Training Qualifications UK

TQUK Level 5 End-Point Assessment for ST0385 **Operations or Departmental Manager** V1.2

Qualification Number: 610/1003/0

Standard Specification

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Key Information

Reference:	ST0385
Version:	V1.2
Level:	5
Typical duration to gateway:	30 months
Typical EPA period:	5 months
Maximum funding:	£7000
Route:	Business and administration
Approved for delivery:	1 June 2016
Date updated:	25/01/2023
Lars code:	104
EQA provider:	Ofqual
Review date:	This standard should be reviewed within three years of its approval
Qualification Number:	610/1003/0

A temporary dispensation has been applied to the ST0385 end-point assessment plan version 1.2 for this apprenticeship. The dispensation will remain live until redundant apprentices identified in the dispensation request have completed their EPA, including any resits and retakes, when it will then be withdrawn.

The dispensation applies to specific, agreed apprentices only.

The key changes are:

- **the training provider will step in as the employer for the duration of the EPA period in order to ensure that apprentices that have been made redundant can conduct their project based evidence to complete their project proposal and complete their apprenticeship**
- **skills 1.2, 2.1, 2.2 and 3.1 will be assessed via the questioning component of the assessment.**

Apprenticeship Summary

Overview of the Role

Managing teams and projects in line with a private, public or voluntary organisation's operational or departmental strategy.

Occupation

An Operations or Departmental Manager is someone who manages teams and/or projects, and achieves operational or departmental goals and objectives, as part of the delivery of the organisations strategy. They are accountable to a more senior manager or business owner. Working in the private, public or third sector and in all sizes of organisation, specific responsibilities and job titles will vary, but the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed will be the same. Key responsibilities may include creating and delivering operational plans, managing projects, leading and managing teams, managing change, financial and resource management, talent management, coaching and mentoring. Roles may include: Operations Manager, Regional Manager, Divisional Manager, Department Manager and Specialist Managers.

Typical Job Titles

Operations Manager, Regional Manager, Divisional Manager, Department Manager and Specialist Managers.

Progression

On completion, apprentices can register as full members with the Chartered Management Institute and/or the Institute of Leadership and Management, and those with three years' of management experience can apply for Chartered Manager Status through the CMI.

Assessment Methods

This end-point assessment (EPA) for this standard consists of two assessment methods:

Professional discussion, underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

Project proposal, presentation and questioning

Assessment Order

The assessment methods can be delivered in any order. The result of one assessment method does not need to be known before starting the next.

EPA Window

The EPA will be completed within an EPA period, lasting typically five months, starting when the EPAO has confirmed that all gateway requirements have been met.

Gateway Considerations

Before the apprentice can start their EPA, the training provider is required to upload the following:

- Photo ID
- Portfolio of evidence
- Project proposal subject, title and scope

At gateway, the training provider is also requested sign a declaration to confirm that the English and maths requirements have been met in line with the funding rules.

Professional Discussion

Assessment Overview

This assessment will take the form of a professional discussion which must be appropriately structured to draw out the best of the apprentice's competence and excellence and cover the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) assigned to this assessment method. A professional discussion is a two-way discussion which involves both the End-Point Assessor and the apprentice actively listening and participating in a formal conversation. It gives the apprentice the opportunity to make detailed and proactive contributions to confirm their competency across the KSBs mapped to this method. The professional discussion will be underpinned by the portfolio which is submitted at gateway.

Rationale

- The professional discussion was selected as a valid way to draw out KSBs, in particular behaviours. It allows for a range of examples to be brought forward during the two-way conversation.
- It allows the apprentice to be assessed against KSBs that may not naturally occur during other assessment methods.
- It enables the apprentice to demonstrate the application of skills and behaviours as well as knowledge.
- It allows scope for the apprentice to demonstrate the depth and breadth of KSBs, allowing for a distinction marking.

Delivery

The End-Point Assessor will conduct and assess the professional discussion. Apprentices must be given at least two weeks' notice ahead of the professional discussion. The underpinning portfolio will have been submitted in line with EPAO requirements at the gateway and must evidence all of the KSBs mapped to this assessment method. The End-Point Assessor should have a minimum of five days to review the portfolio and can use the contents of the portfolio to identify discussion topics for the professional discussion. The professional discussion must last 60 minutes. The End-Point Assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the professional discussion by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer. Further time may be granted for apprentices with appropriate needs, in-line with the EPAO's reasonable adjustments policy. During this method, the End-Point Assessor must combine questions from the EPAO's question bank and those generated by themselves.

The professional discussion will be conducted as a structured two-way conversation between the apprentice and an End-Point Assessor. It must be appropriately structured to draw out the best of the apprentice's competence and excellence.

End-Point Assessors must use the question bank as a source for questioning and are expected to use their professional judgement to tailor the questions appropriately. End-Point Assessors will ask a minimum of six questions and may ask follow-up questions for clarification purposes and to allow the apprentice the opportunity to cover the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

The apprentice and the End-Point Assessor will have access to their own copies of the portfolio throughout the professional discussion and it can be referred to it as needed. End-Point Assessors must be developed and trained in the conduct of professional discussions, how to identify discussion areas from reviewing portfolio content, how to design their own questions from reviewing portfolio content, and in reaching consistent judgement by their EPAO. The professional discussion should be graded fail, pass or distinction.

The portfolio underpins the professional discussion and will not be assessed or graded. End-Point Assessors must allocate grades using the grading criteria. The End-Point Assessor must use the assessment tools and procedures that are set by the EPAO to record the professional discussion. KSBs met and answers to questions, must be recorded in writing by the independent assessor. The End-Point Assessor will make all grading decisions.

Venue

The professional discussion should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence. The professional discussion can take place in/via any of the following:

- employer's premises
- remotely with the agreement of the apprentice and the employer
- a suitable venue selected by the EPAO (for example a training provider's premises)
- video conferencing.

The End-Point Assessor must use the assessment tools and procedures that are set by the EPAO to record the response to questions. Video conferencing can also be used to conduct the professional discussion, but the EPAO must have processes in place to verify the identity of the apprentice and ensure the apprentice is not being aided.

Further Information

End-Point Assessors are responsible for generating suitable questions in line with the EPAO's training and standardisation process. A question bank must be developed by EPAOs. End-Point Assessor must use the question bank as a source for questioning and are expected to use their professional judgement to tailor those questions appropriately. The question bank must be of sufficient size to prevent predictability and the EPAO must review it regularly (at least once a year) to ensure that it, and its content, are fit for purpose. The questions relating to the underpinning KSBs must be varied yet allow assessment of the relevant KSBs. EPAOs must ensure that apprentices have a different set of questions in the case of resits/retakes.

EPAOs will produce the following material to support this assessment method:

- an outline of the assessment method's requirements
- marking materials
- independent assessor training materials
- grading guidance
- a question bank
- assessment recording documentation.

Project Proposal

Please see the temporary dispensation information on page 3 in relation to the project proposal

Assessment Overview

A project proposal involves the apprentice completing a relevant and defined piece of work that has a real business benefit. The project proposal must be undertaken after the apprentice has gone through gateway **(however please see temporary dispensation information)**. Apprentices will prepare and deliver a presentation that, along with the proposal, appropriately covers the KSBs assigned to this method of assessment. It will be followed by questioning from the End-Point Assessor. The project proposal should be designed to ensure that the apprentice's work meets the needs of the business, is relevant to their role and allows the relevant KSBs to be assessed for the EPA. The employer will ensure it has a real business application and the EPAO will ensure it meets the requirements of the EPA, including suitable coverage of the KSBs assigned to this assessment method as shown in the mapping of the assessment methods.

The proposal will be a detailed project implementation proposal that will enable the project to be fully implemented. The project does not need to be fully implemented during the EPA period. The implementation of the project proposal must begin during the EPA period and ensure that S1.2, S2.1, S2.2 and S3.1 can be assessed and progress against these skills must be discussed during the presentation **(again please see temporary dispensation information)**. Apprentices must include evidence of leadership support of the project proposal, detailing what has been implemented to date, which must be included as an appendix so that this can be discussed during the presentation (this could be either an email, letter or similar written confirmation). The evidence provided must be valid and attributable to the apprentice; the project proposal must contain a statement from the employer confirming this. The EPAO must refer to the grading descriptors to ensure that project proposals are pitched appropriately. This assessment method includes two components:

- an outcome component - a proposal based on post-gateway work
- a presentation with questioning to ensure the apprentice is assessed against the KSBs assigned to this assessment method.

Both components should allow the apprentice the opportunity to obtain the highest possible grade. The combination of the components makes the method more robust and gives the apprentice an opportunity to provide depth.

The evidence from the project proposal, presentation and responses to questions will be assessed holistically.

Rationale

- The project proposal is designed to demonstrate the application of knowledge, skills and behaviours as they would occur in occupational practice. Producing a proposal reflects normal practice in the workplace for an Operations or Departmental Manager, so this assessment method is appropriate.
- It is a significant and relevant piece of work that thoroughly tests both higher and lower order knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- The project proposal should have a real business benefit and is a cost-effective assessment method.

Delivery

Apprentices will conduct a project proposal either paper-based or electronically. The project proposal may be based on any of the following.

- The need to review and implement a change plan to improve efficiency within the workplace.
- The continuous improvement review of a current process, service or product to ensure it is still fit for purpose and meets the current needs of the business.
- The need to implement a direct saving (e.g. percentage decrease in direct costs, reduction in headcount) across their team, department or organisation following a reforecast activity.

The list above is not exhaustive but the EPAO should sign off the project proposal's title and scope to confirm its suitability at the gateway (which should be no more than 500 words). The employer is responsible for ensuring it has a real business benefit and the EPAO is responsible for confirming that it provides appropriate coverage of the KSBs. In order to ensure that all the EPA-related work is completed during the EPA period, the EPAO must be involved in determining the focus of the project scope and title at the gateway.

The project proposal starts after the apprentice has gone through gateway. The maximum duration of the project proposal should be 12 weeks.

The employer should ensure the apprentice has sufficient time and the necessary resources, within this period, to plan and undertake the work associated with the project proposal.

The EPAO must provide a generic specification for a range of qualifying projects, to enable the employer to select a project that will meet the requirements of the EPA. Note that the employer is not restricted to this selection. However, the project scope and title must be signed off at the gateway by the EPAO to ensure sufficient coverage of the assigned KSBs.

The project proposal will be 4,000 words (+/- 10% at the apprentice's discretion) including tables, graphs, figures, though excluding references and annexes. The apprentice will have 12 weeks to write and submit the proposal and the presentation following the EPAO's approval of the project proposal's scope and title.

In order to ensure the project proposal is robust and sufficiently covers the KSBs, it should include:

- an executive summary
- an introduction
- the scope of the proposed project (including key performance indicators)
- objectives
- a project plan (including Gantt charts, risk/issue/mitigation, responsibility assignment matrix (RACI matrix))
- how the proposed project outcomes will be achieved
- comment on the validity of the methods of analysis, data interpretation and data presentation used
- financial budgeting and resources
- proposed implementation plan including communications and stakeholder plans
- advise whether an alternative approach might be considered
- advise upon whether it could be completed in a more cost or time efficient manner
- recommendations and conclusions.

The project proposal must include, in addition to the word count, an annex showing how the project proposal maps to all of the KSBs that are being assessed by this method. The project proposal, plus materials relating to the presentation (see below), must be submitted together after the gateway. The apprentice should complete their project proposal unaided. When the project proposal is submitted, the apprentice and their employer must verify that the submitted project proposal is the apprentice's own work. The End-Point Assessor will review and assess the project proposal holistically together with the other components of this assessment method. The End-Point Assessor will make all grading decisions.

Presentation with Questioning

Assessment Overview

A presentation with questioning involves an apprentice presenting to an End-Point Assessor, focusing on the list below. It will be followed by questioning from the End-Point Assessor.

Apprentices will prepare and deliver a presentation that appropriately covers the KSBs assigned to this method of assessment. The purpose of the questioning is to seek clarification of the proposal or presentation, to assess the depth and breadth of knowledge, skills and behaviours and to assess those KSBs that the apprentice did not have the opportunity to demonstrate with the proposal, although these should be kept to a minimum.

The presentation should be submitted at the same time as the project proposal. The End-Point Assessor should have two weeks to review the proposal prior to the presentation. The apprentice needs to notify the EPAO at the submission of the project proposal and presentation of any technical requirements for the presentation component.

Delivery

The presentation will focus on the project proposal and will cover the following.

- Operational management such as business tools, management systems, identifying and overcoming barriers, identifying opportunities and interpretation of data.
- Project management such as using tools and techniques to plan and deliver outcomes, approaches to identifying and managing risks.
- Finance such as monitoring budgets and financial implications.
- Leading people and supporting management of change.
- Building relationships.
- Communication skills.
- Managing self, such as prioritising activities and time management.
- Decision making and using evaluation techniques to support the process.
- Progress of the implementation of the project proposal to date.

The End-Point Assessor will then draw out any further information using questions.

The presentation must be submitted with the project proposal 12 weeks after gateway. The apprentice will be given two weeks' notice of the presentation date to allow the End-Point Assessor sufficient time to review the project proposal and presentation and prepare appropriate questions. The presentation and questioning will take 60 minutes. The End-Point Assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the presentation and questioning by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer. The presentation will typically last for 20 minutes, and the questioning will typically last for 40 minutes. The discretionary additional 10% time can be allocated in any proportion across the presentation and questioning.

The End-Point Assessor will ask a minimum of eight questions at the end of the presentation with one question from each of the bullet pointed themes listed above. The End-Point Assessor will use the questions from a question bank supplied by the EPAO as a guide to tailor their own questions based on the presentation and project proposal. They will use them to confirm their understanding of the presentation and how it demonstrates the relevant KSBs. They may ask follow-up questions where clarification is required. The End-Point Assessor must use the full time available for questioning to allow the apprentice the opportunity to evidence occupational competence at the highest level available, unless the apprentice has already achieved the highest grade available.

The purpose of the questions will be:

- for clarification
- to assess the depth and breadth of understanding.

To deliver the presentation, the apprentice will have access to:

- audio-visual presentation equipment
- a flip chart and writing and drawing materials
- a computer
- any other requirements as notified to the EPAO on submission of the project proposal and presentation.

KSBs met and answers to questions must be recorded in writing by the End-Point Assessor. The End-Point Assessor will make all grading decisions.

Assessment Location

EPAOs must ensure that the presentation and questioning elements are conducted in a suitable controlled environment in/via any of the following:

- employer's premises
- a suitable venue sourced by the EPAO e.g. training provider's premises
- video conferencing.

The venue should be a quiet room, free from distraction and external influence.

Video conferencing can be used to conduct the presentation with questioning, but the EPAO must have processes in place to verify the identity of the apprentice and ensure the apprentice is not being aided.

The End-Point Assessor will assess all components of this assessment method holistically. They will be expected to make an overall judgement on the grade for this assessment method based on the project proposal and the presentation and responses to questions.

Question and Resource Development

EPAOs will create and set open questions to assess KSBs mapped to this assessment method. Each EPAO must develop a question bank of sufficient size to prevent predictability and review them regularly (and at least once a year) to ensure the questions they contain are fit for purpose. End-Point Assessor must use the question bank as a source for questioning and are expected to use their professional judgment to tailor those questions appropriately. End-Point Assessors are responsible for generating suitable follow-up questions in line with the EPAO's training and standardisation process. The questions relating to underpinning KSBs must be varied yet allow assessment of the relevant KSBs.

It is recommended that this be done in consultation with employers. EPAOs should put in place measures and procedures to maintain the security and confidentiality of their questions if employers are consulted.

EPAOs must ensure that apprentices have a different set of questions in the case of resits/retakes. EPAOs will produce the following material to support this assessment method:

- End-Point Assessor training materials
- assessment specifications
- grading guidance
- question bank
- assessment recording documentation
- examples of projects.

Overall Grading

The overall grades available for this apprenticeship are fail, pass, or distinction. Each assessment component is graded individually. Once an apprentice has completed all assessment components, the grades are combined as described in the table below to determine an apprentice's overall grade.

Professional Discussion Underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence	**Project Proposal, Presentation and Questioning**	**Overall Grade**
A fail in any assessment component will result in a fail overall		
Pass	Pass	Pass
Distinction		
Pass	Distinction	
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

Resits and Retakes

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be offered the opportunity to take a resit or a retake. A resit does not require further learning, whereas a retake does. Apprentices should have a supportive action plan to prepare for the resit or a retake. The apprentice's employer will need to agree that either a resit or retake is an appropriate course of action. An apprentice who fails an assessment method, and therefore the EPA in the first instance, will be required to resit or retake any failed assessment methods only. If the apprentice fails the project proposal assessment method, they will be required to amend the project proposal and presentation in line with the End-Point Assessor's feedback.

The apprentice will be given three weeks to rework and submit the amended project proposal and presentation. The End-Point Assessor will have two weeks to review the project proposal and presentation and the apprentice will have five days' notice of the presentation date. Resits and retakes are not offered to apprentices wishing to move from pass to distinction.

The timescales for a resit/retake are agreed between the employer and EPAO. A resit is typically taken within three months of the EPA outcome notification. The timescale for a retake is dependent on how much re-training is required and is typically taken within six months of the EPA outcome notification. All assessment methods must be taken within a six-month period, otherwise the entire EPA will need to be re-sat/retaken. Where any assessment method has to be re-sat or retaken, the apprentice will be awarded a maximum EPA grade of pass, unless the EPAO determines there are exceptional circumstances requiring a resit or retake.

Appeals

Training Qualifications UK's Appeals Policy, including time frames, can be found here.