

Ofqual External Quality Assurance

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Apprenticeship External Quality Assurance

June 2019

1. Landscape

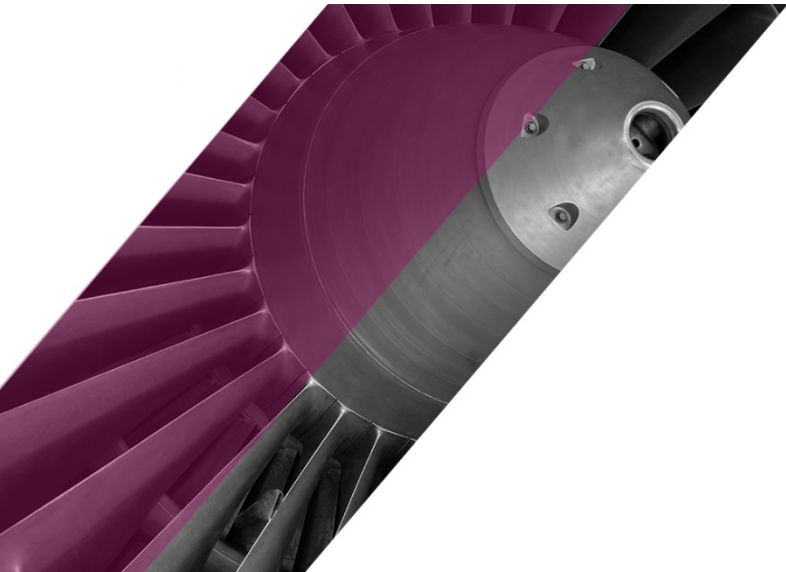
2. Ofqual's approach ('validity')

3. EQA Tools

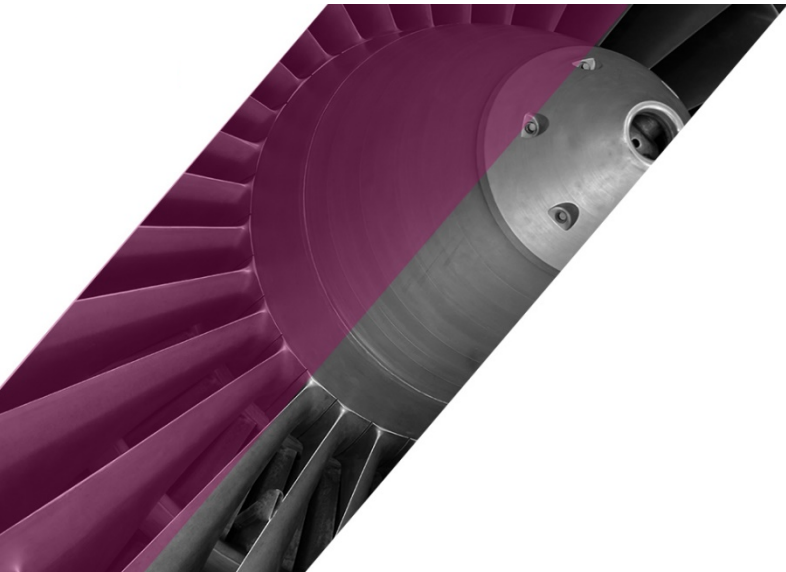
Technical Advisory Group ('sufficient validity')

Technical evaluation

Ongoing regulation

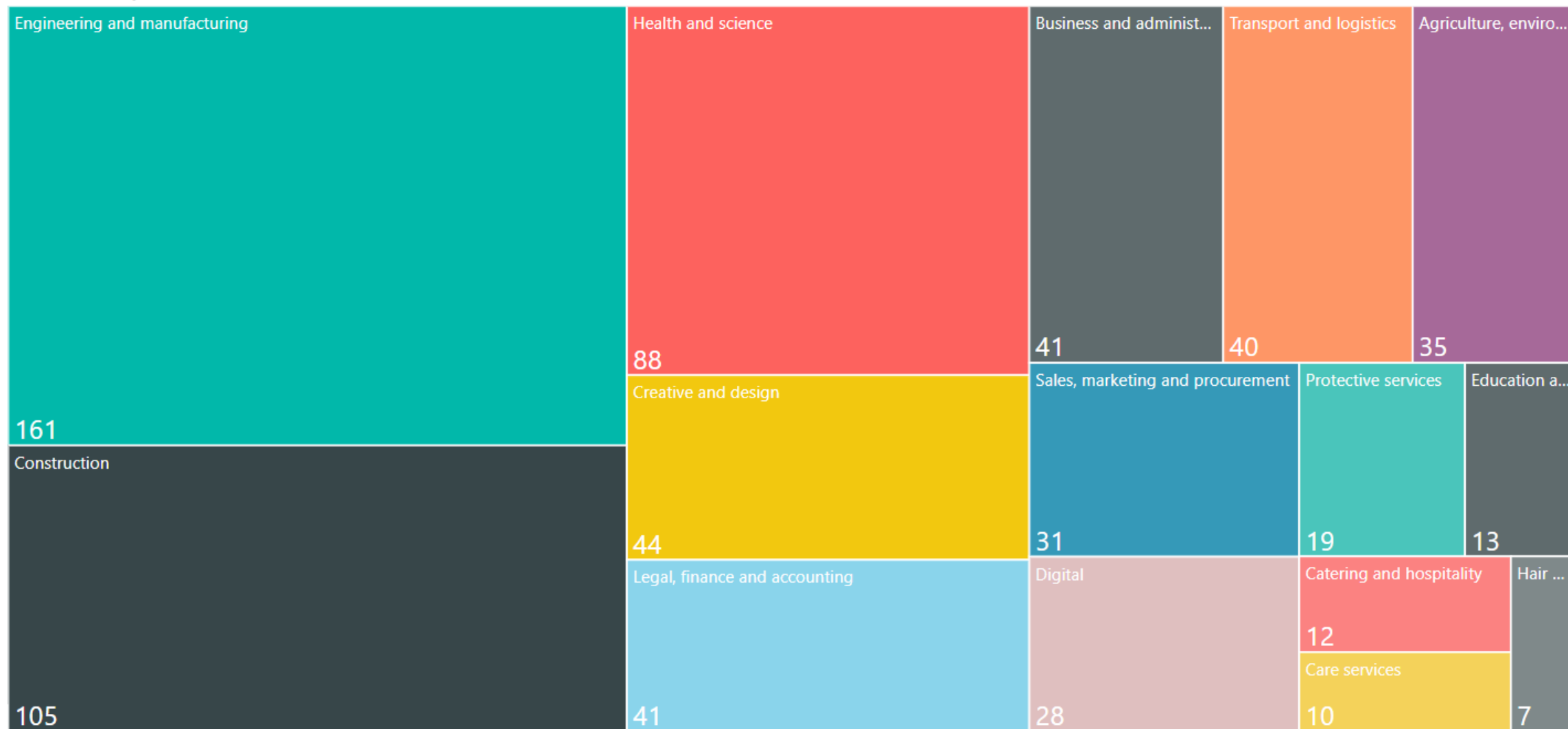


Landscape

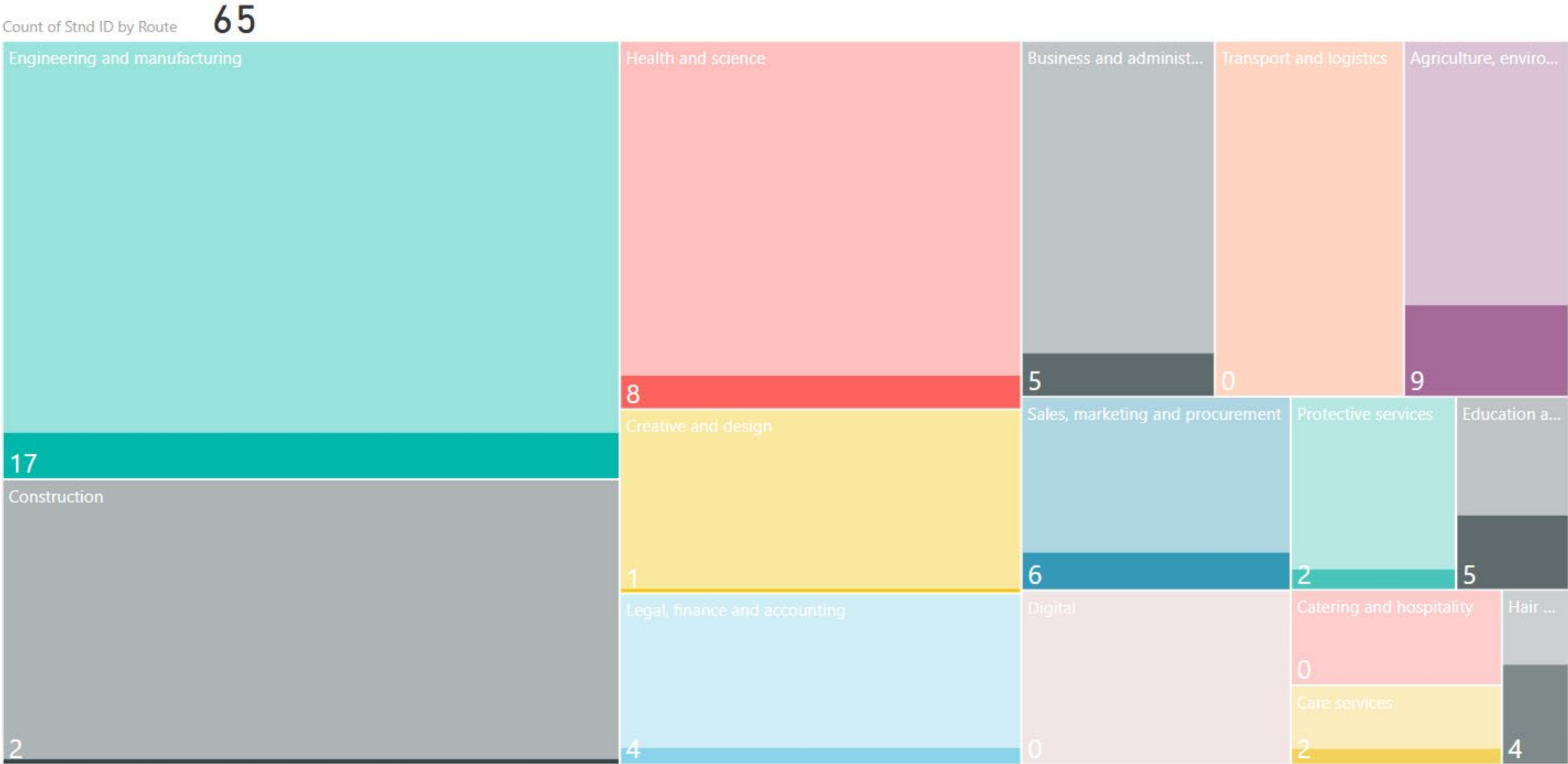


Apprenticeship landscape

Count of Stnd ID by Route **675**



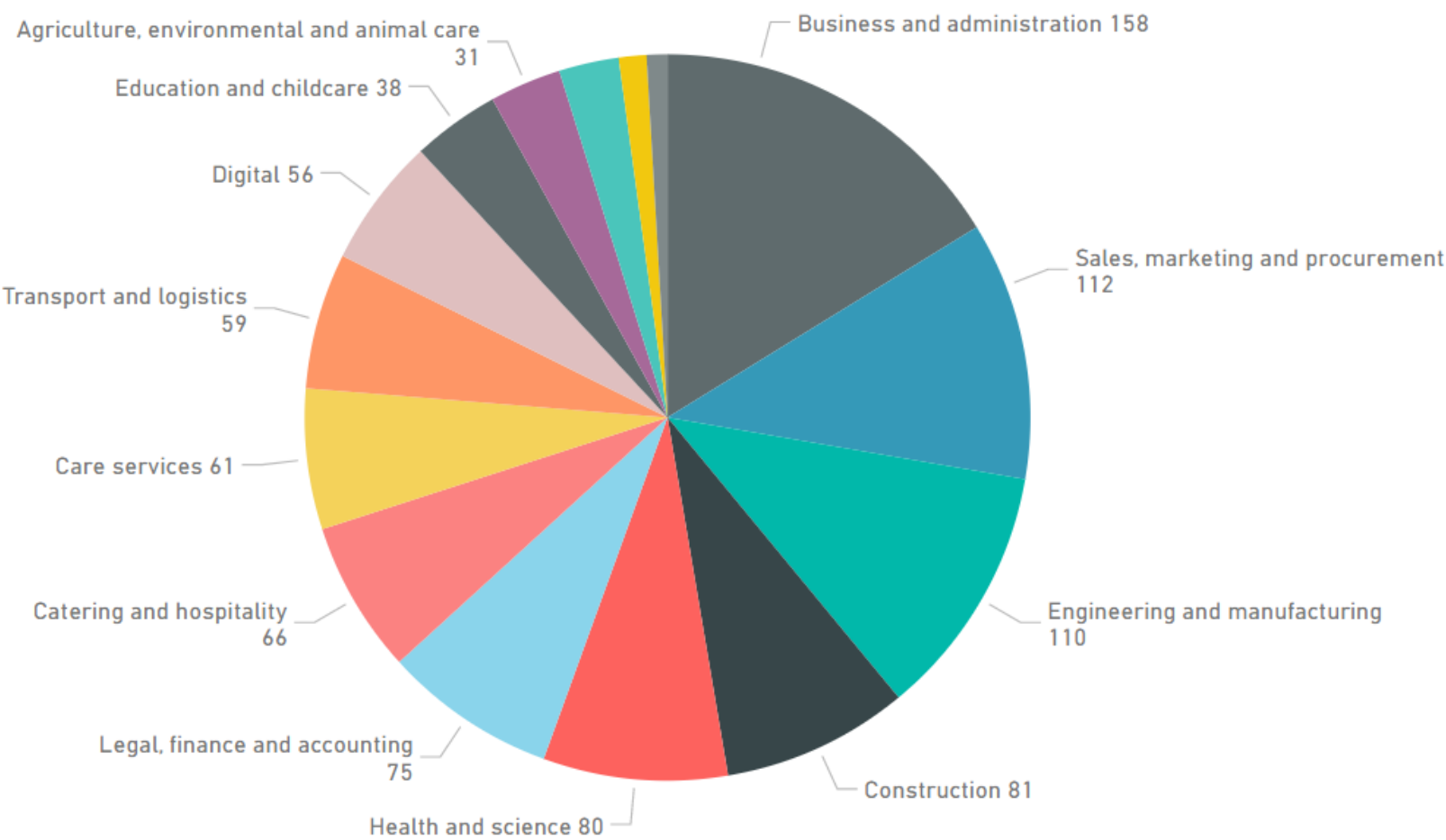
Apprenticeship landscape



EPAs from approved standards

Count of EPA ID by Route **964**

Currently a
potential **964**
EPAs from **454**
approved
Standards

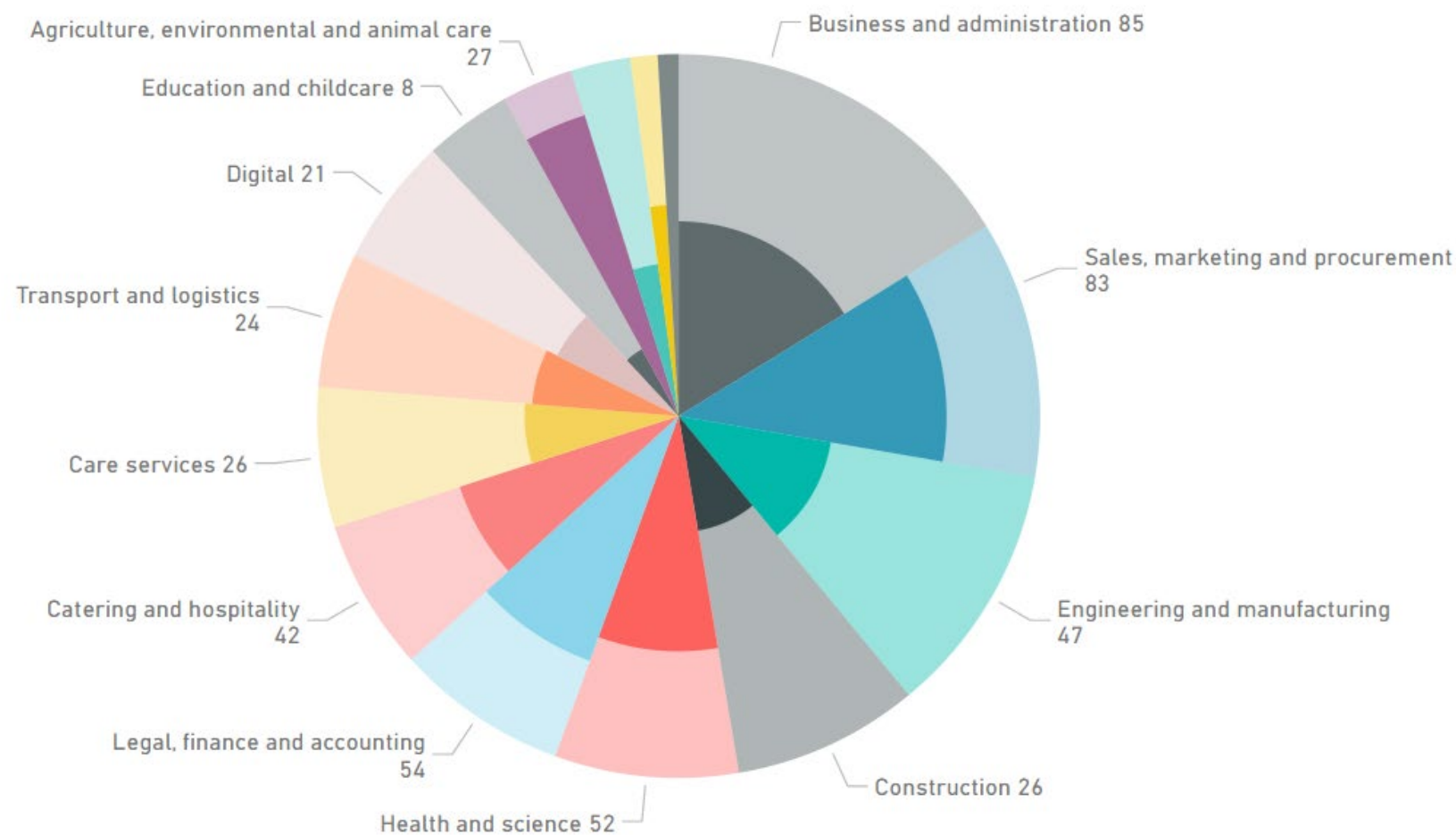


EPAs from approved standards

Count of EPA ID by Route **512**

Currently a
potential **964**
EPAs from **454**
approved
Standards

Regulated
community
accounts for **512**
(53%) of
potential EPAs



EPA 'Readiness'

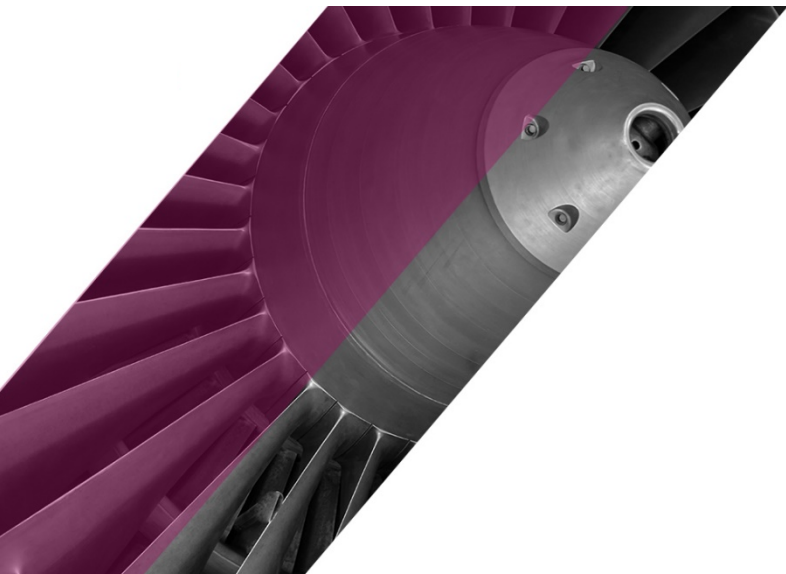
Expected from standards with Ofqual EQA

65 Standards	139 EPAs
	35 Organisations
33 Standards with starts up to 2017/18	28,830 Starts 2017/18

Actual (on the register)

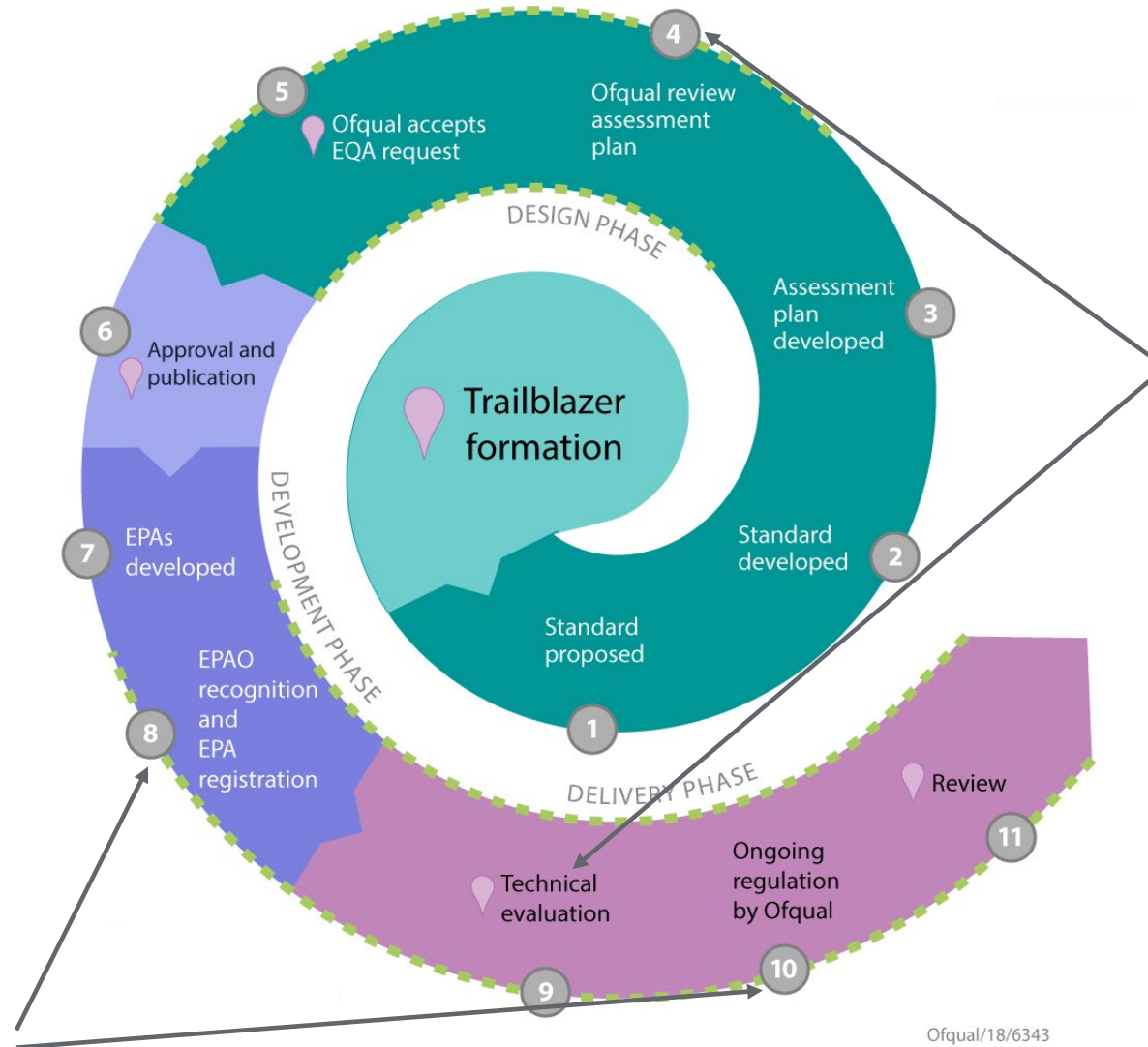
29 Standards	71 EPAs
	21 Organisations
26 Standards with starts up to 2017/18	27,280 Starts 2017/18

Ofqual and our approach to EQA



Two high level objectives

Gain assurance from assessment delivery



Gain assurance from assessment materials

Ofqual/18/6343

Ofqual

We have **five statutory objectives**, which are set out in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. In brief, they are:

- To secure qualifications standards
- To promote National Assessment standards
- To promote public confidence in regulated qualifications and National Assessment arrangements
- To promote awareness of the range and benefits of regulated qualifications
- To secure that regulated qualifications are provided efficiently.

Regulatory Framework

Ofqual

The Recognition Process

Criteria for Recognition

May 2011

GOV.UK

Home

Ofqual Handbook: General Conditions of Recognition

From: Ofqual

Published: 12 October 2017

Updated: 10 June 2019, [see all updates](#)

Search this manual

Contents

Rules and guidance for all awarding organisations regulated qualifications

This document sets out Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition for all the qualifications and organisations we regulate. It sets out the rules.

All regulated awarded organisations have a legal obligation to:

- comply with these rules on an ongoing basis
- have regard to this guidance

Using the Ofqual Handbook

How to use this handbook

EPA Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements

July 2018

Ofqual/18/6402/2

Ofqual

EPA Qualification Level Guidance

July 2018

Ofqual/18/6402/3

GUIDANCE

Apprenticeship end-point assessments: guide for employers

Ofqual's approach to external quality assurance

ofqual

Validity

It's whether we're assessing the right thing, in the right way, to produce **accurate** and **useful** assessment results

- The validity of a particular assessment is
 - the degree to which it is possible to **measure**
 - whatever that assessment **needs** to measure
 - by implementing its assessment **procedure**.

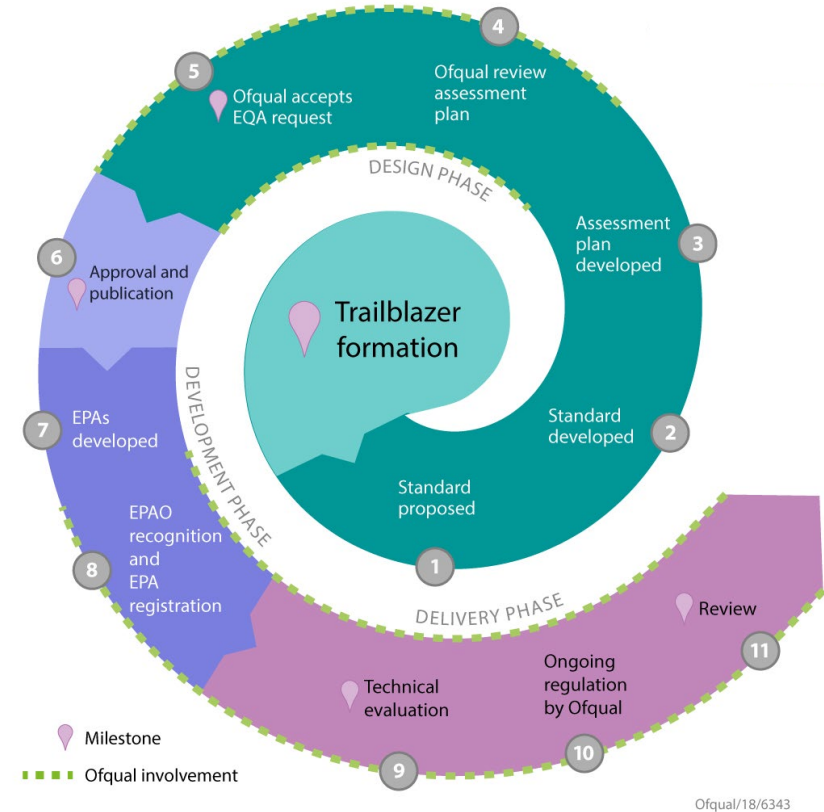
"We are putting validity at the heart of what we do. And clearing out any rules and processes that get in the way of that."

(Stacey, G: Oct 2014 Putting validity at the heart of what we do. Speech to the Federation of Awarding Bodies National Conference)

At every stage

It's whether we're assessing the right thing, in the right way, to produce **accurate** and **useful** assessment results

- The validity of a particular assessment is
 - the degree to which it is possible to **measure**
 - whatever that assessment **needs** to measure
 - by implementing its assessment **procedure**.



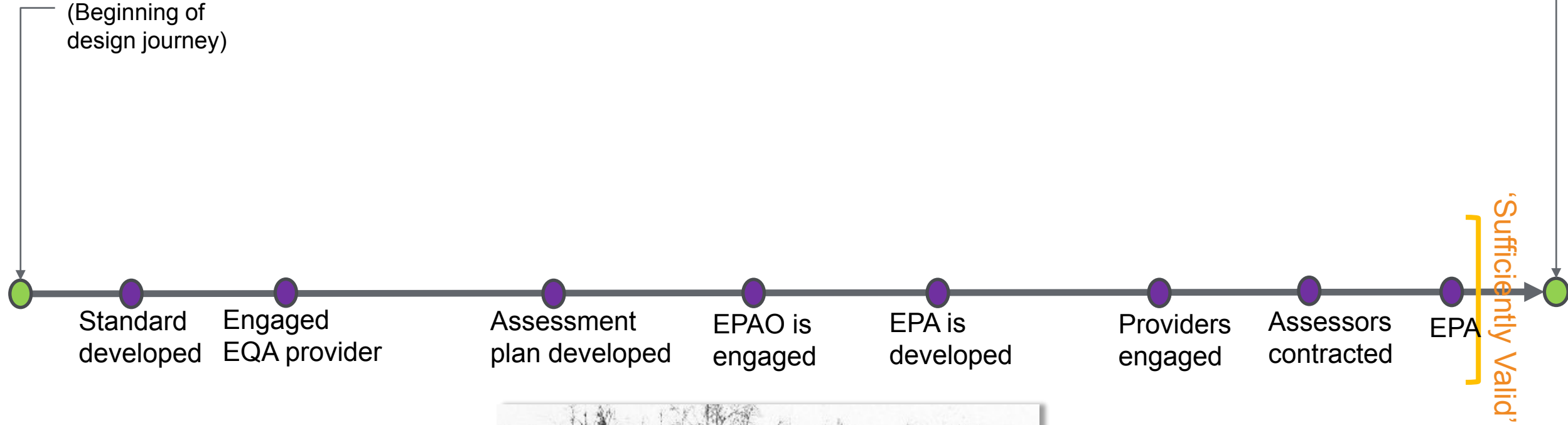
*“A good assessment procedure comprises features and processes which are designed to capture **signal** (concerning the proficiency of each candidate) and eliminate **noise**.”*

(Paul Newton)

The development journey

Starting point
(Beginning of
design journey)

Destination point
(Confidence that Pass
represents Occupational
Competence: Proficiency)

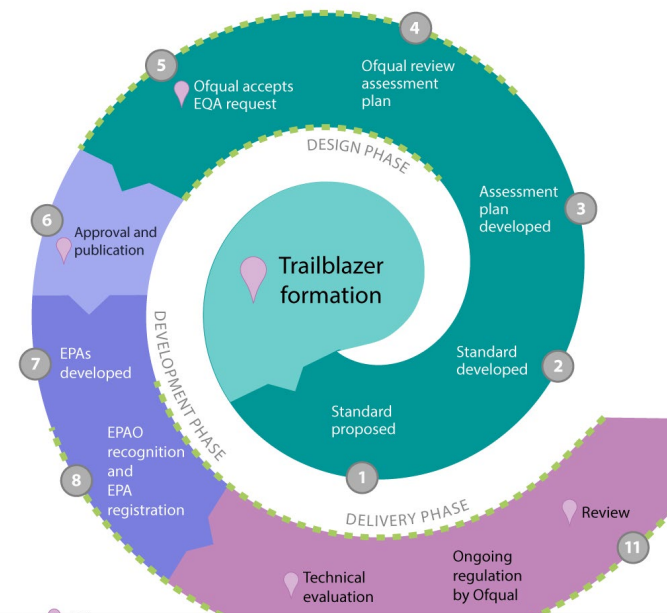


Fire Bucket Brigade by Monroe Historical Society

The development journey

Starting point
(Beginning of
design journey)

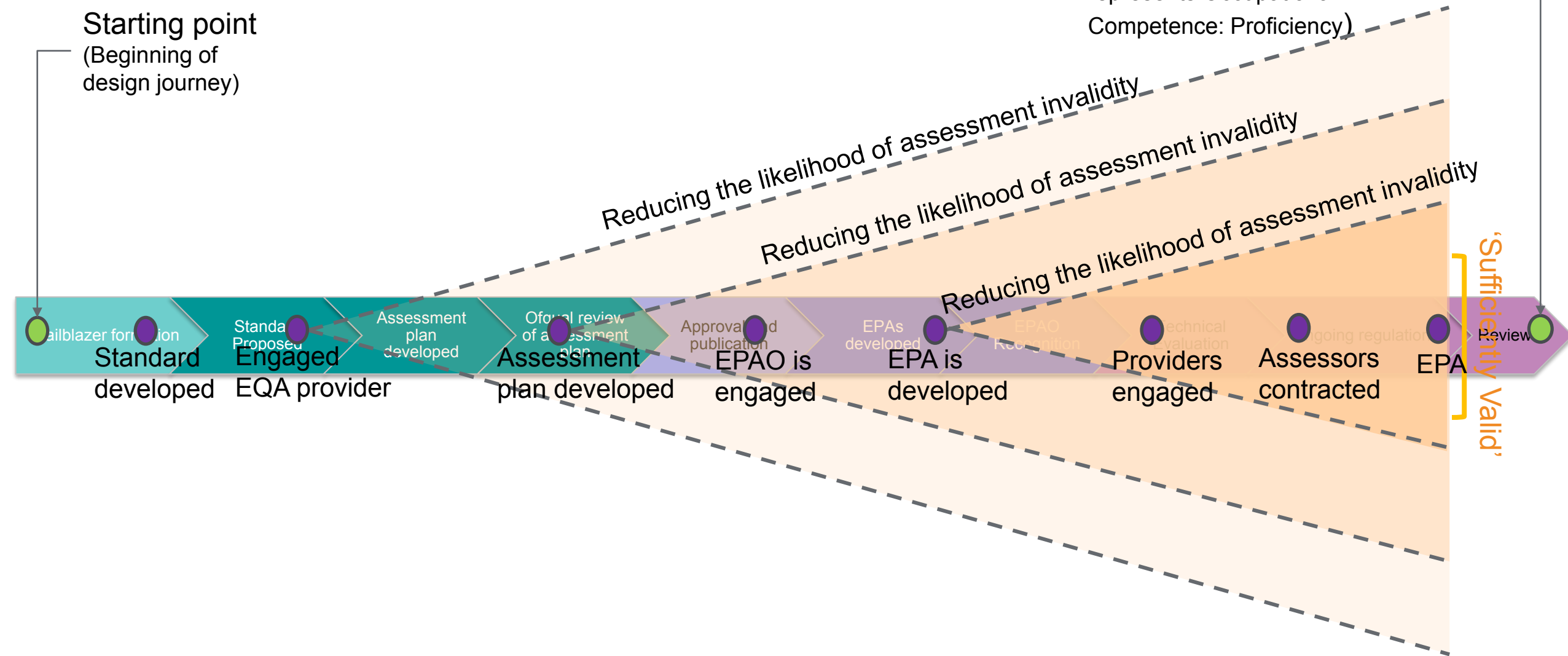
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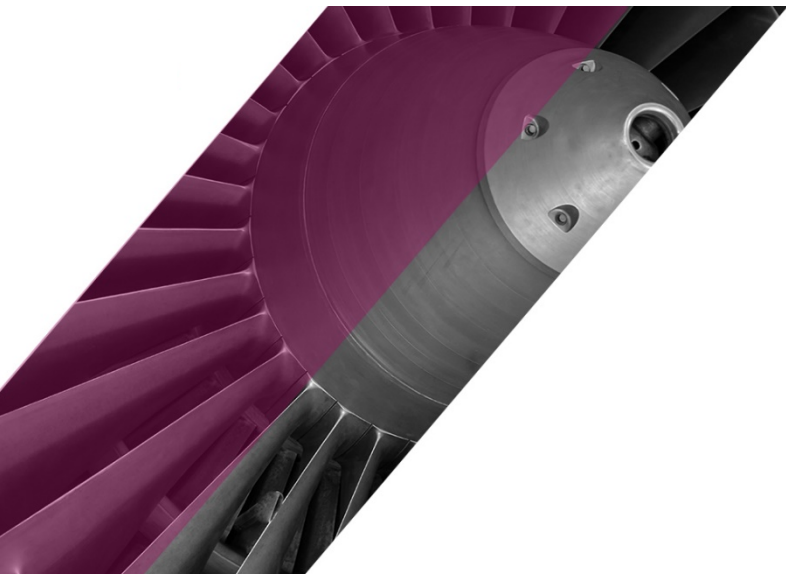
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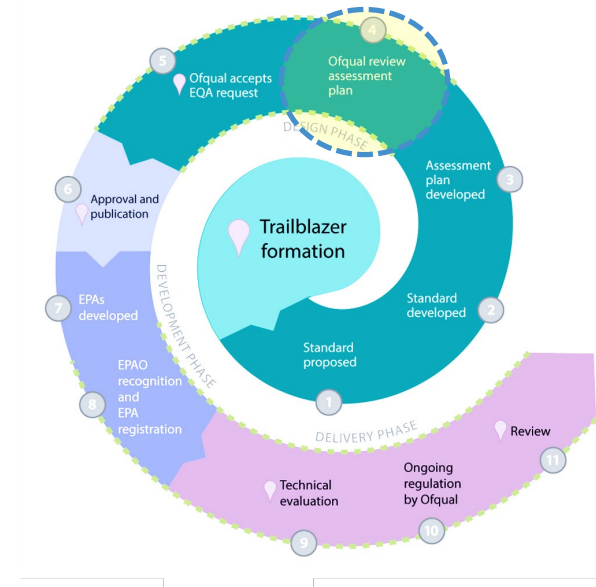


EQA Tools



Technical Advisory Group

“Is there anything in the assessment plan that would cause an awarding organisation to develop an EPA that wasn’t sufficiently valid?”



What are we looking for?



Assessment plan

Assessment
methods

Grading

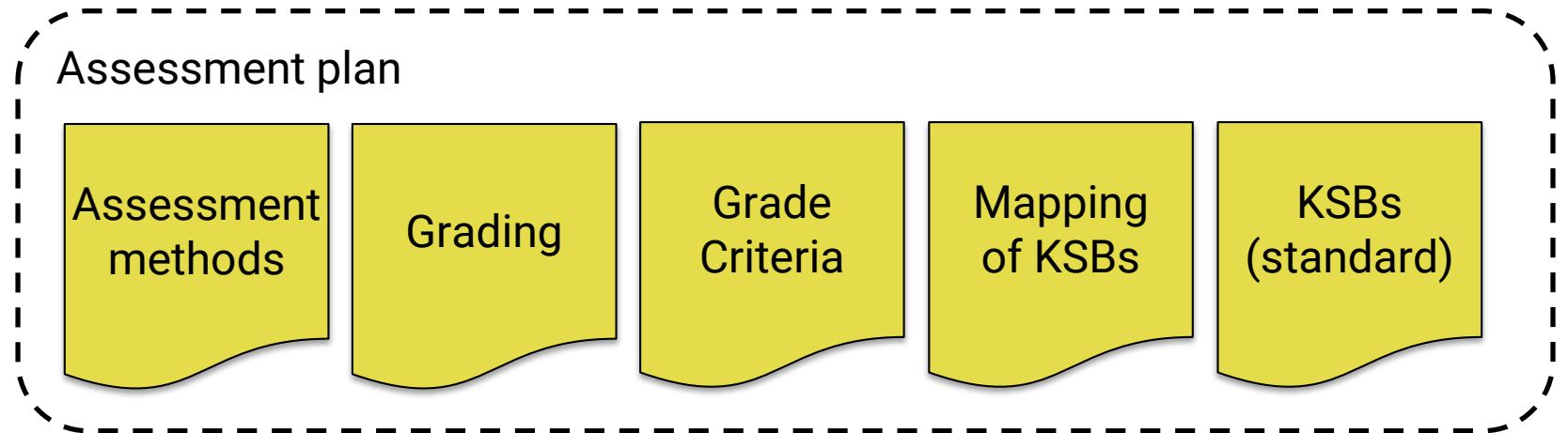
Grade
Criteria

Mapping
of KSBs

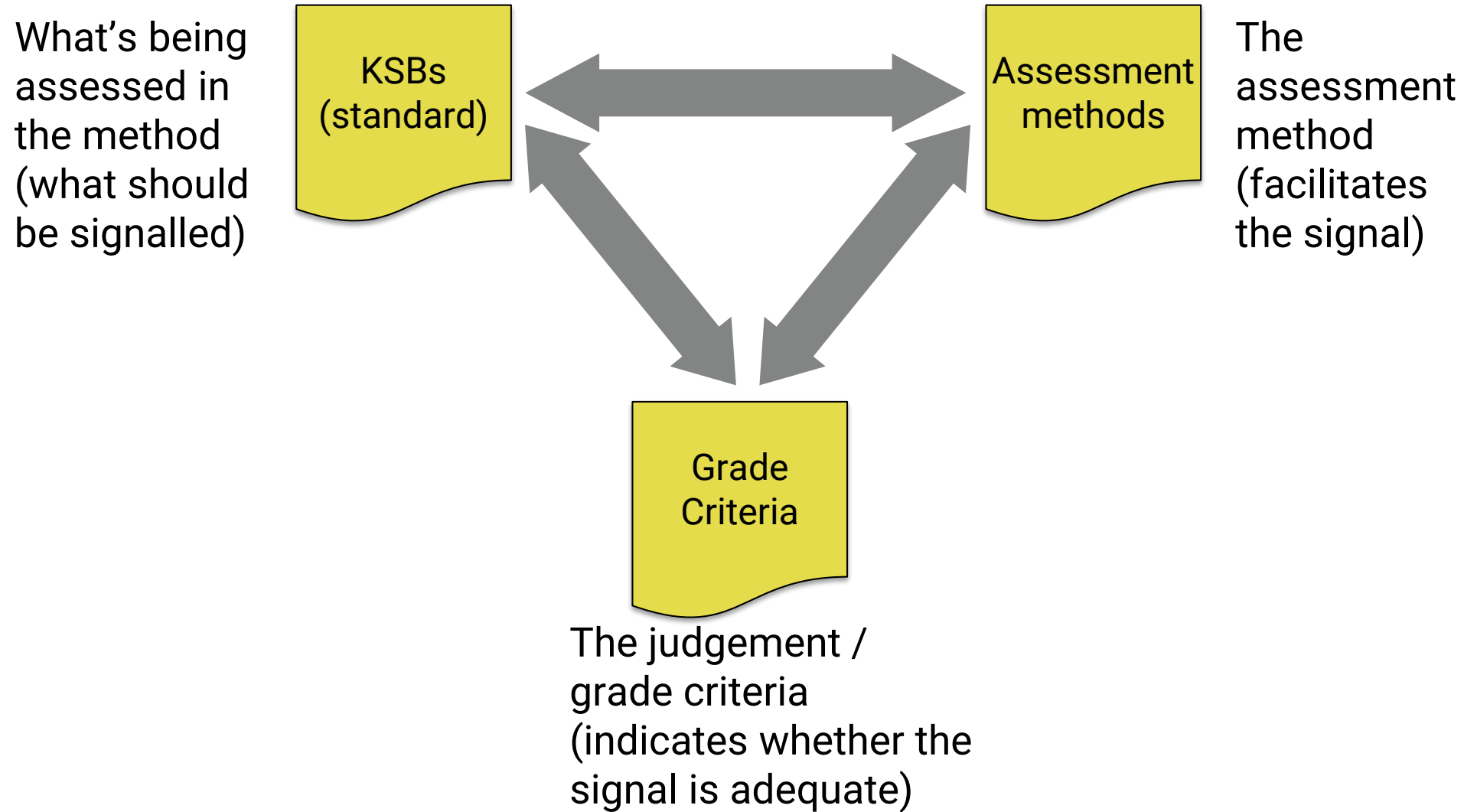
KSBs
(standard)

Interrelation of assessment features and processes

*“A good assessment procedure comprises features and processes which are designed to capture **signal** (concerning the proficiency of each candidate) and eliminate **noise**.”* (Paul Newton)



Interrelation of assessment features and processes



An example...

KSBs Team Working

Interacts well with others,
understands limits of their own
role in relation to others' roles,
can identify the challenges and
benefits of team working.
(Skill/Behaviour?)

Grade Criteria

- communicates verbally with others in the team
- both initiates, and responds to, questions and scenarios faced by others and themselves in a group context
- can both lead and be led in considering a situation faced by their team.

Assessment method

Observation/Practical?



KSBs

Team Working

Interacts well with others,
**understands limits of their own
role in relation to others' roles,
can identify the challenges and
benefits of team working.**

Grade
Criteria

- demonstrates where their responsibility in a task starts and finishes
- displays understanding of how and when to seek the authority of others in the completion of a task
- Identifies more than one challenge and benefit of working with others in a group context

Assessment
method

Discussion, Knowledge test?



What's a good Grade Criteria?

Assessment method:
professional discussion

What's being assessed: **Skills**

- Model and promote positive behaviours expected of children such as turn taking and keeping reactions and emotions proportionate.
- Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others.

Is there **a Measure?**

Is **the Measure clear?**

Is it Measureable, in the assessment method?

Pass Criteria:

Model and promote positive behaviours within day to day practice.

Demonstrate at least one method of managing children's behaviour in relation to others.

Suggested Pass Criteria:

Provides evidence of the ways positive behaviours have been modelled and promoted in their day to day practice.

Evidence at least one method of managing children's behaviour to achieve a positive outcome

Grade Criteria example 2

Assessment method: **Observation**

What's being assessed: **Skills**

- The ability to communicate effectively on all levels, in various formats, both internally and externally, particularly during crisis management, incident reporting, liaising with other providers, such as Emergency Services .

Pass Criteria:

- Demonstrates use of appropriate methods of verbal and non-verbal communication relevant to the situation **in order to ensure that risk does not escalate and all parties are aware of their responsibilities and updated continually.**

A good grade criteria...

Facilitates **accurate** and **useful** assessment results by clarifying the measure that needs to be measured

- Is there a measure? (or is it just a learning outcome)
- Is the measure clear? (objective, well defined)
- Is it measureable? (appropriate to the assessment method)



A good assessment procedure...is a balance



- comprises features and processes which are designed to capture **signal** (concerning the proficiency of each candidate) and eliminate **noise**.
- will never be a **perfect** assessment procedure, because assessment design is always a matter of **trade-off and compromise**.
 - e.g. tolerating a lower-quality signal to keep noise levels manageable
 - e.g. tolerating less validity to keep the assessment burden to a minimum
- is one that has **sufficient validity** and is **trusted**.

Technical Evaluation

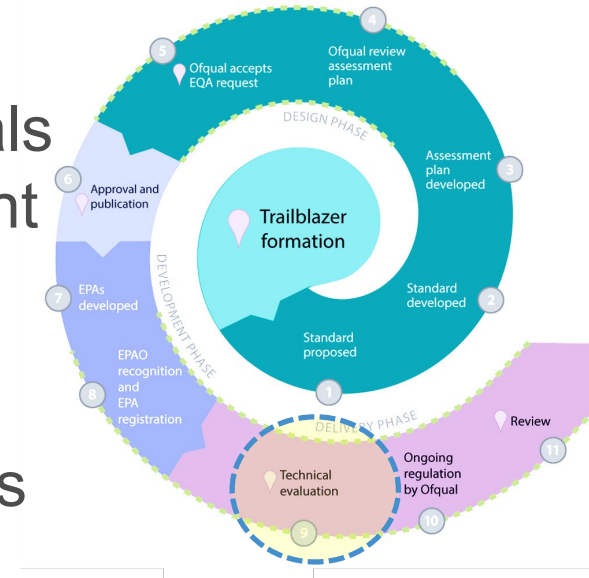
6 tranches to date

- 57 EPAs
- 17 EPAOs
- 20 standards



An in-depth look at EPA materials from EPAOs by both assessment experts and subject specialists

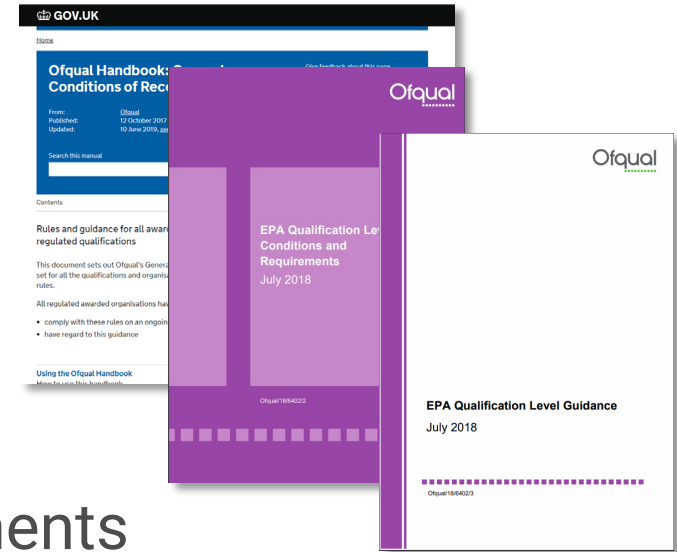
- question papers
- assessor guidance documents
- apprentice guidance documents
- standardisation procedures and guidance
- grading exemplification
- specifications
- malpractice and reasonable adjustment policies



Technical Evaluation outcomes

Resulting from our technical evaluation feedback to AOs.

- amended errors of interpretation in relation to the assessment plan
- amended documentation to ensure assessment requirements were clearer for apprentices and assessors
- changed processes to increase efficiency and manageability for assessors
- clarified assessment parameters for EPAs (e.g. timings)
- clarified guidance around ensuring the authenticity of apprentice evidence
- requested results data to verify the comparability of, and to justify the rationale behind, some assessment approaches



Assessment Plan Queries (APQ)



- To consider queries from EPAOs as a result of operationalising assessment plans
 - Errors
 - Ambiguities
 - Issues that effect standards (e.g.. of consistent interpretation, fairness for apprentices)
- Gather evidence
 - Differences of interpretation that do not effect standards
 - Adds to our intelligence base, our view of risk
 - Amalgamation of evidence taken forward to review or for further investigation (e.g. evidence of manageability at scale)
- Actions
 - Liaise with trailblazers
 - Collaborate with Institute to change plans
 - Communicate with all EPAOs involved

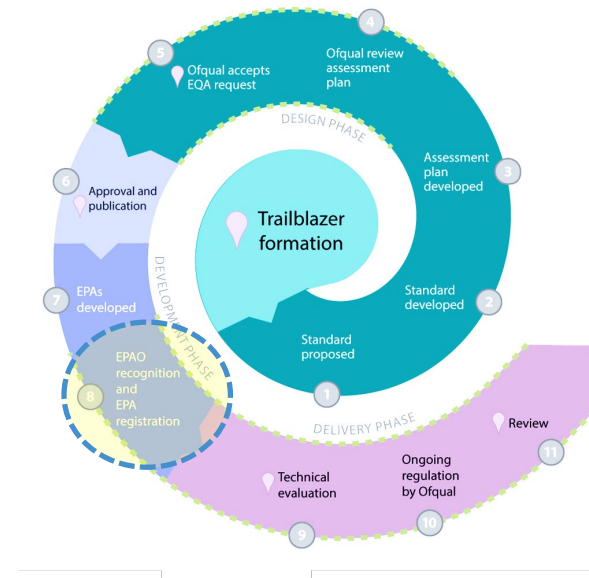
Recognition – our new approach

■ Early engagement

- 33 enquiries from EPAOs
- Changes have improved applications and streamlined the process

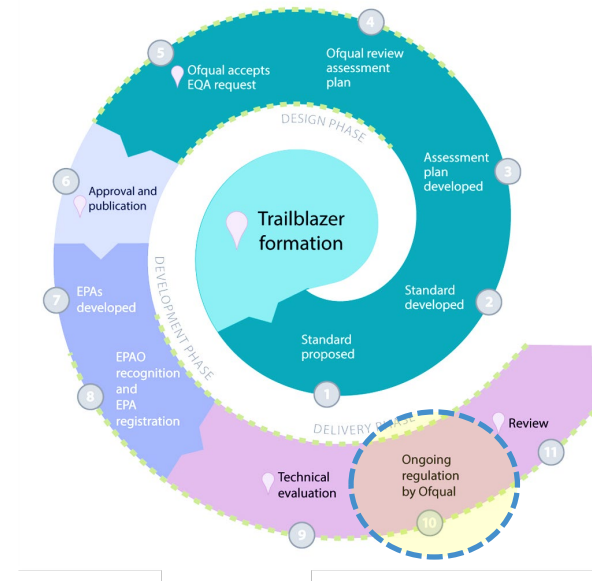
■ Recognition

- Panel discussions with all applicants
- We consider in depth a number of issues:
 - financial standing
 - sector relevant assessment expertise
- Proportionate and flexible approach
 - Some EPAOs recognised with special conditions
 - Some EPAOs approved with no issues



Ongoing regulation

- Event notifications
- Employer engagement and intelligence
- Relationship management of EPAOs
- Case management of incidents
- Annual statements of compliance
- Synergy with monitoring of the wider qualifications landscape (SVR)
- Readiness reviews
- Proactive and reactive audits



Regulation: What have we seen?

- Monitoring of employer intelligence has enabled us to safeguard the delivery of assessment for some apprentices
- Relationship management has led to clarification of publicised EPAO material
- Event notifications have led to the strengthening of assessment processes for apprentices
- Audit findings
 - our Conditions can strengthen the IQA approaches in some assessment plans
 - AOs are facing considerable difficulty in planning their EPA delivery
- Enforcement action where required



EQA to date

■ Materials assurance

- Technical Evaluation, Technical Advisory Group and queries from EPAOs have reiterated our belief that scrutiny of assessment materials is crucial as early as possible in the process – **assessment design is paramount.**

- Our **recognition process** gives us strong assurance of EPAO capabilities


■ Delivery Assurance

- Relationship management working together with our regulatory framework provides us with
 - the rules against which to test and hold EPAOs to account,
 - the flexibility to use our regulatory tools proportionately to achieve compliance.




Our objective is confidence



 Beginning of design journey)

*“A good assessment procedure comprises features and processes which are designed to capture **signal** (concerning the proficiency of each candidate) and eliminate **noise**.”*

(Paul Newton)

Confidence that Pass represents Occupational Competence: Proficiency 

Links

- Our [EQA approach](#), and the [apprenticeship standards](#) we regulate
- Apprenticeship specific enquiries
apprenticeships@Ofqual.gov.uk
- Find out more about becoming an Ofqual external expert:
<http://bit.ly/ofqual-experts>
- Sign up to our employer newsletter for the latest news on qualifications changes:
<http://eepurl.com/dw67ur>

www.gov.uk/ofqual 0300 303 3344 public.enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk



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