

Training Now

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Assessment Policy 2022-23

Includes:

Registration and Certification
Appeals
Reasonable Adjustments
Malpractice
Marking and Feedback
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
Conflict of Interest
EPA

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All apprenticeships are provided by Training Now Group Ltd's training division, Training Now.

1. Who is this policy for?

This policy is for all apprentices, learners, employers and staff.

2. What is this policy for?

Assessment of learning is an essential part of successful teaching and effective learning. This assessment policy aims to:

- Improve the standard of teaching and learning
- Ensure that learners and apprentices are on courses that meet their needs
- Ensure that learners and apprentices progress is regularly monitored and reviewed
- Support learners and apprentices to achieve their learning goals and outcomes
- Provide learners and apprentices with constructive feedback on their progress
- Give learners and apprentices information about what they need to do to achieve and progress
- Motivate learners and apprentices to progress further.

This policy includes internal and external assessments, appeals, reasonable adjustments and all other processes and procedures relating to the assessment process.

3. The Principles of Assessment

- The needs of learners and apprentices are always at the centre of the assessment process
- Effective assessment will add to the learners and apprentices' experience of learning
- Effective assessment will improve the quality of teaching and learning
- All apprentices and learners on long courses take an initial assessment to assess their level of skills and knowledge. This will make sure that they are enrolled on the right course for their level. Teaching and Learning Coaches (TALC) use these assessments when they plan their learning programme
- The initial assessment is used to identify learning support needs. It also informs learning plans, Teaching and Learning Assessment Plans (TLAP) (for both individuals and groups) and progress reviews
- TALCs, learners and apprentices agree clear individual and group objectives along with learning outcomes. This means that learners and apprentices can be assessed and they know how they are progressing
- TALCs agree individual targets and goals with learners
- TALCs regularly assess learners and review their progress during courses
- TALCs give learners and apprentices regular constructive feedback on how they are progressing to help them improve their performance. This includes what learners have done well and what they need to do to improve
- All learners and apprentices have a final assessment (which might include accreditation). The final assessment includes feedback from TALCs so that learners and apprentices understand what progress they have made and what they have achieved. This allows learners to plan for their next steps
- All learning assessments are recorded and used to support improvement, progress and achievement. This also means that they can inform apprentices and learners' future learning plans
- The way that assessment and feedback take place varies according to the learning situation, the subject of the course and the individual learner
- TALCs, apprentices and learners understand the way that their assessment is measured

- Learners have their literacy, language and numeracy skills assessed and developed in learning programmes, where appropriate.

4. Assessment Types

There are three types of assessment that Training Now uses to make sure that all learners and apprentices are placed on the right course and progress well. These are:

- Initial assessment – this is done either before joining a course or during the first sessions. It makes sure that learners and apprentices are on the right course and that TALCs know the level that each of their learners or apprentice is starting out from
- Formative assessment or progress review – these are done during the course to make sure that learners and apprentices are making progress towards their learning goals
- Summative assessment – this is done at the end of a course to make sure that learners and apprentices have achieved their goals.

5. Initial Assessment

Apprentices and learners wanting to join any course take part in an initial assessment to find out what their starting point is for their learning journey. This makes sure that they join the correct course for their needs and skills levels.

For apprentices, this will include an assessment of their specific subject, for example health and social care or business administration, to give TALCs more information about their existing knowledge, experience and skills. These assessments are carried out by our TALCs. This initial assessment helps learners, apprentices and TALCs set learning goals as well as monitor and record progress and achievement.

Initial assessment is always recorded so that TALCs understand each learner or apprentices starting point. This helps them plan their course as well as monitor and review each individual's progress. Initial assessment also identifies any learning support needs that a learner might have so that the right planning and support can put in place.

6. Formative Assessment and Progress Reviews

Formative assessment and progress reviews measure how a learner or apprentice is doing during their course of study. Apprentices are set challenging individual learning goals at the initial assessment stage which takes place at the beginning of the course. Groups of learners are set challenging group learning goals. These goals are then reviewed through formative assessment and progress reviews to make sure that learners and apprentices are making good or better progress towards achieving them.

TALCs assess the performance of learners and apprentices by monitoring learning during learning sessions, observations or via work they have submitted. They also set regular assessment activities, each of which will build on the knowledge, skills and behaviours that learners have been gaining. TALCs also encourage learners to self-assess and assess with their peers or colleagues.

Assessment is done in various ways and can be verbal, written, photographic, recorded or through observation. All assessments are recorded and discussed with learners and apprentices. The methods that TALCs use to assess learners and apprentices are monitored by the quality team to ensure that they are fair and take place at regular intervals.

Learners and apprentices receive regular constructive feedback on their progress from their TALCs so that they know what they need to do to improve and how they are progressing.

7. Summative Assessment

Summative assessment takes place towards the end of the course. It is used as an opportunity for TALCs, apprentices, employers and learners to discuss what they have achieved in relation to the goals and learning outcomes that were set out at the beginning of the course. It also measures and records all progress and achievement over the course.

Summative assessment can include formal assessment of assignments, learners' work, portfolios or exams.

8. Individual Learning Plans (ILP)

All learners and apprentices have a detailed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) which is set up at the beginning of the learning.

These are completed using information from the initial assessment and they include individual apprentices or learners' aims, aspirations and learning goals as well as exploring career aspirations, personal development and potential barriers.

ILPs are set up jointly by learners, apprentices, employers and TALCs and contain a range of short and longer-term learning goals. Learners and apprentices are fully involved in setting their targets, and also in regularly reviewing, monitoring and recording their progress. For apprentices, the ILPs also include On/Off the Job training.

9. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Plan (TLAP)

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Plans (TLAPs) are used to plan our apprentices' learning. They include the progress review, on/off the job training log, planned learning, reflection and learning goals.

Learning goals need to be written in such a way that apprentices or TALCs can see easily what progress is made towards them. This is done by using a SMART guide which means that all goals are:

- S – specific. Goals are specific to the learner/apprentice.
- M – measurable. Goals can be measured to see if they have been achieved.
- A – achievable. Goals are not too easy or difficult for the learner/apprentice.
- R – realistic. Goals are to be achieved in the timeframe of the course.
- T – timely. All goals have a date by which they should be achieved.

Once an apprentice has a range of SMART learning goals, the TALC, employer and apprentice use the TLAP to assess, measure and record progress towards them. As apprentices progress and achieve the learning goals, the TLAP is updated and new targets can be set if this is relevant to their needs. In addition, the ILP is updated with progress made. In this way, the TLAP is a useful document for both apprentices, employers and tutors to keep track of progress.

As TLAPs are used to plan learning, Training Now will monitor these during observations (called OTLA – Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment) and also during audits to demonstrate that learning is taking place. They are also checked as part of Training Now's internal moderation, reviews and quality checks.

10. Accreditation

Some courses include qualifications that are accredited externally. This means that they lead to a qualification and may include exams, formal assignments or portfolios which are assessed. All learners/apprentices who are enrolled on accredited courses are expected to take the accreditation, including in English and maths if it is part of their apprenticeship. They will be

well prepared for it and TALCs will constantly assess them both formally and informally to make sure they are on target to achieve. Exams are scheduled, where possible, to suit learners.

All accredited courses are externally recognised and the standards are regulated by the awarding organisation which assesses the qualification.

11. Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

Advice and guidance are not part of the selection or assessment process. However, it can be used alongside assessment to advise learners on the best course for them, or to refer them somewhere else if necessary.

Information helps learner to find out about learning or work opportunities.

Advice helps learners to understand the information they have been given and choose the best option for them.

Guidance helps learners to explore their options and decide whether the information they have is relevant to their needs. Guidance can also help learners to understand themselves, find out more information by themselves and support their decision making. Learners can get guidance from specialist IAG advisers or from TALCs with strong experience in the area required by a learner.

12. Support for learners

As part of the initial assessment process, learners and apprentices can identify what additional support they need to help them complete their learning goals. This means that Training Now can make sure that they have the support they need right from the start.

Any learner or apprentice who declare a disability can have reasonable adjustments made to allow them to do their chosen course where possible.

Learners and apprentices with identified support needs are regularly assessed and their progress is reviewed and monitored to make sure that they support they are getting is helping them to achieve their learning goals.

13. Methods of assessment

Learners and apprentices are assessed through a range of learning activities including written work, oral work, questions, practical activities, interviews, video recordings or computerised activities.

Methods of assessment can include marking written work or tests, computerised checking, observation of practical activities and tasks, monitoring of oral work (including recording), interviews, tutorials and question and answer sessions. TALCs will give regular and constructive feedback either verbally or in written form to help learners to understand their progress, know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.

Training Now monitors assessment practices through Observations of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (OTLA) and other quality checks. This ensures they are timely, regular, fair, informative and reliable.

14. Recording and Monitoring

All courses have written assessment records to show progress and achievement of learners. These records are likely to be through external accreditation. Both TALCs and learners keep records of assessment and progress which is included on the TLAP.

Evidence of learning can be paper based, computerised or non-paper based (photos, digital recording).

Training Now monitors how effective assessment is through internal and external quality assurance, verification and through observations.

15. Registration and Certification

Training Now will register all apprentices/learners with the appropriate Awarding Organisation (AO) for the qualification they are undertaking in a timely manner. This will ensure all apprentices/learners are able to complete and receive their certification within a reasonable timeframe. We will check to make sure that all apprentices or learners taking an accredited qualification with Training Now are on the right course with the relevant AO.

Training Now will comply with the requirements that each AO sets out with regards to both the registration and certification process and procedure.

We will endeavour to get your certificate to you within one month of completing your qualification.

How we will do this:

- The **Teaching and Learning Coach** will: Confirm and check that all apprentices/learners on their caseload are on the correct level, standard and correct pathway. They will check that we have the correct spelling of the apprentice's name and to inform the Contracts and Compliance Team (CCT) of any errors and will also collect the relevant exemption certificates at sign up.
- **Quality and Learning Managers (QLM)** will: Make sure that all the delivery team comply with this policy and check all aspects of an Apprenticeship Standard have been completed prior to being put forward to End Point Assessment (EPA)
- All **apprentices and learners** must be responsible for providing relevant and supporting information to Training Now so we can swiftly process their registration or claim their certificates.

Registration

At the end of each month, the CCT will register any apprentice who has been in learning for 12 weeks.

Certification

Following internal quality insurance and portfolio sign off, the Quality and Learning Manager will claim the certificate of completion within one day of completion. Once we receive the certificate, we will enter it onto our log so we can track them as well as scanning them and completing them on our Management Information System, currently PICs.

Withdrawal, deletion, break in learning

If an apprentice withdraws from their learning, we have to make changes to the Individual Learner Record (ILR). We use the ILR Adjustment form to do this. The TALC will send this completed form to the QLM to check the dates and for accuracy. Once this is completed, the Head of Quality and Learning (HQL) will authorise and send to CCT to process. This will include updating PICs and withdrawing/suspending from the qualification with the AO.

If an apprentice's circumstances change, for example their name or address, the TALC will use the ILR Adjustment form to inform CCT of this change. If the name is changed, then this must be supported by evidence, for example a marriage certificate, divorce papers or deed poll certificate.

16. Appeals Process

Learners and apprentices have a right to appeal if they do not agree with an assessment decision or an AO's examination marks. You can also appeal if you think there has been malpractice. Each case will be dealt with fairly and consistently in line with this policy and the AO's own process and procedure.

This is done in 3 stages:

Stage 1

If you disagree with an assessment decision that has been made, firstly you should talk to your TALC so you can discuss the feedback given and have them explain the rationale for their decision. Hopefully, this can be resolved at this stage and most problems can be.

Stage 2

If you cannot agree in stage one, the next step is to make your appeal to the Quality and Learning Manager who is responsible for the internal quality assurance on your work and portfolio. You need to do this in writing (this can be an email) within 5 working days of discussing it with your TALC. Once we have this, the QLM will investigate your claim and will respond to you, in writing, within 10 working days.

Stage 3

Once you have received the written response from the QLM, if you still do not agree, then you can escalate this to the Head of Quality and Learning (HQL). You must do this within 5 working days of receiving the investigation outcome from the QLM. The HQL will carry out an additional investigation and will give you the outcome of this within 10 working days. This decision will be final.

If you are dissatisfied with the result of the appeal, you can contact or Training Now will contact the AO on your behalf, if the matter cannot be resolved you can further escalate to the relevant Qualification Regulator.

17. Reasonable Adjustments

Training Now is committed to enabling all our apprentices and learners to achieve and complete their qualification or standard.

If a person has a disability or difficulty that may put them at disadvantage, then we will make reasonable adjustments to support them to achieve. This may include special exam arrangements or adaptations.

Definition of reasonable adjustment

A reasonable adjustment is put in place to help reduce the impact a disability or difficulty may have that may put an apprentice or learner at a significant disadvantage in an assessment or exam. Reasonable adjustments will not affect the validity or reliability of assessment/examination outcomes, but may involve:

- Changing usual assessment arrangements
- Adapting assessment materials
- Providing assistance during assessment
- Re-organising the assessment physical environment
- Changing or adapting the assessment method
- Using assistive technology.

All reasonable adjustments must be approved by Training Now. We will use our induction and ILP session to identify any potential barriers and apprentice or learner may have. This will be reviewed in each learning session with your TALC.

For external examinations, we will need to collect evidence, for example an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which we will then use with the AO to justify a reasonable adjustment.

The work you produce following a reasonable adjustment must be assessed in the same way as the work from other apprentices and must not affect the integrity of what is being assessed.

Reasonable adjustments may include, but are not limited to:

- Special equipment
- A reader
- A separate room
- Extra time allowance.

Special Considerations

Special considerations are different to reasonable adjustments as they apply to a disadvantage that happens either just before or during an assessment. A special consideration may happen if you have a temporary illness (for example Covid) or an injury or you had adverse circumstances at the time of the assessment (for example a bereavement).

An apprentice or learner may be eligible for special consideration if:

- Their performance in an external assessment is affected by something that is beyond their control e.g. recent personal illness, accident, bereavement, serious disturbance during the assessment
- The alternative assessment arrangements which were agreed before the assessment have been proven to be inappropriate or inadequate
- Any part of an assessment has been missed due to circumstances beyond the apprentice's or learner's control.

18. Malpractice, Maladministration & Plagiarism

Any allegations of malpractice, maladministration or plagiarism are serious. As a result, all suspected or reported incidents will be investigated.

Definitions

'Malpractice' a deliberate act or action, neglect, or default that could compromise or is noncompliant with the regulations pertaining to the assessment process (including examinations) which may adversely affect the integrity of a qualification, its assessment and validity of a learner's result or certification.

'Maladministration' is any activity, neglect, default or other act or action which results in a staff member or associate not complying with the specified requirements for the registration, certification and delivery of qualifications, as set out in relevant codes of practice.

'Plagiarism' is the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas or pass them off as your own.

Examples of Malpractice/Maladministration and Plagiarism

1. Failure to meet with an Awarding Organisation (AO) centre and qualification approval requirements
 - Failure to continually meet an AO centre and qualification approval requirements e.g. failure to advise an AO of centre changes related to the delivery of an AO qualifications;

- external verifier action plans not implemented within agreed timescales; repeated short-notice cancellation of external verifier visits by a centre; postponement by a centre of an external verifier visit
- Failure to meet AO requirements for assessment, internal moderation or internal verification
 - Failure to keep learners' portfolios of evidence secure
 - Failure to adhere to an AO procedure for learner registration and certification.
2. Influencing the assessment or certification process
 - Improper assistance to learners
 - Inappropriate signing
 - Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the learners' achievements to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made
 - Fraudulent claims for certificates
 - Inappropriate retention of certificates.
 3. Failure to meet the requirements of an AO regulation for the conduct of examinations
 - Breaches of security of examination papers
 - Unauthorised changes to examination timetables
 - Unjustifiable support of learners during examinations
 - Failure to issue learners/apprentices with appropriate notices and warnings
 - Non-adherence to AO invigilation requirements by centre staff
 - Failure to dispatch scripts to examiners promptly and efficiently
 - Amendment of examination materials without permission
 - Failure to provide access arrangements in accordance with an AO requirement.
 4. Learner Malpractice: Assessment
 - Plagiarism of any nature
 - Collusion with others
 - Copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying)
 - Deliberate destruction of another's work
 - False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework
 - Impersonation.
 5. Learner Malpractice: Inappropriate conduct during an examination
 - Introduction of unauthorised material into the examination room
 - Mobile phone in the examination room
 - Disruptive or offensive behaviour
 - Passing information to other learners
 - Failure to abide by the instructions of an invigilator.
 6. Plagiarism: using
 - Plagiarism by apprentices/staff
 - Copying from another apprentice/author (including using ICT to do so).

The term 'malpractice' is used for both malpractice and maladministration.

Malpractice of examinations

Exams must be carried out in certain conditions that are set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). We have to make sure that any exam that we administer on behalf of our AOs is carried out under these conditions.

To make sure we abide by these rules, we cannot:

- Have possession of any materials in the assessment room, whether or not they are relevant to the assessment or the apprentice refers to them. This includes: notes, blank paper, electronic devices including mobile phones, personal organisers, books, dictionaries / calculators (when prohibited)
- Communicate in any form, for example verbally or electronically, with other learners or apprentices in the assessment room when it is prohibited
- Copy the work of another apprentice or learner or knowingly allow another apprentice/learner to copy from their own work
- Fail to carry out instructions given by the assessment invigilator, ie, working beyond the allocated time; refusing to hand in assessment script / paper when requested; not adhering to warnings relating to conduct during the assessment.

Reporting a suspected case of malpractice

All Training Now staff, learners, apprentices or anyone who wants to remain anonymous should report any suspected cases of malpractice.

If you suspect malpractice, you should:

1. Send a written report to the Head of Quality and Learning. You will need to include the all the relevant facts. You may need to include statements from other learners or apprentices who were involved, any evidence that you have and what actions you know have happened as a result
2. You need to do this report swiftly, ideally immediately after or definitely within 2 working days
3. If this is an exam, then it must be reported immediately and with urgency and the appropriate steps, identified by JCQ, must be followed
4. If possible, without disrupting any other learner or apprentice, if you suspect an apprentice of doing something that can be deemed as malpractice, they should be told immediately that their actions may be considered malpractice.
5. If there is a case of suspected malpractice by a member of Training Now staff or a report by someone who wants to remain anonymous, the report made to the Head of Learning and Quality must include the following:
 - the date time and place the alleged malpractice took place, if known
 - the name of the person(s) involved
 - a description of the suspected malpractice; and
 - any available supporting evidence.

In cases of suspected malpractice reported by a third party, or someone who wishes to remain anonymous, Training Now will do everything they can and take all reasonable steps to authenticate the reported information and to investigate the alleged malpractice.

Administering suspected cases of malpractice

Training Now will investigate all suspected or reported malpractice cases relating to qualifications, to establish whether it is malpractice or not. The investigation's aim is to try and find out the full facts. Following this, we will take all the reasonable steps we can to prevent

any potential issues that may arise as a result of the malpractice identified, to maintain the integrity of our qualifications and for our reputation.

If we received a report of suspected malpractice, we will respond to this within 5 working days. Following this, we will make sure that we contact all involved with the investigation report within 10 working days of us getting the suspected malpractice report. This may involve contacting other learners or apprentices who may be able to provide evidence.

We will tell the individual(s) the following:

- That an investigation is going to take place, and what that investigation refers to
- Details of all the relevant timescales, and dates, if we know them
- That they have a right to respond by providing a personal written response relating to the suspected malpractice (within 15 working days of the date of that letter)
- That, if malpractice is considered proven, sanctions may be imposed either by Training Now or by associated third parties depending on the seriousness of the case
- That, if they are found guilty, they have the right to appeal
- That Training Now has a duty to inform all relevant authorities / regulators, but only after time for the appeal has passed or the appeal process has been completed. This may also include informing the police if the law has been broken and to comply with any other appropriate legislation.

Where more than one individual is contacted regarding a case of suspected malpractice, for example in a case involving suspected collusion, we will contact each individual separately, and will not reveal personal data to any third party unless necessary for the purpose of the investigation.

The individual has a right to appeal against a malpractice outcome if they believe that the policy or procedure has not been followed properly or has been implemented to their detriment.

We will keep all records of malpractice cases and their outcomes for at least five years, and these records are subject to regular monitoring and review.

Where a member of Training Now staff or a Training Now Associate is under investigation we may suspend them or move them to other duties until the investigation is complete.

7. Marking and Feedback

See Marking and Feedback Policy



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8. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

At Training Now, we want to make sure our learners do not need to repeat learning or assessment that they have previously achieved.

We can do this in 2 ways:

1. We can transfer credits, this means we can recognise your previous accredited/certificated achievements to **count towards other qualifications**. These must be recognised qualifications.
2. With learning or achievements that have not been accredited or certificated, it may be possible to assess this knowledge and recognise it through the Recognising Prior Learning (RPL) process. This may be via a professional discussion and/or an expert witness testimony. This may then count towards your qualification.

Definition of Recognition Prior Learning

RPL is a method of assessment. This assessment method considers whether an apprentice or learner can demonstrate that they meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already have and do not need to develop during a course of learning

To consider using RPL, the apprentice or learner will need to produce valid and reliable evidence of learning to support their claim. An apprentice/learner may be able to claim RPL against a whole unit or several units. It is not possible to award part units, but where the RPL evidence does not fully meet the needs of a complete unit, the missing information may be provided via the same assessment processes that are undertaken by the TALC.

In order to achieve recognition of achievement there are 2 options open to the apprentice/learner:

1. Submit a certificate or portfolio of evidence which demonstrates the previous learning, skills and/or competence. This must be cross referenced to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the unit or units that you are wanting to use RPL for
2. Submit an expert witness testimony that supports the experiential learning and is referenced to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for unit or units that you are wanting to use RPL for. These experiences must be current, valid and sufficient to cover the criteria.

Principles of RPL

According to 'Claiming Credit – Guidance on the recognition of prior learning within the Qualifications and Credit Framework' the five principles of RPL/APL are as follows:

RPL is a valid method that enables apprentices/learners to claim credit for units and qualifications of the RQF, irrespective of how the learning took place whether this be online, face to face or workbooks. RPL must follow all regulatory requirements for assessment. RPL

policies, processes, procedures, practices and decisions must be transparent,

rigorous, reliable, fair and accessible to apprentices/learners to ensure that they can be confident of the decisions and outcomes of RPL

The apprentice/learner will be offered advice on the different kinds of evidence considered within RPL and given the support to make his or her claim.

RPL will be subject to the same standard of quality assurance and monitoring processes as any other form of learning and assessment.

12.1 Guidance for implementation

Stage 1: Discuss with your TALC the prior learning that you wish to have recognised, Your TALC will then explain the process to be able to claim this prior learning and any other considerations such as when the prior learning took place, is it an equal value and appeals

Stage 2: You will provide your TALC with the evidence to demonstrate your prior learning

Stage 3: Once your TALC has reviewed the evidence they will work with you to find ways to demonstrate that the evidence meets the assessment criteria of being Valid, Accurate, Current, sufficient, Reliable against the criteria you have identified it meets. This maybe through discussion or reflection of what you learnt.

Stage 4: Once the assessment of the evidence has taken place your TALC will give you feedback, discussing the criteria that has been met and support and guidance on the options available for further learning and development.

9. Conflict of Interest/Interested Party

Definition

A conflict of interest exists where the interests of a director, employee, consultant or contractor could lead them to take actions or make decisions which are not in the interests of the Training Now, but more in their own interests. This may include the decision-making at any level including the development, delivery and award of regulated qualifications in accordance with regulatory requirements.

A conflict of interest may generally be defined as a conflict between the official responsibilities of any Training Now employee and any other interests the particular individual may have which may or appear to compromise their decisions.

A conflict of Interest/Interested Party issue is when anyone who is tutoring, assessing or internally quality assuring a learner or apprentice has a personal relationship with them. This might include parents, siblings, other near relation (grandparent, aunt/uncle etc.), neighbours, friends etc.

Training Now needs to make sure that all assessments that are carried out in these situations are objective. To do this we will:

- Try to avoid any conflict of interest (both actual and perceived) between the interests of the organisation and personal, professional or business interests
- Identify, record, monitor, manage and disclose (if appropriate) any conflict of interest
- Take reasonable steps to mitigate and correct the adverse effect of a conflict where one has taken place
- Take all reasonable steps to make sure anyone with a personal interest in an apprentices or learner's results is not involved in any part of the assessment. This includes moderation or internal quality assurance
- If assessment by such a person cannot be avoided, we shall make arrangements to verify and record the assessment.

We want to maintain the integrity of our organisation in the decision-making processes at all levels. This means that anyone who may have an actual or potential conflict of interest must declare it. This will help ensure that the Senior Management Team do not unduly influence decisions for a personal or commercial material benefit.

Our Human Resources (HR) Policies (via Agincare) are designed to make sure that staff cannot be influenced and do not received gifts or hospitality that could appear to others to influence a decision or impact a judgement.

When we are considering hiring someone in any role, for example a Director, employee or contractor, we need to be made aware of any potential conflict in relation to their work for Training Now prior to making that appointment.

If an appointment is made, any new staff member, regardless of role will need to make a full, written disclosure of any potential interests, for example any personal relationships, business interests or posts held that could result in a conflict of interest. All our employees must take responsibility for updating HR of any new conflicts that have arisen since their original appointment date.

Any actual/potential conflicts of interest must also be raised with their line manager in the case of staff, and the person responsible for their appointment in the case of consultants and contractors.

The actual/potential conflict of interest must then be recorded together with the steps taken, or planned, to monitor and manage the conflict.

Declarations must also be made orally at any meetings where a conflict of interest may arise.

A register of conflicts of interest will be maintained for all conflicts. This includes a copy of the written disclosure and any management steps taken.

If someone is unsure whether to declare a matter as a conflict of interest the Training Now's policy is "when in doubt, declare".

In certain circumstances an individual may wish to report a potential conflict of interest confidentially. In this case the process set out in the Whistleblowing Policy will be used for raising concerns.

Dealing with conflicts of interest

Investigations into possible conflicts of interest will be carried out, where considered appropriate, by an appropriate person, who is independent, and do not have a vested interest in the outcome.

10. End Point Assessment (EPA)

Training Now is committed to providing high quality Apprenticeship standards to support progression and achievement. This includes delivering high quality teaching, learning and assessment fully embedding the skills, knowledge and behaviours of the apprenticeship standards.

The 3 stages of an Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship standards comprise of 3 stages:

1. On Programme
2. Gateway
3. End Point Assessment (EPA)

We want to make sure that the apprentice can move swiftly into 'Gateway' (see below) once they have completed the practical period of their apprenticeship.

On Programme

The **On Programme** element of the apprenticeship standard is where the delivery and training takes place. The apprentice can expect to be coached and where appropriate assessed on the skills, knowledge and behaviours outlined in the standard, as well as be exposed to

assessment methods that relate to their **End Point Assessment (EPA)**. The **On Programme** element must be delivered by vocational experts who have experience and, in most cases, qualifications relating to the apprentice's standard. In some standards qualifications are required to support the skills, knowledge and behaviours of the standard, but are not designed to replace the standard, they are to complement and enhance the standard in line with employer expectations within that industry.

Gateway

The **Gateway** is the portal between the **On Programme** and **EPA** stage where the employer, provider and apprentice agree that the skills, knowledge and behaviour of the standard has been met, and the Gateway requirements are ready to be submitted to the End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO). At this stage it is agreed the apprentice has met all requirements of EPA criteria and is ready to pass through the Gateway and progress to EPA. This ensures the EPA can be booked and arrangements communicated to the employer and apprentice.

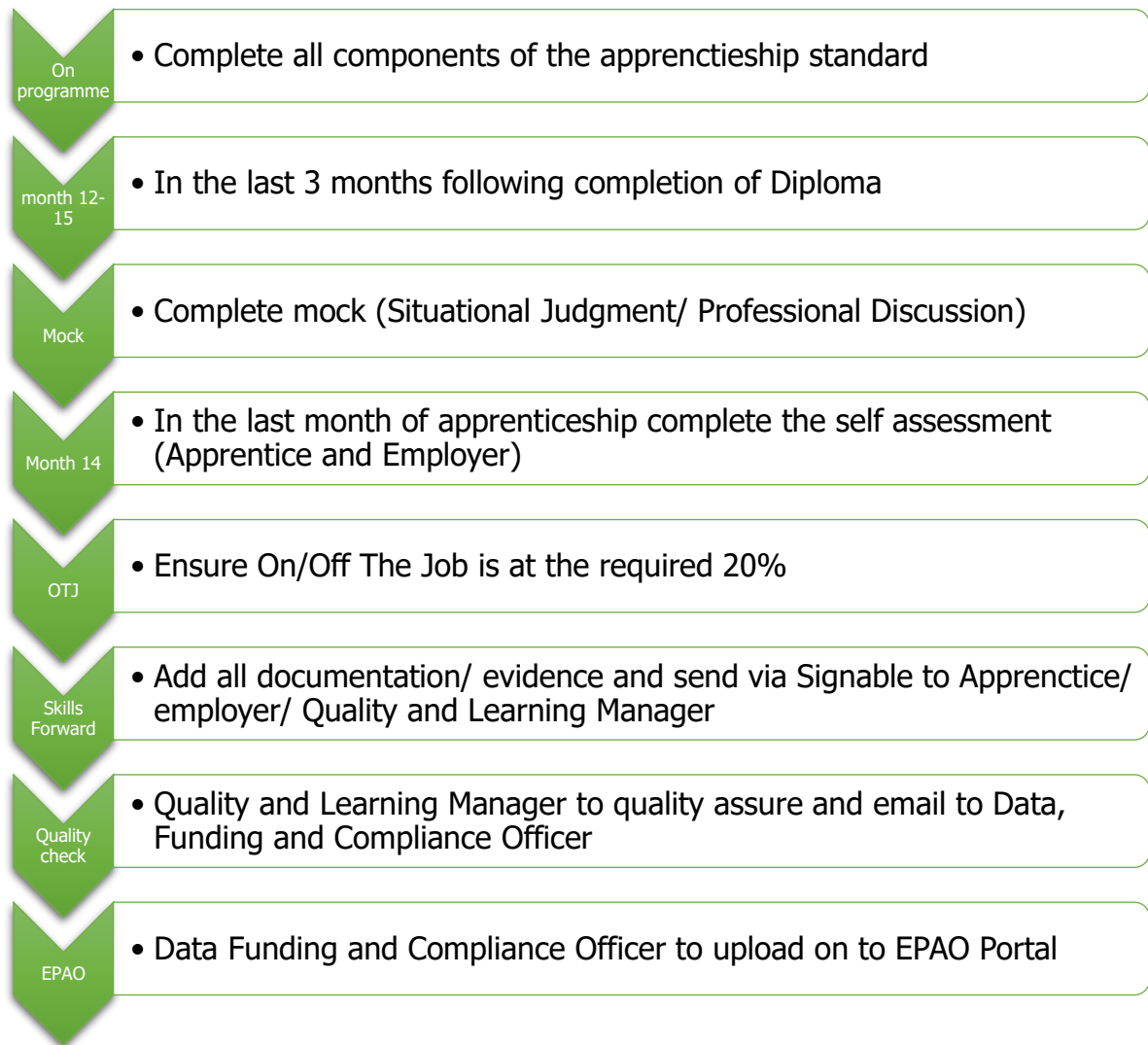
End Point Assessment

End Point Assessment has been a mandatory element of all apprenticeship standards from their creation. **EPA** is the name given to a series of tests and assessments that an apprentice must take to prove their ability to do the job they have been training for. These assessments take place at the end of an apprenticeship following the **On Programme** delivery stage. EPA must be conducted and managed by an independent organisation (called an End Point Assessment Organisation or **EPAO**), who has had no input on the delivery of the apprenticeship standard. Each standard has a unique EPA plan which has been quality assured and approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships.



The Gateway Process

At Training Now, we will make sure that all apprentices are well prepared and have proven competency to enter EPA. Our process in supporting our apprentices into Gateway is laid out below.



Once all requirements for Gateway have been met the TALC has responsibility for the apprentice as they progress through the EPA stage.

EPA assessment

Every standard has an End Point Assessment Plan. This plan details the methods of assessment each apprentice will go through to prove their competence, this is often in line with the industry an apprentice has been training to work in. Common assessment methods could include the following:

- Multiple choice question exam
- Scenario based exam
- Synoptic project
- Presentation
- Interview
- Viva
- Portfolio
- Professional discussion
- Observation

EPA Portals

Each EPAO has its own portal, and once we have all the apprentices' evidence from Gateway, we upload it to the portal. We have to follow the process for each individual EPA which can be

different from one company to another. This means that it can take different times for each organisation, so we can only make an estimate to our apprentice or employer of what to expect. Sometimes fully completion of all EPA activity, including re-sits if needed can take up to 90 days.

Assessment re-sit

If we need to re-book an assessment as the apprentice didn't meet standard, we need to do this in line with the EPAO and their processes. In most cases, the cost of re-sits will be covered by the employer unless an arrangement has been put in place with Training Now within the negotiation stage of sign up. Re-sit results will be shared with the apprentice and in most cases with us as the provider. In these cases, the apprentice can be booked in for re-assessment without any requirement for additional training. If an apprentice fails the EPA based on competency ability to complete the assessment, the EPAO will inform Training Now and the apprentice will need to start the Gateway process from scratch with all assessments being re-taken.

Costs

The cost of an apprenticeship is split into 2 sections. The first is the funding required to deliver the On-Programme element of the apprenticeship. 80% of the apprenticeship cost is divided across the On-Programme section in equal divisions. This leaves 20% of the full cost remaining for EPA. All EPAOs must advertise their assessment fees, as well as break down what is included within this fee. As the EPA element of the apprenticeship takes place at the end of the standard, the cost charged by the EPAO to Training Now is usually invoiced once the apprentice has completed their EPA. Most EPAOs will take a small deposit or registration fee to secure the apprentices place and hold their expected assessment date. This is taken at the point of registration and is non-refundable.

Re-sit fees

Where an apprentice is required to re-sit any elements of their EPA, Training Now will be charged for this process. Where possible, the cost of re-sits will be negotiated into the full price of the EPA. Where not possible, the cost of the re-sits will be the responsibility of the employer. Training Now will need to make this clear when agreeing the cost of the programme with the employer at sign-up ensuring there is a signed agreement in place if re-sits are required. Training Now and employer can negotiate the ownership of the re-sit costs.

Employer Responsibility

Employers have a responsibility to support their apprentice throughout their programme including the EPA element of the apprenticeship. The level of responsibility will be clearly communicated with the employer at sign up and be detailed in the contract agreement between Training Now and employer. Some EPA plans require input from the employer which needs to clearly be outlined so the employer is aware of that requirement from the start of the apprenticeship. As the employer is required to sign their agreement that the apprentice is competent and ready for Gateway, it is important that they have a clear understanding of how their apprentice is progressing and any areas of improvement that they can support their apprentice with. All employers have the responsibility to ensure their apprentice has access to training and development opportunities. These activities will be tracked by Training Now and any areas of concern would need to be raised with the employer under the training agreement and ESFA funding requirements.

Policy Review Statement:	This policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary in line with legislation or business changes. All of Training Now's policies are reviewed at least once a year to ensure relevance and currency.
Responsibility:	Head of Quality and Learning
Authorised by:	Tara Roudiani (Managing Director (Training Now))
Version:	1
Authorised Signature	