Institute will be responsible for implementing any actions to address DQB and/ or External Examiner feedback where improvement is needed, or they are deemed not ready to deliver, with support and oversight from the Apprenticeship Team (Quality Function).

## **6 The role of the IA for integrated EPAs**

- 6.1 The functions of an IA vary depending on the EPA but are inclusive of the following:
- Carrying out the EPA as set out in the EPAP. This involves ensuring national comparability of academic standards, that the processes are relevant and reliable and operate in line with:
    - University regulations, policies and procedures
    - UK Quality Code for Higher Education
    - Characteristics Statement for Apprenticeships
    - Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements (where applicable)
  - Participating in annual assessment training and assessment standardisation events
  - Annually submitting evidence of CPD records to the Apprenticeships Team within agreed timescales
  - Annually reviewing conflict of interest declaration within agreed timescales
  - Completing reports within University timescales
- 6.2 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 the apprenticeship
  - Relevant academic and/ or professional qualifications to at least the level of the apprenticeship and award, 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 PSRBs where applicable
- Awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant assessments

## **7 Recruiting and maintaining records of IAs for integrated EPAs**

7.1 Where the EPA is integrated, the University ensures it has suitable IAs who meet the requirements described in section 6.

IAs may be permanent employees of the University directly in this or in another capacity, or individuals recruited on a flexible basis specifically as an IA. As part of the apprenticeship approval, the School/ Institute must make clear the human resourcing resolution to ensure high quality EPA.

7.2 For every integrated EPA there must be at least 2 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 the Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function).

In order to ensure oversight across University EPA activity, the Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function) maintain records for 6 years (or longer if required by the University's Data Retention Schedule) of:

- The approved assessments for integrated EPAs on apprenticeships delivered by Staffordshire University
- IAs (both permanent University staff and staff recruited specifically for the role)

7.3 Where Schools/ Institutes appoint existing full-time, fractional or hourly-paid staff to be IAs, the School/ Institute must log the details of the staff member with the Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function) and the IA must not engage with any aspect of the apprenticeship (including teaching, assessment, verification, marking, moderation) apart from conducting the EPA.

7.4 Where Schools/ Institutes recruit temporary staff specifically for the IA role, the School/ Institute is responsible for leading the process ensuring the IA has appropriate knowledge and skills. Once IAs are recruited the Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function) is responsible for paying IA fees and expenses.

7.5 The appointment of IAs should be informed by the principle of 'balance' for example to avoid a high proportion of IAs from a single institution or type of institution, or to avoid an imbalance between the numbers of academic and practitioner IAs on a particular apprenticeship. To take account of the balance of appointments, Schools/ Institutes should consult the University's list of current IA appointments centrally maintained by the Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function). A checklist 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 checklist covers the criteria for appointment set out in section 6. There is no formal limit for the period of service of an IA.

7.6 The work of IAs is reviewed by the Apprenticeships Team as part of the Institutional Self-Assessment Report (SAR) to Academic Board, and Board of Governors (BoG).

7.7 Where a specifically employed IA wishes to terminate their contract of appointment early, a minimum of 3 months' notice is required. The Executive Dean/ Director of the School/ Institute considers the request and reports terminations to the Apprenticeships Team. 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 3 months will be given to the IA.

Where a School/ Institute considers an IA has failed to fulfil their obligations satisfactorily this must be reported to the Dean/ Director of the School/ Institute. The Executive Dean/ Director 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/ Director and reported to the Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function). Examples of an IA failing to fulfil their obligations include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to update their records of CPD and conflict of interest annually
- Failure to carry out EPAs in line with expectations
- Failure to provide the written reports by the required deadline

Where a conflict of interest arises during the IAs 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 IAs contract.

## **8 Conflicts of interest and IAs for integrated EPAs**

8.1 The University's staff facing Code of Conduct, including its Standards, of Prohibity applies to all aspects of our apprenticeship provision. The University makes every effort to manage and mitigate any perceived or actual conflict of delivery in the delivery of EPA.

8.2 All those performing the role of an IA are required to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest at the time of their application or nomination. Prior to the EPA the IA will be provided with a list of the names of the apprentices, and their employers, who they are scheduled to assess, and the IA must declare any actual or potential conflict of interest.

8.3 If any conflict of interest is declared and cannot be resolved, the School/ Institute, with guidance from the Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function), will decide how the matter will be managed. In some situations, it may be appropriate to appoint an alternative IA.

8.4 Conflict of interest declarations are reported by the School/ Institute to the Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function) who will retain central records. See appendix 2 for Conflict-of-Interest Declaration Template.

8.5 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'<sup>7</sup> the University does not appoint as IAs any individuals in the following categories and/ or circumstances:

- Anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with an apprentice on the apprenticeship in question
- Anyone with a close personal relationship with a member of staff involved with the apprenticeship in question
- Anyone required to assess colleagues who are recruited as apprentices to the apprenticeship
- Anyone who is, or knows they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of apprentices on the apprenticeship 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 apprenticeship in question
- Anyone involved in reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at another HEI

The University avoids appointing more than one IA for an apprenticeship from the same department of the same HEI or apprenticeship provider.

## **9 Training and ensuring the CPD of IAs**

9.1 To ensure consistency of approach and in-depth understanding of the Apprenticeships Standards and EPA, all IAs are required to undertake training to support them in their capacity as an IA.

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

On-going training is provided jointly by Schools/ Institutes, the Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function) and Quality Service, to ensure that all requirements are met, that all assessments are reliable and relevant in line with the EPAP.

9.2 All IAs are expected to attend standardisation events led by the School/ Institute. The purpose of this is to ensure the fair, consistent and reliable grading of all assessments. They also allow Schools/ Institutes to update IAs on any changes to the apprenticeship or standard. Academic teams are expected to maintain channels of communication with IAs and provide on-going updates as appropriate.

9.3 The Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function) ensures that the CPD and training records of IAs are updated annually and retained for 6 years.

## **10 EPA gateway for integrated and non-integrated EPAs**

10.1 Where the apprenticeship is delivered by the University with an integrated EPA, the School/ Institute as the EPAO verifies that the apprentice has completed any pre-requisites to EPA, including any mandated awards.

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<sup>7</sup> UK Quality Code for HE, Advice and Guidance: [External Expertise](#)

The School/ Institute, through the gateway review, determine whether the apprentice has met the gateway requirements, ensuring completion of mandated aspects of the standard and that the employer believes an apprentice has achieved occupational competence in line with the KSBs.

For non-integrated apprenticeships, the Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function) in liaison with the School/ Institute, will gather EPA gateway evidence to submit to the EPAO. The School/ Institute will submit this to the EPAO as evidence that the EPA can go ahead for each individual.

## **11 Conducting EPA and applying for completion certificates for integrated EPAs**

- 11.1 Schools/ Institutes maintain records for 6 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/ Institute, the lead School/ Institute must maintain the records.
- 11.2 A minimum of 2 IAs are appointed to each apprenticeship to ensure independence in assessment verification and moderation. Verification and moderation is undertaken in line with the University's Assessment Procedure<sup>8</sup>. Details of internal moderation are set out in the apprenticeships EPAOP.
- 11.3 Re-sits and re-takes are undertaken in line with the University's Academic Regulations<sup>9</sup> and the Assessment Policy and Procedures except where the EPAP sets out specific procedures, in which case the EPAP takes precedence.  
Each apprenticeship EPAP stipulates the procedure to be followed where an apprentice fails the EPA. Schools/ Institutions must keep the Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function), and apprentice's employers, informed of attempts and outcomes in respect of each EPA.
- 11.4 Apprentices are issued with a transcript of their performance in line with standard University procedures. Transcripts for apprentices completing the EPA make it clear that the document is not an apprenticeship certificate.
- 11.5 The Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function) as the EPAO is responsible for claiming the certificate from the Apprenticeship Assessment Service.

## **12 Feedback in relation to EPAs and EPAOs**

- 12.1 To develop the University's understanding of the experience of EPAs from varied perspectives and use this information to improve provision of services, the Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function) conducts a confidential post-EPA survey. See appendix 3 for the EPA Surveys.

A version of this survey is tailored to each of the following roles:

- Apprentice
- Employer

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<sup>8</sup> Staffordshire University: [Assessment Procedure](#)

<sup>9</sup> Staffordshire University: [Academic Regulations](#)

The results of the survey are redacted and shared with the relevant School/ Institute as the provider. If the survey highlights poor quality in EPA provision, the University may use this as evidence as to why an EPAO should not be used in the future. A summary of the results of this survey will be appended to the Institutional SAR to Academic Board and BoG.

### **13 External examination for integrated EPAs**

- 13.1 Schools/ Institutes must ensure External Examiners (EE), where the EPA module is included in or constitutes their caseload, have oversight of and make comment on the quality and standards of the EPA. In this capacity, the EE will be referred to as an apprenticeship External Assessor (EA) to make a clear delineation. The School/ Institute must ensure that the EA has appropriate opportunities to undertake relevant Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to assist them in their role.
- 13.2 External Assessors will carry out their role in accordance with DQB EQA External Assessors Guidance<sup>10</sup> and the University's External Examiner Policy and Procedure<sup>11</sup> with the following enhancements to practice<sup>12</sup> in reflection of DQB requirements:
- Assurance of implementation of EPA in alignment with the conditions for being on the RoEPAO and DQB guidance
  - Assurance of modular/ award conformance with the specific EPAP
  - Representation in person (physically and/ or virtually) at award boards where the External Assessor is also the Independent Assessor and External Examiner in the cases of EPA by award board
  - Intermittent observation of apprenticeship award board where the External Assessor is solely overseeing the EPA module
- 13.3 External Assessors will be nominated and appointed in accordance with the DQB EQA External Assessor person specification and the University's External Examiner Policy and Procedure.
- 13.4 The apprenticeship External Assessor will comment on assessment practice and procedures for the EPA against the requirements of the specific apprenticeship Standard, through the review of documentation and visits to the EPAO, reporting on the following in the External Assessors Annual Report Form submission:
- Review documentation relating to the EPA, including the EPA assessment instruments/materials and internal quality assurance documentation
  - Review a sample of EPA assessed work, including observing live assessments
  - Observe assessor standardisation or moderation meetings
  - Meet with independent assessors and other EPAO staff
  - Meet with apprentices and, where possible, employers
  - Observe the meeting at which the final decision on the EPA is confirmed (such as the Board of Examiners/Examination Committee)
  - Conduct at least one visit to the EPAO for each cohort (academic year) of apprentices completing an EPA.

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<sup>10</sup> DQB: [EQA External Assessors Guidance](#)

<sup>11</sup> Staffordshire University: [External Examiner Policy and Procedure](#)

<sup>12</sup> Staffordshire University: [Enhanced Practice Materials](#)

- 13.5 Bespoke training for External Assessors, underpinned by online resources, will be provided by the Quality Service as part of the wider introduction to External Examining.
- 13.6 Quality and impact of the EA role and responsibilities will be monitored and reported on as part of the wider University led report on External Examining of provision.

#### **14 Self-assessment and quality improvement for integrated EPAs**

- 14.1 In line with EQA requirements, Schools/ Institutes will be required to reflect specifically on the strengths and areas for improvement of their EPA practice within their annual SAR. In the case of integrated higher and degree apprenticeships, this is via the means of the content of the DQB Self-Assessment for the EQA Monitoring Check form embedded into the SAR. Schools/ Institutes will be responsible for maintaining their own SAR and any associated actions within their Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). Oversight of the SAR and QIP will be maintained in accordance with the University's Apprenticeship Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement Procedure.

#### **15 Equality and diversity**

- 15.1 The University ensures that apprentices with protected characteristics or learning support needs are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged at EPA, in order that all achievements at EPA are fair and equitable. Data in relation to the outcomes of EPAs and apprentices with protected characteristics and learning needs will be monitored by the Apprenticeship Strategy Group.

## Appendix 1: Apprenticeship EPA in Practice – Roles and Responsibilities

Situation	Activity	Responsibility	Support
Apprentices employed by another organisation, participant in Staffordshire University Apprenticeship, non-integrated EPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initiate and manage contracting of EPAO</li> <li>- Log contract detail on UNDMIS</li> <li>- Respond to concerns arising</li> <li>- Manage transition to and contracting with alterative EPAO where necessary</li> <li>- Gather apprentice gateway evidence</li> </ul>	Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function)	Legal Services
Apprentices employed by Staffordshire University, participant in Staffordshire University or another HEI apprenticeship, non-integrated EPA.	- Select EPAO	Human Resources Team	Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function)
	Where Staffordshire University is the training provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initiate and manage contracting of EPAO</li> <li>- Log contract detail on UNDMIS</li> <li>- Respond to concerns arising</li> <li>- Manage transition to and contracting with alterative EPAO where necessary</li> <li>- Gather apprentice gateway evidence</li> </ul>	Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function)	Legal Services
Apprentices employed by Staffordshire University/ or another organisation, participant Staffordshire University apprenticeship, integrated EPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete RoEPAO Application inclusive of detailed evidence/ outputs, including EPAOP and assessment materials</li> <li>- Manage minor change to EPAOP</li> <li>- Engage with DQB for readiness checks, achieving prior approval for documentation submission, and on-going monitoring</li> <li>- Manage implementation of subsequent action plans</li> <li>- IA recruitment, appointment and termination</li> <li>- Conduct conflict of interest checks</li> <li>- IA training and CPD, annual standardisation</li> <li>- Maintain records of EPA</li> <li>- Report completion and achievement outcomes of EPA including re-sits and re-takes</li> <li>- Sourcing and nominating EA/s</li> </ul>	School/ Institute	Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function) Quality Service

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manage scheduling and access for EA/s</li> <li>- Engage in annual self-assessment of EPA</li> <li>- Manage implementation of subsequent QIP actions</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Approve End-Point Assessment Plan and materials via Apprenticeship Approval</li> <li>- Approve major change to EPAOP</li> <li>- Approval of EA appointment, notification to DQB</li> <li>- Training of EA/s</li> <li>- Monitoring of EA/s</li> <li>- Reporting on EA/s quality and impact</li> </ul>	Quality Service	Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submit RoEPAO Application to ESFA</li> <li>- Report deviation from/ update to RoEPAO Application to ESFA</li> <li>- Retain records of RoEPAO Applications</li> <li>- Complete annual RoEPAO reconfirmation</li> <li>- Paying IA fees and expenses</li> <li>- Maintain data records of EPA completion and achievement rates, including re-sits and re-takes, by standard</li> <li>- Claim Apprenticeship Certificates</li> <li>- Distribute and report on outcomes of post-EPA surveys</li> </ul>	Apprenticeships Team (Operational Function)	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Approve readiness check documentation</li> <li>- Retain records of approved assessments</li> <li>- Manage register and retain records of IAs</li> <li>- Retain records of conflicts of interest</li> <li>- Retain and manage annual update of IA CPD</li> <li>- Manage self-assessment and quality improvement cycle inclusive of EPA</li> </ul>	Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function)	N/A

## Appendix 2: Apprenticeship EPA in Practice – Conflict of Interest Declaration Template

This template is used for apprenticeships delivered by Staffordshire University with integrated End-Point Assessment (EPA).

The form is completed by each Apprentice and by Independent Assessor (IA) approximately two months before the planned EPA date.

Schools/ Institutes are responsible for ensuring the form is completed by all parties prior to the EPA taking place. Completed forms are reported to and retained by the Apprenticeships Team (Quality Function) for 6 years after the EPA takes place.

The University's Apprenticeship EPA Procedure recognises the importance of managing and assuring independence and preventing conflicts of interest in accordance with ESFA funding rules and the Assessment Plan for each Apprenticeship Standard.

<b>Part A: Completed by Staffordshire University</b>	
Apprenticeship Standard	
University Award	
Planned Date of First EPA Component	
Details of IA <i>Provide first and last name and details of employer/s</i>	
<b>Part B: Completed by the Apprentice</b>	
First Name	
Second Name	
Student Number	
Unique Learner Number (ULN)	
Apprentices should select and complete <b>either</b> option 1 <b>or</b> option 2	
<b>Option 1:</b> <i>'To the best of my knowledge I confirm there are no known potential or actual conflicts of interest between me, the Apprentice, and the Independent Assessor named above'</i>	
Apprentice Signature	
Date	
<b>Option 2:</b> <i>'I wish to raise a concern that there may be a conflict of interest between me, the Apprentice, and the Independent Assessor named above'</i>	
Description of Relationship	
Apprentice Signature	
Date	
<b>Part C: Completed by the Independent Assessor</b>	
First Name	
Second Name	

Independent Assessors should select and complete **either** option 1 **or** option 2

**Option 1:** *'To the best of my knowledge I confirm there are no known potential or actual conflicts of interest between me, the Independent Assessor, and the Apprentice named above'*

Independent Assessor  
Signature

Date

**Option 2:** *'I wish to raise a concern that there may be a conflict of interest between me, the Independent Assessor, and the Apprentice named above'*

Description of Relationship

Independent Assessor  
Signature

Date

Part D: Office Use

Notes

## Appendix 3: Apprentice and Employer EPA Survey

### Apprentice Survey

You have recently completed your Apprenticeship End-Point Assessment (EPA).

This survey asks you to reflect on your experience of your EPA to provide Staffordshire University with constructive feedback to enable our continuous improvement of our EPA procedure and practise.

<b>Demographic</b>	4 questions
1. Employer name	Free text
2. Apprenticeship Standard	Select from list
3. Were you required to participate in a resit/ retake?	Yes/ No
4. Did you submit an appeal/ complaint following your EPA?	Yes/ No
<b>Before your EPA</b>	6 questions
5. Information, advice and guidance I received about my EPA helped me to prepare for my assessment	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
6. I received a pen portrait of my Independent End Point Assessor	Yes/ No
7. (If 6 yes) The pen portrait helped me to complete my conflict-of-interest declaration	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
8. I understood how I had met all Gateway requirements	Yes/ No
9. I felt ready to undertake my EPA	Yes/ No
10. Please provide any further constructive feedback/ comments	Free text
<b>During your EPA</b>	8 questions
11. My EPA was conducted in a timely manner	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
12. My EPA was conducted in a quiet and confidential space	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
13. My Independent End Point Assessor explained assessment activities clearly	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
14. Resources and/ or facilities provided were accessible and met my needs	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
15. My EPA met my expectations	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
16. Did you require any reasonable adjustment or special conditions as part of your EPA	Yes/ No
17. (If 16 yes) The adjustments or special conditions met my needs	Yes/ No
18. Please provide any further constructive feedback/ comments	Free text
<b>After your EPA</b>	6 questions
19. My Independent End Point Assessor explained the appeals process clearly	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
20. My Independent End Point Assessor explained the complaints process clearly	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
21. My Independent End Point Assessor explained arrangements for resits and retakes	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
22. I received my feedback and results in a timely manner	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
23. I am satisfied with how my EPA was conducted	1 – 10
24. Please provide any further constructive feedback/ comments	Free text

## Employer Survey

Your apprentice/s has/have recently completed their Apprenticeship End-Point Assessment (EPA).

This survey asks you to reflect on your experience of your apprentice's EPA to provide Staffordshire University with constructive feedback to enable our continuous improvement of our EPA procedure and practise.

<b>Demographic</b>	4 questions
1. Employer name	Free text
2. Apprenticeship Standard	Select from list
3. Was/were your apprentice/s required to participate in a resit/retake?	Yes/ No
4. Did your apprentice/s submit an appeal/ complaint following your EPA?	Yes/ No
<b>Before the EPA</b>	7 questions
5. Information, advice and guidance about the EPA helped us to support our apprentice/s to prepare for their assessment	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
6. Information, advice and guidance about the EPA enabled us to understand our role as the employer in the EPA	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
7. We received a pen portrait of our apprentices Independent End Point Assessor/s	Yes/ No
8. (If 7 yes) The pen portrait helped us to complete the company's conflict-of-interest declaration	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
9. (If 7 yes) The pen portrait enabled our understanding of Independent End Point Assessor expertise in the apprenticeship sector	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
10. We were equipped to confirm the competence of our apprentice/s in having fluently mastered the knowledge, skills and behaviours of their apprenticeship standard	Yes/ No
11. Please provide any further constructive feedback/ comments	Free text
<b>During the EPA</b>	6 questions
12. EPA was conducted in a timely manner	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
13. EPA was conducted in quiet and confidential space	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
14. Independent End Point Assessor/s explained assessment activities clearly	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
15. Resources and/ or facilities provided were accessible and met the needs of our apprentice/s	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
16. EPA met our expectations	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
17. Please provide any further constructive feedback/ comments	Free text
<b>After your EPA</b>	6 questions
18. Independent End Point Assessor/s were receptive to our EPA observations and/ or assessments	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
19. Independent End Point Assessor/s explained the appeals process clearly	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA

20. Independent End Point Assessor/s explained the complaints process clearly	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
21. Independent End Point Assessor/s explained arrangements for resits and retakes	SD/D/NAOD/A/SA
22. We are satisfied with how EPA was conducted	1 – 10
23. Please provide any further constructive feedback/ comments	Free text