

CIPD



Level 3 Human Resources Support End-point Assessment (EPA)

Specification

Issue 2

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Introduction

CIPD is the professional body for experts in people at work. For more than 100 years, we've been championing better work and working lives by setting professional standards for HR and people development, as well as driving positive change in the world of work.

With hubs in the UK, Ireland, Middle East and Asia, we're the career partner of choice for over 160,000 members around the world. We're the only body in the world that can award chartered status to individual HR and L&D professionals, and our independent research and insights make us trusted advisers to governments and employers.

CIPD has been closely involved in the development of the apprenticeship standards within HR and L&D and is a registered end-point assessment organisation (EPAO) for these standards.

As an EPAO, it is our job to ensure that we uphold the rigorous standards of independent assessment to ensure all apprentices demonstrate occupational competence on completing their apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship standard and assessment plan

The Level 3 Learning and Development Practitioner Apprenticeship ST0239 and the associated assessment plan were developed by the L&D and HR trailblazer employer group and is maintained by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE).

Full details can be found on the [Institute's website](#).

Maximum funding:	£4,500
EQA provider:	Ofqual
Typical on-programme duration:	18 months
Typical EPA period:	3 months
Grades:	Fail, Pass, Distinction
Assessment methods:	Consultative Project Professional Discussion

Occupation summary

HR Professionals in this role are typically either working in a medium to large organisation as part of the HR function delivering front line support to managers and employees, or are a HR Manager in a small organisation. Their work is likely to include handling day to day queries and providing HR advice; working on a range of HR processes, ranging from transactional to relatively complex, from recruitment through to retirement; using HR systems to keep records; providing relevant HR information to the business; working with the business on HR changes. They will typically be taking ownership for providing advice to managers on a wide range of HR issues using company policy and current law, giving guidance that is compliant and where errors could expose the organisation to employment tribunals or legal risk. In a larger organisation they may also have responsibility for managing a small team - this aspect is outside the scope of this apprenticeship and will need to be covered separately by the employer.

Gateway

The EPA period should only start once the employer is satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard - that is to say, they are deemed to have achieved occupational competence. In making this decision, the employer may take advice from the apprentice's training provider(s), but the decision must ultimately be made solely by the employer. In addition to the employer's confirmation that the apprentice is working at or above the level of the occupational standard, the apprentice must have achieved English and mathematics at Level 2 or above.

For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the apprenticeship's English and mathematics minimum requirement is Entry Level 3.

British Sign Language (BSL) qualifications are an alternative to English qualifications for those who have BSL as their primary language.

For the EPA the apprentice must complete a consultative project following Gateway ahead of the assessment day where a professional discussion will then take place.

Assessment methods

Consultative Project

For this assessment the apprentice is required to submit a consultative project to describe how they've applied their knowledge and HR skills to deliver the services required, which will draw out the best of the apprentice's competence and excellence and cover the grading criteria and associated knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) assigned to this assessment method.

Duration: a maximum of 3 months to complete

Location: Written submission

Participants: Apprentice

Grades: Fail, Pass, Distinction

Professional Discussion

A professional discussion involves the apprentice have a conversation one week after consultative project submission with an independent assessor from the CIPD to give the apprentice an opportunity to make detailed and proactive contributions through discussion to confirm their competency across the necessary skills and behaviours

Apprentices will have a conversation based on the grading criteria and associated KSBs assigned to this method of assessment.

Duration: Questioning - between 60 and 75 minutes (if components transferred from the Consultative Project)

Location: Remote, via video conferencing

Participants: Assessor, Apprentice

Grades: Fail, Pass, Distinction

Scoring and Grading

Scoring the Assessment Methods

The scoring used for the two assessment methods is from a scale of 0-5. A score of 3 indicates that the apprentice has presented evidence at the level expected. Scores of 4 or 5 are achieved when an apprentice provides extensive range of evidence and/or demonstrates an exceedingly high level of competence. To score a 5 an apprentice needs to present a wide range of evidence at a level that demonstrated exceptional competence.

This table shows the scoring scale 0-5:

0	The apprentice provided no evidence against this component
1-2	Apprentice provides partial evidence
3	Apprentice provides sufficient evidence and meets the requirements
4-5	Apprentice provides extensive range of evidence/demonstrates high level of competence or exceedingly high-level competence

Grading the Assessment Methods

This table shows how each assessment method is graded based on the scores for each component.

Assessment Method	To achieve a Pass	To achieve a Distinction
Consultative Project	Score 60-84% and Score a minimum of 3 across all components	Score 85% and above Score a minimum of 3 across all components and Score 4 or 5 in all 6 distinction components
Professional Discussion	Score 60-84% and Score a minimum of 3 across all components including any components transferred from CP to PD	core 85% and above Score a minimum of 3 across all components including any components transferred from CP to PD Score 4 or 5 in all 6 distinction components

Overall Grading

The EPA outcome for the HR Apprenticeships has three potential grades.

Fail
Pass
Distinction

Fail - this means the assessor has not yet seen sufficient evidence against all of the components of the standard. Apprentices will need to *resit or **retake the EPA in order to complete their apprenticeship.

Pass - indicates apprentices are occupationally competent and they have provided evidence of the required KSB in the standards and is a huge achievement. This is regarded as a significant achievement due to the requirement to reach a minimum of 3 in all components.

Distinction - indicates that apprentices consistently exceed the standards set for the role. This grade recognises the small proportion of apprentices who have provided evidence that is outstanding and consistently exceeds the required standard for competence

The EPAs for the HR Standards have two assessment methods:

- Consultative Project
- Professional Discussion

Each assessment method is graded Fail, Pass or Distinction, just like the overall EPA. The grade for the assessment methods are then used to calculate the overall EPA grade.

The table shows how the overall EPA grade is calculated:

Consultative Project	Professional Discussion	EPA Grade
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction
Distinction	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Pass
Fail	Any Grade	Fail
Any Grade	Fail	Fail

To achieve a Distinction overall, an apprentice needs to achieve a Distinction in both assessment methods.

To achieve an Pass overall, the apprentice must achieve at least a Pass in both assessment methods.

A fail in either assessment method will mean a fail overall and the apprentice will need to resit that assessment method.

For example, if an apprentice fails the CP but passes the PD, they will only need to resit the CP and will bank the grade for the PD.

Due to the nature of the resit process, the highest mark awarded at resit is an overall pass.

Support material

More information and guidance is contained within the Level 3 HR Support support materials, which include:

- Guide to End Point Assessment: HR Support
- Essential Guide to the Consultative Project: HR Support
- Essential Guide to the Professional Discussion: HR Support
- Apprentice Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- SmartEPA Support Documents

This list is not exhaustive and you may find helpful further guidance on the [website](#).

Resits/retakes

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method(s) will be offered the opportunity to take a resit or a retake at the employer's discretion. The apprentice's employer will need to agree that either a resit or retake is an appropriate course of action and will be responsible for the reassessment fees and any additional training costs. A resit does not require further learning, whereas a retake does.

Where apprentices have failed one assessment method but have the necessary evidence or can acquire the necessary evidence within the resit period, they may resit that assessment method only.

Where apprentices have failed both assessment methods, a retake is advised.

Employers should develop a supportive action plan with the apprentice, drawing on the assessment feedback, to help their apprentice prepare for either a resit or a retake.

The timescale for a resit/retake will be agreed between the employer and EPAO. A resit is typically completed within 4 weeks of the EPA outcome notification.

The timescale for a retake is dependent on how much additional learning is required.

The highest grade that can be achieved in a resit or retake is a pass grade.

For further information please review Resit and Retake policy accessible via the CIPD [website](#).

EPA fees

The maximum funding for this apprenticeship is £4,500 and EPA fees have been set bearing in mind ESFA funding rules. EPA fees for the first assessment of the Level 3 HR Support Apprenticeship are:

First assessment: £810

Resit (either assessment method): £250

CIPD Membership

At CIPD we believe completing an apprenticeship is a huge achievement and should come with professional recognition. For that reason, any apprentice who successfully completes their End Point Assessment with CIPD will be immediately eligible to come into CIPD membership.

Find out more on our [website](#).

Assessment Methods and Associated KSBs

These are the assessment methods for Level 3 HR Support to support, please refer to the grading amplification which outlines the expectation of evidence that the apprentice will need to provide for each component.

Consultative Project

The following associated KSBs are assessed in the consultative project. Components shaded in grey below are those that carry the distinction criteria.

Assessment Area	Component Title	Code	Description
Knowledge	Business Understanding	K1.1	Understands the external market and sector within which their organisation operates, the products and services it delivers
Knowledge	Business Understanding	K1.2	Understands the structure of the organisation, where their role fits in the organisation; the 'Values' by which it operates and how these apply to their role.
Knowledge	HR Legislation and Policy	K2.1	Basic understanding of HR in their sector and any unique features.
Knowledge	HR Legislation and Policy	K2.2	Good understanding of HR legislation and the HR Policy framework of the organisation.
Knowledge	HR Legislation and Policy	K2.3	Sound understanding of the HR Policies that are relevant to their role. Knows where to find expert advice
Knowledge	HR Function	K3.1	Understands the role and focus of HR within the organisation
Knowledge	HR Function	K3.2	Understands the HR business plan / priorities and how these apply to their role.

Assessment Area	Component Title	Code	Description
Knowledge	HR Systems and Processes	K4.1	Understands the systems, tools and processes used in the role, including the organisation's core HR systems
Knowledge	HR Systems and Processes	K4.2	Understands the standards that have to be met in the role
Skills	Service Delivery	S1.1	Delivers excellent customer service on a range of HR queries and requirements, providing solutions, advice and support primarily to managers
Skills	Service Delivery	S1.2	Builds manager's expertise in HR matters, improving their ability to handle repeated situations themselves where appropriate.
Skills	Service Delivery	S1.3	Uses agreed systems and processes to deliver service to customers
Skills	Service Delivery	S1.4	Takes the initiative to meet agreed individual and team KPIs in line with company policy, values, standards
Skills	Service Delivery	S1.5	Plans and organises their work, often without direct supervision, to meet commitments and KPIs.
Skills	Problem Solving	S2.1	Uses sound questioning and active listening skills to understand requirements and establish root causes before developing HR solutions
Skills	Problem Solving	S2.2	Takes ownership through to resolution, escalating complex situations as appropriate.
Skills	Process Improvement	S5.1	Identifies opportunities to improve HR performance and service, acting on them within the authority of their role
Skills	Process Improvement	S5.2	Supports implementation of HR changes/projects with the business.
Skills	Managing HR Information	S6.1	Maintains required HR records as part of services delivered.
Skills	Managing HR Information	S6.2	Prepares reports and management information from HR data, with interpretation as required

Professional Discussion

The following associated KSBs are assessed in the professional discussion between the apprentice to the assessor. Components shaded in grey below are those that carry the distinction criteria.

Assessment Area	Component Title	Code	Description
Skills	Communication and Interpersonal	S3.1	Deals effectively with customers/colleagues, using sound interpersonal skills and communicating well through a range of media e.g. phone, face to face, email, internet. Adapts their style to their audience.
Skills	Communication and Interpersonal	S3.2	Builds trust and sound relationships with customers.
Skills	Communication and Interpersonal	S3.3.	Handles conflict and sensitive HR situations professionally and confidentially.
Skills	Teamwork	S4.1	Consistently supports colleagues collaborates within the team and HR to achieve results.
Skills	Teamwork	S4.2	Builds/maintains strong working relationships with others in the team and across HR where necessary.
Skills	Personal Development	S7.1	Keeps up to date with business changes and HR legal/policy/process changes relevant to their role.
Skills	Personal Development	S7.2	Seeks feedback and acts on it to improve their performance and overall capability.

Behaviours	Honesty and Integrity	B1.1	Truthful, sincere and trustworthy in their actions. Shows integrity by doing the right thing.
Behaviours	Honesty and Integrity	B1.2	Maintains appropriate confidentiality at all times.
Behaviours	Honesty and Integrity	B1.3	Has the courage to challenge when appropriate.
Behaviours	Flexibility	B2.1	Adapts positively to changing work priorities and patterns when new tasks need to be done or requirements change.
Behaviours	Resilience	B3.1	Displays energy and enthusiasm in the way they go about their role.
Behaviours	Resilience	B3.2	Deals positively with setbacks when they occur. Stays positive under pressure.

