

Future Apprenticeships Webinar: Provider Practice – the transition from frameworks to standards

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Q: Before an Apprentice can begin to evidence their portfolio they must complete the knowledge modules. As the knowledge modules do not contribute towards the portfolio knowledge competencies, how have they ensured that the submitted portfolio achieves the totality of the standard, including knowledge?

A: I am not sure if this is a question referring to EPA for a specific standard? There will not be a portfolio completed for every standard but it is something that is indicated in some assessment plans. Team Leader in Management is an example. Where there is a portfolio as a method of EPA it is usually accompanied by e.g. a Professional Discussion with the appointed end point assessor. There should be guidance within the specific assessment plan so for example in TL it says:

"Development of a portfolio of evidence including reports, assignments, evidence of tasks undertaken, demonstrations, presentations."

The appointed AAO should give some more detailed guidance on how a portfolio should be collated in that instance.

Q: Are there any materials currently available to assist training providers with recording evidence for End Point Assessment?

A: As each Standard and assessment plan is an individual set of documents with differing requirements there would be no standard set of materials for recording evidence. There will also be variation between recording requirements of each AAO so once the chosen AAO has been agreed with the employer this is a good question for them?

Q: End Point assessment and the processes involved (ideally with reference to my course in technical theatre).

A: At the moment the standard for Creative Venue Technician (if that is the relevant standard?) is published but not the Assessment Plan so you would have to wait until the assessment plan is published or put out for consultation to find out details of EPA? You could

email the trailblazer contact: johnyoung@jyci.co.uk to see how it is progressing and express an interest in being part of any development or consultation?

Q: Behaviours & end point assessment - what models are emerging? Is there an appetite from employers to ensure that behaviours are assessed in some way and if so, how and at what point?

A: This is really quite varied? Some EPA use trade tests or workplace observations? Some take testimonies from service users or managers, some use 360 appraisal. It is true to say employers have very happily embraced embedding behaviours into standards and some standards show quite clearly what these look like in the specific context.

Q: Is there an appetite from employers / providers to integrate 'experiential / outward bound' type activity into an apprenticeship programme to embed skills, knowledge and behaviours either at induction or during the programme? What value do you see in this approach? And how would the funding / costing work?

A: Although there is scope to define the required learning with individual contracting employers, I think here you need to look at the guidance in the recently published funding rules. P13 says what can and what cannot be funded. Learning needs to meet the achievement of the specific SKB in that standard. What cannot be funded through either levy payments or the co-investment model:

"Enrolment, induction, prior assessment, initial diagnostic testing or similar activity"

"Any training, optional modules, educational trips or trips to professional events in excess of those required need to achieve the apprenticeship framework or meet the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the apprenticeship standard."

Q: Previously the SFA indicated that they would extend starts on current contracts to end April to cover the 30 day delay in provider start payments caused by the new funding system. I have not heard any more about this. Is it still the case and if so how will it work (i.e will contracts be extended by one month etc?)

A: Contacts have been extended to July. Funding rules page

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/589509/Apprenticeships_common_funding_and_pm_rules_2016_to_2017_V4.pdf

Contracts will run for the full 2016 to 2017 funding year. We will adjust the April-to-July 2017 element of the contract so that it only includes funding for apprentices that started their learning before 1 May 2017.

Q: Can you please provide clarity around the recent information published about the use of providers/employers using 'associate' contracts to help them retain the SFA contract. We need to be clear on whether providers/employers are allowed to do this under the SFA funding rules, this is not something we are doing ourselves but it is occurring.

A: Subcontracting is limited to £100k. Associates can be used to deliver some specialist aspects of an apprenticeship. It is down to the provider to ensure that this practice is within the rules and offers the best value and best learner experience. I wouldn't want to comment on an FE week article <https://feweeek.co.uk/2017/03/03/banned-subcontracting-hidden-through->

widespread-associate-partnerships/

Q: We are a regionally based Independent Training Provider currently in negotiation with 23 employers regarding Levy Contracts, we are about to deliver 6 Standards for the first time. As an Independent provider it would be useful to hear from other providers like ourselves who understand our issues?

Answered live – suggestion to make use of regional networks, AELP sector forums and <http://futureapprenticeships.org.uk/about-us/provider-readiness-groups/>

Q: How are you planning with END Point assessment for new delivery?

Q: How do they cover end point assessment?

A: This is mixed dependent on the actual standard. For some we are involved in the Trailblazer groups and therefore the development of the EPA. For others we have an internal review structure for newly approved EPAs to understand how they would need to be assessed.

Q: I'd be keen to understand how we can look to integrate our L2/L2 health & Social care apprenticeships with SHU degree pathway? Reverse engineer our programmes?

A: We have begun work within the Sheffield City Region to look at curriculum mapping from levels 2-7. Further detailed discussions would need to take place directly with our Health and Well Being Faculty.

Q: How does the university ensure they comply with the requirements for 20% off the job training?

A: The delivery models deployed tend to mirror the part time degree model, with either a day release or block release that reflects the 20% off the job training delivery. Other models such as utilising blended learning are being looked at in a bid to reduce delivery costs.

Q: How many staff at SHU work directly on apprenticeships?

A: There is one Full Time Apprenticeship Development Manager and other roles have a significant allocation of time within them from a central support team, equivalent to approx 3xFTE. Faculty professional services and academic staff also have a time allocation.

Q: In terms of the CDI sector, what LMI and skills gap have you done with employers to identify true skills needs.

A: The Local Enterprise Partnership have provided some data on the regional picture using data from UKCES Working Futures and others such as from the Creative Skillset and Creative and Cultural Skills Sector Skills Councils.

Q: What contract have you designed to incorporate all funding rules and payment structure, this includes breakdown against monthly employer costs and Levy (as Nestle will be Levy) and how this links to EPA costs and layout.

A: We have a template contract in place which includes commitment to the EPA, and a monthly payment structure.

Q: That then links to the current SFA funding rules on EPA costs in a contract with the

employer. How is this currently in a contract.

A: We are looking at incorporating the EPA cost as an additional cost to the employer in the event an apprentice does not go on to complete the EPA following the awarding of their degree.

Q: With grey areas around EPA costs and how much the employer will get involved in delivery. We are struggling to work out delivery models. Any suggestions?

A: We have discussed this with several providers during the 'Delivering Apprenticeship Standards' programme delivery. Our advice has been dissect the standard and assessment plan and work out your ideal delivery model with associated costing. Where does this take you within the band? Add on 20% (funding rules say at P116. *Costs of end-point assessment will vary but we expect that it should not usually be more than 20% of the total agreed price for delivering the apprenticeship training and assessment.* Then you also know what is your wiggle room with any employers who want to deliver specific components. You might also want to leave some scope for resits? Some providers are saying they will take the hit on this, others saying they will charge employers additionally (and cover off in contracts). If you can offer flexible options it will be important to make sure that any business development /employer engagement staff know what are the margins within which they can operate?

Q: Do we think that Maths and English requirements will inhibit some providers allowing these with lower levels to enter Apprenticeships? e.g. Its less of a risk?

A: There is a possibility that some providers will raise the entry bar for their apprentices to exclude those with the greatest English and maths needs. That must be the providers' decision.

Q: When you say that a provider can't charge an employer for a desired technical certificate qualification. Do you mean it can't be government funded and is charged for outside the funding system?

A: The Apprenticeship Levy and the 90:10 funding can only be used against an apprenticeship. If you are offering additional value through a qualification that is not part of the standard, then the costs for this must be found from elsewhere. If the qualification does map at least partially to the Knowledge Skills and Behaviours you can indeed offer it but Funding Rules say you cannot use the employer funds (or co-investment for para 82.12 *'Registration and examination (including certification) costs for non-mandatory qualifications (qualifications that are not specifically listed in the standard).*

Q: Does 20% off the job learning mean away from the work place, does E learning cover this?

A: It could do, but you must be able to evidence it takes place in working time. Also para 82.5 of Funding Rules says funding cannot be used for: *'Off-the-job training delivered only by distance learning, although you can include online and other blended learning activity as part of the delivery of an apprenticeship'.*

Q: Does 20% off the learning mean away from the work place?

A: No. it means away from the pressures of work.

Q: Is there any requirements for ICT in those quals that used to have them embedded?

A: If ICT is not part of the standard then is it not required. There is work going on to address this in some standards.

Q: Cost of resit EPA will be paid by the employer, out of the funding band??

A: This is part of the negotiation of price with the employer to agree who pays.

Q: How do we approach standards when the employers own in house trainers are delivering the majority of training but want the provider to quality assure it and make it an apprenticeship?

A: Covered live. Suggest your written agreement with each employer covers quality arrangements. If they are not claiming funding they are not subject to e.g. Ofsted but you are responsible for the sum of the whole...

Q: Can you please clarify the point around using funding within the cap for upskilling learners where they do not meet the requirements, up to the maximum amount of the cap. How can this be achieved if employers have already committed to a price. Can we then go back to them and ask to use additional funds from either the levy or through co-investment?

A: The funding Rules say that using funds from Levy or from the co-investment is allowable if additional learning is required after a failed EPA See para 79.6. 'providing additional learning takes place'. The advice is make provision for this in your costing and in your contracting with employers. You might take a punt on covering it for one resit if you have left some margin in overall costing or you might make provision in the contract that this will be taken out of any allowance left within the band. That assumes you haven't simply charged the full band price.

Q: We are currently delivering a standard. End point assessment seems a very high cost e.g 20% of finding banding. Very concerned about lack of EPA that are coming through and how quality will be assured.

A: See below re costs. RE quality the Employer groups are tasked to create some external quality assurance provision for the AAOS who deliver their End point assessment. Some are using Ofqual which then means the AAO must be regulated as an awarding organisation is now. Others have bespoke arrangements. The Institute for Apprenticeships will then have responsibility for strategic oversight of quality for EPA and willing turn monitor that external quality arrangement.

Q: Is the cost of the EPO limited to 20% of the standard funding?

A: The 20% retention is not to just to cover the cost of EPA. In most cases EPA will be much less than 20%. The funding rules say at P116. *Costs of end-point assessment will vary but we expect that it should not usually be more than 20% of the total agreed price for delivering the apprenticeship training and assessment.* AAOs are now aware of this guidance and seem to be setting prices within the bracket where they can.

Q: Are the end point multiple tests set by the end point assessment centre or are they the same tests for all centres?

A: They are set by the epa centre (AAO) to meet the epa requirements. The AAOs will produce sample tests for practice.

Q: Do the quality people who will be checking prior to EPA need to be professionally qualified in the area?

A: The quality of the assessors will be assured through the EPA organisation. There are no EPA qualifications yet written. There are no fixed levels of qualification for staff who are working for providers on – programme i.e. before Gateway either in delivery or quality assurance. Some standards have veered into this area suggesting advised occupational competence but they are dissuaded from doing so in the guidance to developers.

Association of Employment and Learning Providers
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