

# **Guidance on Degree & Integrated Degree Apprenticeship Programmes**



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# DEGREE & INTEGRATED DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES GUIDANCE

## PART 1: DEGREE & INTEGRATED DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with the [BPP University Policies and Procedures \(UPPs\)](#) and [General Academic Regulations \(GARs\)](#) which outline guidance for the setting and maintenance of academic standards and the quality and enhancement of learning opportunities
- 1.2. The principles and practice within this document are governed by, and aligned with, rules and guidance set out by:
  - [Education and Skills Funding Agency \(ESFA\)](#)
  - [Office for Students \(OfS\) Ongoing Conditions of Registration](#)
  - [Higher Education and Research Act 2017](#)
  - [Education and Inspection Framework](#)
  - [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#)
  - [Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015 \("The Prevent Duty"\)](#)
  - [Quality Assurance Agency Characteristics Statement for Higher Education in Apprenticeships](#)
  - [Institute for Apprentices and Technical Education \(IfATE\)](#).
- 1.3. In addition, the guidance provided here supports the [BPP Apprenticeship Regulations](#) which, along with the [Apprenticeship Operating Manual](#), detail the overarching BPP apprenticeship policies and procedures. For Higher Education Apprenticeships with degrees, or Higher Education (HE) awards, the guidance provided here is definitive and must be followed to ensure compliance.
- 1.4. BPP University, as an Apprenticeship provider and End Point Assessment Organisation, delivers high quality training and an independent, objective assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours as set out in the relevant Apprenticeship Standard. This ensures the integrity of Apprenticeship delivery and provides assurance of the achievement of the associated Apprenticeship and any associated component qualifications.

### 2. Definitions of Higher Education Apprenticeships

- 2.1. Higher Education apprenticeships are funded and regulated through the ESFA. As an apprenticeship training provider, BPP University operates within the terms and conditions of its funding contract with the ESFA.
- 2.2. A higher education apprenticeship combines both higher and vocational education, and fully tests wider occupational competence and academic achievement through successful completion of either:
  - a) an integrated degree, co-designed by the University and employers to ensure content and context are directly relevant to the workplace; or
  - b) an undergraduate degree and a standalone End-Point Assessment (EPA) which tests professional competence.

- 2.3. An apprenticeship is an employer-driven programme of learning, linked to a specific occupational level which develops knowledge, skills and behaviours required for a specific job role. Qualifications offered as part of a HE apprenticeship are positioned at the appropriate level for the award as defined in the [Quality Assurance Agency \(QAA\) Framework for Higher Education Qualifications \(FHEQ\)](#), aligning with the approved qualification descriptors and relevant subject benchmarks.
- 2.4. On- and off-the-job training and learning is included within an apprenticeship and each individual Apprenticeship Standard specifies the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to demonstrate full competence in the relevant occupation.
- 2.5. There are two types of apprenticeships involving a HE qualification and covered by the expectations of the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education:
- a) Higher apprenticeships are offered at levels 4 and 5. These are equivalent to a higher education certificate, higher education diploma or a foundation degree.
  - b) Degree apprenticeships are offered at levels 6 and 7. These are equivalent to a bachelor's or master's degree respectively.
- 2.6. To be eligible for an apprenticeship, the apprentice must be in paid employment for the duration of the apprenticeship and EPA and have a job role (or roles) within an organisation that provides the opportunity for them to gain the required knowledge, skills and behaviours set out in the relevant Apprenticeship Standard.
- 2.7. Further detail on eligibility can be found in the [Apprenticeship Regulations](#).
- 2.8. Degree apprenticeship programmes are designed to allow apprentices to achieve both the University qualification and the apprenticeship.

### **3. Apprenticeship Standards**

- 3.1. IfATE approve apprenticeship standards which define the knowledge, skills and behaviours that are required to demonstrate full occupational competence in the identified job role linked to the standard. The standards are produced by employer groups and, when approved for delivery by the IfATE, include an approved Assessment Plan and allocated funding band. The apprenticeship standard must be fully approved, including funding band, and be published on [the IfATE website](#) before an apprentice can be enrolled.
- 3.2. The standards are grouped into 15 defined technical routes to skilled employment and can be accessed directly through [the IfATE website](#).

### **4. Entry requirements**

- 4.1. The processes for recruitment and entry for HE apprenticeships differs slightly from the standard process for University student recruitment and admission. To ensure candidates are recruited to a programme of the correct academic level, align with their job role and with access to appropriate opportunities to fulfil the criteria of their course, Degree Apprentices must be recruited in accordance with the:
- [University Admissions Policy](#) as stated in the GARs and UPPs
  - Apprenticeship recruitment requirements as set out in the specific [Apprenticeship Standard](#) and also general apprenticeship requirements found in the [Apprenticeship Regulations](#).

- 4.2. It is the joint responsibility of the University and employer(s) to ensure the processes of recruitment and selection are implemented consistently. The University will routinely monitor the effectiveness of the agreed criteria and process and identify any enhancements required.
- 4.3. The University sets out the minimum entry requirements for the HE apprenticeship, incorporating requirements specified within the relevant Apprenticeship Standard. The specific arrangements for recruitment and selection of apprentices must be outlined in programme documentation. This must be agreed in advance of the enrolment of an apprentice with each employer.
- 4.4. There are several eligibility criteria that all apprentices must meet in order for the University to access funding. The eligibility criteria are mandated by the ESFA and apply to all apprenticeships, they can be found in the [ESFA apprenticeship funding rules](#) for training providers.
- 4.5. An apprentice must work enough hours each week so that they can undertake sufficient, appropriate, regular training and on-the-job activity. The minimum duration of each apprenticeship is based on the apprentice working 30 hours a week or more, inclusive of any off-the-job training they undertake. If the apprentice works fewer than 30 hours a week the minimum duration of their programme (pro rata) must be extended to accommodate this. This also applies to any temporary period of part-time working.
- 4.6. All elements of the apprenticeship must be completed in normal working hours.
- 4.7. Programme teams should consider how to support apprentices who have not achieved level 2 English and mathematics, and whether achieving these qualifications should be standard for entry to any degree apprenticeship programme. Some apprentices may undertake level 2 English and mathematics functional skills qualifications alongside their apprenticeship, but these are no longer (from February 2025) mandated as an exit qualification for apprenticeships for apprentices aged 19 years or older.
- 4.8. Degree apprenticeships must include a process to Recognise Prior Learning (RPL) unless it is precluded in the apprenticeship EPA plan. The criteria for RPL must relate to the knowledge, skills and behaviours within the apprenticeship standard, recognising the holistic nature of learning as a combination of applied theory and reflective practice. Where RPL is to be applied, the BPP Onboarding Team will work with employers to complete a training needs analysis of each apprentice. Where appropriate, the Programme Team will be consulted for their input. If RPL is granted and some modules are exempt from an apprentice's training, then such modules will not be funded as they do not constitute 'new learning'. If RPL is granted, the baseline requirement of 12 months' minimum duration and off-the-job training must still be met by the remaining programme elements.
- 4.9. The University and the employer have shared responsibility for ensuring the quality of the apprentice learning and training experience. Arrangements must be in place for mentoring /coaching both in the workplace and at the University, along with support for mentors /coaches, pastoral support for learners, arrangements for safeguarding and to satisfy requirements of; the prevent duty, equality and diversity legislation and health and safety policies.

- 4.10. Effective collaboration between the University and the employer(s) is essential, the details of which must be agreed and documented. This includes completion of the:
- [Written Agreement](#) (contract) between the University and the employer,
  - [Commitment Statement](#) between the University, the employer, and the apprentice,
  - [Apprenticeship Agreement](#) between the employer and the apprentice which the University should retain a copy of.
- 4.11. The final decision to accept an applicant for a place on an apprenticeship programme incorporating a HE qualification rests with the University.

## **5. Programme Design**

- 5.1. The primary aim of programme design is to provide a coherent structure which allows learners to meet the required knowledge, skills and behaviours of the relevant approved apprenticeship standard.
- 5.2. BPP University apprenticeship programme design must be aligned with the University's principles for programme design as set out in the [GARs Section D – Awards and Programmes Framework](#), and the [UPPs Curriculum Development Policy](#). This is to ensure the appropriate credit equivalence of the HE qualification offered as part of the apprenticeship, alongside assurance that the programme embraces:
- a) Flexible design to meet the business needs of employers;
  - b) A personalised, work-based curriculum for all learners;
  - c) Involvement of employers in the delivery.

### *Programme Learning outcomes*

- 5.3. Programme design ensures alignment to the relevant apprenticeship standard and associated Assessment Plan to enable apprentices to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to successfully complete their apprenticeship, allowing them to achieve both the HE qualification and the apprenticeship in tandem. To ensure complete alignment, the programme development team is required to map module learning outcomes to the individual skills, knowledge and behaviours specified in the apprenticeship standard. This mapping is in addition to standard curriculum mapping.
- 5.4. The programme design should enable apprentices to take responsibility for their own learning and plan for their future learning by providing opportunities for reflective learning based on informal and formal feedback and a dialogue with mentors /coaches. Apprentices need to be supported to develop the ability to identify additional learning opportunities within the context of their day-to-day work activity, for example negotiated work-based projects, completing learning logs or professional development portfolios.
- 5.5. Apprenticeship programmes must be designed to be delivered over a 52-week calendar year rather than an academic year with a period of 'active learning' taking place at least every four weeks. Direct face to face, online and live online delivery is not required throughout, however during periods when the apprentice is not attending the University, structured off-the-job training activities must be planned to support engagement and progress in advancing their knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- 5.6. When designing a degree apprenticeship programme, the programme team must consider the range of working contexts, variety of employment settings and different working patterns within which the apprenticeship may be undertaken.

- 5.7. There is a minimum of 30 working hours in each week of an apprenticeship; including off-the-job training. For part time employees, or those working less than 30 hours per week, the minimum duration of the apprenticeship must be adjusted pro-rata to accommodate the same number of hours overall. This should be calculated using the following:

$$12 \times \left( \frac{30}{\text{Average weekly hours}} \right) = \text{Revised Minimum Programme Duration (in Months)}$$

For zero hours' employees, the apprenticeship duration must be adjusted in proportion to the hours they work (based on either historical patterns of work or future projections). Apprentices with a zero hours contract must still undertake off-the-job training during their paid working hours.

- 5.8. Learning must take place over a minimum period of 12 months prior to gateway
- 5.9. The academic contribution to the apprenticeship programme might therefore comprise of a maximum of 30-45 credits from free-standing modules from 120 credits covered in each year of study, the remaining credits will be covered through learning that is integrated into the 80% work-based learning: for example, modules that integrate the off- the-job with on-the-job learning. The exact nature of this will be programme specific, but typical examples include study for a defined number of hours on University-based introductory sessions that provide a theoretical underpinning for further hours of learning spent on the application, and exploration of theory in a work place context. Additional hours of study will be required for learners to undertake an end-of-module reflection on, or evaluation of, the relationship they discover between the theory and the application of it in practice. Thus, modules for off-the-job learning might be:
- a) Academic and free-standing, contextualised in the workplace or role, but without an element of work-based learning taking place. They will have a defined credit value and notional learning hours, OR
  - b) An integration of theory and application to practice, with a defined credit value and notional learning hours divided between the off-the-job and the on-the-job learning such that overall, the off-the-job learning can be identified as contributing to the overall minimum 20% of the apprenticeship learning.
- 5.10. To allow for flexibility in delivery, apprenticeship courses should not normally include any pre, post or co-requisite modules. Optional modules may be required to meet employer specific needs, in particular for open programmes where apprentices attend from a number of employers.
- 5.11. Additional modules that do not contribute to the achievement of the apprenticeship cannot be funded by the levy and would need to be funded by the employer directly.
- 5.12. Learning and teaching strategies for apprenticeships are aligned to the requirements set out in the BPP University Assessment Strategy and Framework in [Section 5 of the UPPs Assessment & Examinations Framework and Procedures](#).
- 5.13. For all HE qualifications incorporating an apprenticeship, the programme assessment strategy must align with the apprenticeship Assessment Plan which forms part of the approved apprenticeship standard. The programme assessment strategy must include a range of both formative and summative assessments which enable the programme /module learning outcomes to be successfully met and also prepare apprentices for EPA.

- 5.14. Plans for programme delivery should ensure that time is available following Progression and Awards Boards for those who are referred at the first attempt to resubmit in a timely fashion and enable learners to progress with their peers.

*On and off-the-job training*

- 5.15. Integration of on- and off-the-job learning is fundamental for the delivery of a high-quality apprenticeship.
- 5.16. For degree apprenticeships, the work environment provides the key context for learning; up to 80% of the learning and training on the programme takes place on-the-job. BPP University is responsible for ensuring that the apprentice's workplace provides an appropriate source of learning. The hours for off-the-job learning must be calculated using the ESFA guidance.
- 5.17. Off-the-job learning must be;
- a) Outside of the normal day-to-day working environment;
  - b) During the apprentice's contracted working hours;
  - c) Directly relevant to the apprenticeship standard.
- 5.18. Off-the-job learning can include:
- Traditional face to face or online learning;
  - Practical training;
  - Training delivered at the apprentice's normal place of work, but must not be delivered as part of their normal working duties;
  - Shadowing;
  - Mentoring;
  - Industry visits and attendance at competitions;
  - Time spent preparing and writing assessments.
- 5.19. Off-the-job learning cannot include:
- Learning for level 2 English and mathematics;
  - Undertaking progress reviews;
  - Completing on-programme assessment required for a standard;
  - Training which takes place outside the apprentice's paid hours.
- 5.20. The off-the-job training must be tracked and measured over the course of an apprenticeship. BPP University and the employer should agree at what point during the programme of study off-the-job training is best delivered, for example a proportion of every day or week, a block at the beginning, middle and/or end of the apprenticeship. This will depend on what is best for the employer and the apprentice, and it will take account of the technical and theoretical requirements of the apprenticeship standard.



## 6. Programme Approval

- 6.1. The normal procedure for BPP University programme approvals is outlined in the [GARs Section D – Awards and Programmes Framework and UPPs](#), and the corresponding [UPPs Curriculum Development Policy](#) and must be followed. However, in addition, the input of appropriate practice expertise is required to supplement subject expertise in the programme design. This must be evident in documentation submitted for to the Curriculum Review Group (CRG) for approval, the CRG will not endorse the proposal without it. Following the CRG, this evidence must also be submitted to the University Approval Panel (UAP) with the proposal documentation. Where an apprenticeship includes recognition, or accreditation, from Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB), the relevant PSRB should be appropriately involved in the validation and approval processes, evidence of which must similarly be submitted to the UAP.
- 6.2. External reviewers of programme proposals, and ultimately those appointed as external examiners, must be suitably qualified and/or experienced to undertake the role. This might mean that two external examiners would be selected, one a subject expert and the other a practice expert. For degree apprenticeships the external examiner(s) will be responsible for the quality assurance of assessments and judgements made; for integrated degree apprenticeships this will include the EPA and awarding of the degree, for independent degree apprenticeships this would be for the award of the degree only.
- 6.3. The CRG and UAP will evaluate the programme proposal against:
- The FHEQ descriptors;
  - Coherence with the relevant subject benchmark statement(s);
  - The relevant Apprenticeship Standard and Assessment Plan, including provision for the EPA.
- 6.4. Teams proposing degree apprenticeship programmes should ensure, in consultation with the relevant University department/service, that appropriate arrangements will be in place for post-approval programme management and in particular:
- a) Support systems for the apprentices as learners,
  - b) New partners approved/noted through the Due Diligence Panel,
  - c) Collaborative and contractual agreements,
  - d) Completion of the Learning Aim Request to the ESFA (required for Individualised Learner Records),
  - e) Maintenance of Individual Learning Records,
  - f) Funding arrangements with ESFA.
- 6.5. Degree apprenticeships involve the assessment of academic standards and occupational or professional competence. Where they also provide PSRB recognition, consideration should be given to how these assessments might be most effectively coordinated. For example, the EPA may have a dual role and stand as the requirement for establishing professional body status/membership. The Assessment Plan will indicate whether or not the EPA must be conducted by assessors from the relevant PSRB.

## 7. Apprentice Experience

- 7.1. The tri-partite relationship between BPP University, the employer and the apprentice is an integral component in the success of an apprenticeship and enhancement of creative and transformational learning. The University has a responsibility to ensure that the rights and entitlements of apprentices as learners, and the rights and obligations of apprentices as employees are appropriately aligned.

- 7.2. Apprentices are allocated a workplace mentor by the employer. This mentor should work with BPP University's academic mentor /coach to support the progress and achievement of the apprentice and support the identification of appropriate workplace activities to facilitate work-based achievement opportunities.
- 7.3. Apprentices on HE programmes will have a progress review with their BPP University coach at least every three months. These will be carefully timed to support academic progression and to follow the milestones of the learner's journey. Records of these review meetings must be produced and retained by the academic mentor /coach. These formal meetings may be supplemented by further telephone or online meetings as required.
- 7.4. Schools must indicate how and when the apprentice voice will be captured in terms of module and /or programme evaluation, apprentice liaison committees, representation on bespoke Boards and so on. Existing opportunities may not be accessible to apprentices due to work commitments, so arrangements need to be considered to take this into account.
- 7.5. Assuring the quality of the apprentice experience means that employer feedback and the School's responsive actions in relation to it, needs to be recorded and reported as part of standard review process.
- 7.6. Whilst studying at BPP University, all degree apprentices have the same recourse to the University's extenuating circumstances policy (contained in the [UPPs Extensions and Extenuating Circumstances Policy](#)) and support for students with a disability or long-term health condition (contained in the [UPPs Learning Support Policy](#), [UPPs Disability Disclosure Policy](#), [UPPs Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy](#), and [UPPs Reasonable Adjustments Policy](#)), complaints and academic appeals procedures ([UPPs Student Complaints Policy](#) and [UPPs Academic Appeals Policy](#)).
- 7.7. There is also an expectation that apprentices adhere to the University's expectations of good academic practice as outlined in the [UPPs Academic Practice Policy](#). Where an allegation of academic misconduct is raised, the University process for investigating will follow as outlined in the Policy.
- 7.8. All degree apprenticeship programmes will be subject to the standard internal and external monitoring and review procedures but, given the multi-location settings and the partnership delivery, the processes must also allow for input from the employer, workplace mentor, and the End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO).

## PART 2: QUALITY ASSURANCE OF END POINT ASSESSMENT IN UNIVERSITY APPRENTICESHIPS

### Summary: Managing End Point Assessment (EPA)

Maintaining records of End-Point Assessment (EPA) responsibilities and activities	In order to comply with Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) rules, the University must maintain records in relation to End-Point Assessments (EPAs) for six years following the completion of EPA.
Recruiting and maintaining records of Independent Assessors	Where the EPA is integrated, the University must ensure it has suitable Independent Assessors (IAs).
Training and ensuring the CPD of Independent Assessors	For integrated EPAs, the University is required to ensure IAs keep their professional expertise current and up to date. The Apprenticeship Compliance and Quality team are responsible for ensuring IAs understand the specific requirements of the EPA and that evidence of this is logged with the IA records.
Ensuring potential conflicts of interest are identified and managed	EPAs must be conducted impartially with a clear separation between those who teach on the programme and those who carry out the EPA. This document explains how we manage and mitigate any potential or real conflict of interest in the delivery of EPAs.
Conducting EPAs and applying for Completion Certificates	BPP University carries out EPAs ensuring adherence to the internal and external quality assurance requirements.

## 8. Introduction

- 8.1. This Policy provides detail regarding End Point Assessment (EPA) and how this:
- a) fits with the approval of Apprenticeship Training delivery;
  - b) aligns BPP University's Quality Assurance policy and processes.
- 8.2. All apprenticeship standards involve an:
- a) Independently assessed, synoptic EPA, which determines whether the apprentice has met the requirements of the apprenticeship standard;
  - b) Assessment Plan, which sets out how the EPA should be carried out.
- 8.3. To be eligible to enter the "gateway," the apprentice needs to have met the requirements set out in the Assessment Plan, the minimum duration of study and completion of the required amount of off-the-job training, they also need to have the employer's permission to proceed. The EPAO will check this in assessing eligibility to enter the gateway.
- 8.4. There are two ways in which the EPA may be carried out, dependent on the requirements of the apprenticeship standard and the Assessment Plan. There is a predetermined approach for each standard. The choices are:
- a) Independent. The EPA organisation is independent of the training provider. An apprentice on a degree apprenticeship would need to gain the academic award and pass the end point assessment in order to complete the apprenticeship.
  - b) Integrated. The EPA forms an integral part of the academic award, but nevertheless it must involve a terminal assessment carried out by the training provider.
- 8.5. All EPAs must include at least two assessment methods; for example, these could be a work- or practice- based project and a performative assessment such as a presentation or professional discussion. Whether the EPA is integrated or independent, the programme assessment strategy must ensure that apprentices have had adequate access to these forms of assessment throughout the programme and prior to meeting the gateway requirements for the EPA, as set out in the EPA Assessment Plan.
- 8.6. The EPA can only be taken after the minimum duration of the apprenticeship has been completed. The entire duration of the apprenticeship standard for both training and EPA should be recorded on the Individualised Learner Record (ILR), a minimum of 372 days is needed in order to be eligible for funding.
- 8.7. EPA is carried out by a designated End Point Assessor Organisation (EPAO).

The University can act as an independent EPAO where it has not been involved in the training of the apprentices. The University can therefore be an EPAO and training provider for the same apprenticeship standard, provided that it does not assess the apprentices it has trained.

## 9. Independent Endpoint Assessment

### *Background*

- 9.1. Any independent EPAO needs approval from the organisation providing the External Quality Assurance (EQA) for the relevant apprenticeship standard (e.g., Ofqual, OfS) The EPAO to be used is the choice of the employer, although in practice the employer may follow the University's advice. Some employers may have specific requirements about flexibility of place and timing, as well as about price and quality.

- 9.2. The University is responsible for paying the EPA organisation from within the fee it receives for delivering the apprenticeship training, the final 20% of which is only recoverable on completion. The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) will set the maximum funding band which can be recovered from the levy and the maximum percentage of the cost which can be spent on EPA.
- 9.3. The University will have a contract with the EPAO and the employer, setting out the terms and conditions of the EPA including payment. The University must also satisfy itself of the EPAO's capability and capacity to deliver high quality EPA, by reviewing the organisation's:
  - i. track record as an EPAO;
  - ii. number of EPAs it has carried out;
  - iii. the qualifications of the staff who carry out the assessments;
  - iv. policy on conflicts of interest;
  - v. checking that the organisation is on the RAAO.
  - vi. how the EPAO ensures consistency in the work it undertakes, covering such issues as moderation, standardisation;
  - vii. training and CPD for assessors.
- 9.4. The contract should also specify what feedback the University will get from the EPAO, as this is needed to feed forward into development of future apprenticeship training. Feedback from the EPAO is to be reviewed using an equivalent process to that adopted for annual external examiners' reports to ensure best practice is surfaced and areas for development are highlighted. A clause must be included in the contract between the University and employer insisting that where an employer wishes to change EPAO, that they consult with BPP before this decision is finalised.
- 9.5. When approving new programmes involving a degree apprenticeship, BPP University must satisfy itself that appropriate arrangements will be in place for the EPA. Programme Teams will be required to explain how:
  - i. The design of their programme(s) prepares apprentices for their EPA, which might involve different forms of assessment (portfolio; professional discussion) which they may not be familiar with;
  - ii. How the programme team will, with the employer, determine when each apprentice is ready for EPA.
- 9.6. Programme Teams will also need to show familiarity with the Assessment Plan. When attending the CRG the programme development team should include at least one member of staff familiar with apprenticeship training. The approval process should also involve employers where feasible.

### *Requirements*

- 9.7. For Independent Degree apprenticeships the following apply:
  - i. The apprentice must have passed their degree to be put forward for EPA. This is determined by the University;
  - ii. Successful completion of the degree does not constitute completion of the apprenticeship. The apprenticeship is not achieved until both the degree and EPA have been achieved;
  - iii. In some Apprenticeship Standards, the EPA is undertaken after the degree has been awarded.

## *Monitoring*

- 9.8. All programmes must be monitored annually consistent with the Continuous Programme Monitoring Review (CPMR) Procedure ([GARs Section D – Awards and Programmes Framework](#) and [UPPs Academic Planning, Monitoring and Review](#)) and the Annual Programme Monitoring Review requirements of apprenticeship provision with the BPP Education Group.
- 9.9. In its constant review of the apprenticeship and associated degree programme, through CPMR, the University should take into account the views of employers and apprentices of the EPA, as well as considering feedback from the EPAO. It should also review progression on the degree programme and the apprenticeship. Where any action is required to address any issues identified, this should be included in the action plan which is part of the CPMR and in this way practice can be enhanced over time. This includes a review of how satisfactorily the EPAO had performed.

## **10. Integrated End Point Assessment**

### *Background*

- 10.1. Where indicated by the Assessment Plan and the Apprenticeship Standard that the EPA is integrated, the University will carry out the EPA as well as provide the training. The EPA will be part of the academic award and must comply with the requirements of the Assessment Plan, including the requirement that any staff carrying out EPA have not been involved in delivering training on the same programme being assessed.
- 10.2. In such cases the University has to be approved by the organisation providing the External Quality Assurance (EQA) for the relevant apprenticeship standard (e.g., Ofqual, OfS) for each individual apprenticeship standard, as registration is by standard rather than for the institution. Thus, when planning apprenticeship training with an integrated EPA, time to successfully complete the registration process for new standards with the relevant organisation (e.g., Ofqual, OfS) will need to be factored into the overall timeline.

### *Approval*

- 10.3. In the programme approval process, the Programme Development Team will need to:
- a. Demonstrate that the integrated EPA meets the requirements of the Assessment Plan, which will set out the required elements of assessment and how it will be graded. All EPAs must involve at least two forms of assessment.
  - b. Demonstrate that the University is approved for undertaking EPA as part of its EPAO activities for the relevant Apprenticeship Standard(s) or clarify the timescale for achieving this.
  - c. Explain how the programme prepares apprentices for the EPA.
  - d. Clarify the requirements for entering the gateway and outline how these will be assessed.
  - e. Demonstrate that staff qualified to act as end point assessors will not be involved in delivering training, and that this capacity can be sustained. If new appointments are required, then the School will need to explain how it will ensure that such appointees meet the requirements in the Assessment Plan in relation to qualifications and experience, and they will be completed in an appropriate timescale.

- f. Explain what steps will be taken to ensure that the assessments are appropriately standardised and moderated, both internally and externally, including outlining how external examiners will be involved. Such procedures should at least meet the normal requirements of the University for moderation. This means that the external examiner must review a representative sample of evidence and accompanying assessment decisions in line with the policy and record in writing.
  - g. Indicate what protocols have been developed to ensure fair and consistent treatment of all candidates. The specifics will depend on the relevant apprenticeship standard and Assessment Plans, which may allow for some discretion in relation to the tools, materials and techniques used.
  - h. Explain how the outcomes from different end point assessors will be monitored for consistency and their individual, and collective, performance reviewed.
  - i. Indicate what rules are in place to deal with conflicts of interest. End point assessors would be required to disclose any conflicts of interest and the Dean of Academic Quality (or nominee) will then decide how this should be dealt with. In some cases, it might be appropriate to appoint a different end point assessor.
  - j. Show what steps that will be taken to ensure that assessors are adequately briefed and trained, bearing in mind that the assessment may include unusual forms of assessment (e.g. professional discussion).
  - k. Confirm that any discussions, interviews or presentations for assessment will be recorded and maintained for a period of 6 years following completion of the EPA.
- 10.4. Employers should be involved in the approval process wherever relevant and feasible. The UAP must include at least one member of staff who has some expertise in degree apprenticeships.
- 10.5. All interviews, discussions and presentations considered for assessment should be recorded in an appropriate way for quality assurance purposes and in case there are appeals or complaints.

### *Monitoring*

- 10.6. All programmes must be monitored consistent with the Continuous Programme Monitoring Review (CPMR) Procedure ([GARs Section D – Awards and Programmes Framework](#) and [UPPs Academic Planning, Monitoring and Review](#)) and the Annual Programme Monitoring Review requirements of apprenticeship provision with the BPP Education Group..
- 10.7. The CPMR for the programme will cover the EPA and should take account of feedback from employers and apprentices on the process. External examiners' reports and progression and completion data should also be taken into account. Where any action is required to address any issues identified, this should be included in the action plan which is part of the CPMR and in this way practice can be enhanced over time.

## PART 3: INDEPENDENT END POINT ASSESSORS

### 11. Applying to deliver EPA

- 11.1. For integrated Degree apprenticeships, the University will also be the EPAO and must be approved by the relevant EQA organisation to deliver EPA, [in the case of integrated degrees, this is the Office for Students \(OfS\)](#). The EPA must deliver an impartial result. Assessors must be independent of the apprentice and their employer; they must be:
- occupationally competent;
  - meet any other conditions for assessors;
  - not have been involved in the on-programme delivery.
- 11.2. Schools are required, under ESFA rules, to be capable and registered to deliver their own integrated EPA to enable each learner to complete the Apprenticeship. Only following completion of the apprenticeship can the University draw down the final 20% of funding.
- 11.3. The Apprenticeship Compliance and Quality team completes all applications and submissions to the relevant EQA Organisation on behalf of BPP in order that BPP can undertake the necessary EPA. The application should be made at least 12 months before the first EPA is due to take place. Ideally applications should be drafted concurrently with Academic Approval documentation. The application must be approved at least nine months before the first EPA is scheduled to take place.
- 11.4. The evidence required includes:
- The mapping of the Apprenticeship Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) to the University award and the delivery method to support the learner through the Apprenticeship to EPA;
  - Explanation of the how the components of the EPA will be assessed and graded in line with the EPA for the standard;
  - Explanation of how the programme team, with employers, will confirm that apprentices can enter the Gateway to EPA;
  - Evidence that Independent Assessors (IAs) have the professional competence, experience and assessment expertise for the relevant standard;
  - Draft Job Descriptions and Person Specifications for IAs that will be recruited specifically for the role;
  - Information about how IAs will be briefed and trained;
  - Explanation of the methods that will be used to record and store assessment records;
  - Policies and procedures in support of Higher Education Apprenticeship.
- 11.5. Proposed changes to the End-Point Assessment Operational Plan (EPAOP) may be treated as minor programme amendments in line with the University Curriculum development and Academic Planning Policy, however these will be reviewed on an individual basis before making that determination.
- 11.6. In order to ensure oversight across University EPA activity, and in alignment with ESFA requirements, the Apprenticeship Compliance and Quality team maintain records for six years of:
- University applications to deliver integrated EPAs; and
  - Schedules of annual reconfirmation of our EPA provision to the appropriate EQA organisation (e.g., OfS).



## **12. The role of an Independent Assessor (IA) and the skills and knowledge requirements for IAs**

### **12.1. The role of an Independent Assessor (IA) will vary depending on the EPA but will include:**

- Participating in assessment standardisation events.
- Annually submitting evidence of CPD records within an agreed timescale.
- Annually reviewing, and where necessary updating, their conflicts of interest declaration within an agreed timescale.
- Carrying out EPA as set out in the EPA plan for the programme. This involves ensuring national comparability of academic standards, and that the assessment and classification processes are reliable, fair and transparent, and operate in line with:
  - University regulations, policies and procedures ([General Academic Regulations](#), and [University Policies and Procedures](#))
  - UK Quality Code for Higher Education;
  - Characteristic Statement for Apprenticeships;
  - Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) rules;
  - Relevant Apprenticeship Standard and End-Point Assessment Plan;
  - Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements (where applicable).
- Complete reports within appropriate timescales.

### **12.2. The Apprenticeship Compliance and Quality team will appoint IAs who demonstrate appropriate evidence of the following:**

- Knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality.
- Competence and experience in the fields covered by the programme of study.
- Relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate.
- Competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures.
- Sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic peers and, where appropriate, professional peers.
- Familiarity with the EPA standard to be expected of learners to achieve the award that is to be assessed.
- Fluency in English.
- Where applicable, meeting criteria set by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB).
- Awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant assessments.

## **13. Recruiting and maintaining records of Independent Assessors (IAs)**

### **13.1. Where the EPA is integrated, the Apprenticeship Compliance and Quality Team ensures it has suitable Independent Assessors who meet the requirements described previously.**

### **13.2. For every Integrated EPA there shall be at least two IAs in order to support the moderation and calibration of marks. The total number of IAs for any EPA must be sufficient to cover the number of EPAs expected.**

- 13.3. The appointment of IAs is the responsibility of the Director of Apprenticeship Quality and Regulation.
- 13.4. The appointment of IAs should be informed by the principle of “balance” e.g., to avoid a high proportion of IAs from a single institution or type of institution or to avoid an imbalance between the numbers of academic and practitioner independent assessors on a particular programme of study. To take account of the balance of appointments, Schools should consult the University’s list of current IA appointments.
- 13.5. There is no formal limit for the period of service of an IA. The work of IAs is reviewed by the Apprenticeship Compliance and Quality Team as part of the Apprenticeships Annual Report to Academic Council and the BPP University Board.

#### **14. Termination of appointment of staff recruited as IAs**

- 14.1. Where an IA wishes to terminate their contract of appointment early, a minimum of three months’ notice is required. The Apprenticeship Compliance and Quality team considers the request and agrees all early contractual terminations, reporting them to the Dean of Academic Quality & Policy. Steps must be put in place to appoint a new IA as quickly as possible.
- 14.2. Where the University wishes to terminate the appointment of an IA early, for example where a programme is due to close, a minimum notice period of three months will be given.
- 14.3. Where a School considers an IA has failed to fulfil their obligations satisfactorily this must be reported to the Director of Apprenticeship Quality and Regulation. The Director of Apprenticeship Quality and Regulation will then take appropriate steps to contact the IA and resolve the matter. If it is felt necessary to terminate the appointment, then this shall be formally undertaken by the Director of Apprenticeship Quality and Regulation. Examples of an IA failing to fulfil their obligations include, but are not limited to:
- Failure to take part in required training;
  - Failure to update their records of CPD and conflicts of interest annually;
  - Failure to carry out EPAs in line with expectations;
  - Failure to provide the written report by the published deadline.
- 14.4. Where a conflict of interest arises during the IA’s employment, and where the conflict cannot be resolved satisfactorily, normal practice is that the IA resigns. However, as a last resort the University will terminate the IA’s contract to ensure integrity of its processes.

#### **15. Conflicts of interest and EPAs**

- 15.1. The University takes every effort to manage and mitigate any potential or actual conflict of interest in the delivery of EPAs.
- 15.2. All IAs are required to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest at the time of their nomination and update this declaration on an annual basis. Prior to the EPA the IA will be given a list of the names of apprentices (and their employers) that they are due to assess, and the IA must declare any actual or potential conflict of interest at the earliest opportunity. If actual or potential conflicts of interest are declared, and they cannot be resolved, the Apprenticeship Compliance and Quality team will decide how they should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. In some situations, it may be appropriate to appoint a different IA.

- 15.3. To ensure IAs are impartial in judgement and “do not personally benefit from any learner outcomes, nor have any connection to any learner being assessed” ([UK Quality Code for HE, Advice and Guidance: External Expertise](#)) the University does not appoint as IAs any individuals in the following categories or circumstances:
- Anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with an apprentice studying a Degree Apprenticeship.
  - Anyone with a close personal relationship with a member of staff involved with the Degree Apprenticeship.
  - Anyone required to assess colleagues who are recruited as apprentices to the Degree Apprenticeship.
  - Anyone who is, or knows they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of apprentices on the Degree Apprenticeship.
  - Anyone significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme(s) or modules in question.
  - Involved in a reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at another higher education provider.
  - The appointment of more than one IAs from the same department of the same higher education or apprenticeship provider.

## **16. Training and ensuring the CPD of Independent Assessors**

- 16.1. To ensure consistency of approach and in-depth understanding of the Apprenticeship Standards and EPA, all IAs are required to undertake training to prepare them for the assessor role, ensuring that all IAs are informed about relevant institutional procedures, practices and academic regulations, their role and the apprenticeships and modules to which they are appointed.
- 16.2. Ongoing training will be provided by the Apprenticeship Compliance and Quality team to ensure that all requirements are met, and all assessments conducted are valid, fair and reliable and in line with the relevant EPA plan.
- 16.3. All IAs are expected to attend an annual standardisation event. The purpose of these events is to ensure the fair, consistent and reliable grading of all assessments. They also allow the programme team to update the IAs on any changes to the apprenticeship or standard.
- 16.4. The Apprenticeship Compliance and Quality team ensures that the CPD and training records of IAs are updated annually and retained for six years.

## **17. Conducting End Point Assessments and applying for Completion Certificates**

- 17.1. Reassessments of the EPA will be undertaken in line with the University's Regulations except where the Apprenticeship Assessment Plan sets out specific procedures, in which case the Assessment Plan will take precedence.
- 17.2. Apprentices will be issued with a transcript of their achievement in line with standard University procedures for undergraduate and postgraduate degree awards. Transcripts for apprentices completing the EPA make it clear that the document is not an Apprenticeship Certificate.
- 17.3. The Apprenticeship Compliance and Quality team, as EPAO, is responsible for claiming the apprenticeship certificate from the Apprenticeship Assessment Service.

## **18. Failure and reassessment of the end-point assessment**

- 18.1. Each apprenticeship End-Point Assessment Plan will stipulate the procedures to be followed where an apprentice fails to pass their End-Point Assessment.

## **19. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion**

- 19.1. The appointment of IAs will be monitored by Apprenticeship Quality and Compliance in relation to protected characteristics and reported annually as part of the Apprenticeships Annual Report to Academic Council and the University Board of Directors.

## **20. Appeals and Complaints**

- 20.1. EPA carried out by the University is subject to the University's normal appeals and complaints procedures as defined in the [GARs Section G: Rights and Duties, 1. Complaint and Appeal Rights](#), and [UPPs Student Complaints Policy](#) and [UPPs Academic Appeals Policy](#).

## **21. Fair Access**

- 21.1. The University has a strong commitment, backed by the University Board, to Equality and Diversity. Outcomes from EPA will be reviewed against protected characteristics (gender; ethnicity; disability) and analysed to highlight trends which may indicate unconscious bias, although initially numbers will be too small to show trends which are statistically significant.
- 21.2. To ensure that all learners have an equal chance of success, where apprentices have notified the University of a disability, an agreed learner support plan will be put into place recommending adjustments which are necessary to ensure all learners have an equal opportunity of being successful in their studies (e.g., additional time for dyslexic candidates to read programme materials) These adjustments will not advantage any apprentice, nor affect the integrity of an EPA conducted by the University or any of its staff or contracted IAs delivering EPA on its behalf.

## **22. Monitoring of End Point Assessors**

- 22.1. Where the University carries out the EPA, the outcomes will be reviewed and signed off by the relevant Progression and Awards Board, which may need to hold a special meeting to ensure these are dealt with in a timely way. Where applicable, the Programme Board will look at the outcomes across different end point assessors. If it appears that there might be differences between assessors, further moderation work will need to be undertaken.
- 22.2. Subsequently as part of CPMR, EPA outcomes will be reviewed against different protected characteristics, although only once numbers become sufficiently large will these be statistically significant.

## **23. Procedures to ensure comparability and consistency of practice**

23.1. As shown elsewhere in this document, comparability and consistency will be ensured through:

- a) Recruitment of suitable end point assessors who will be briefed and trained.
- b) Utilising a team approach to carrying out end point assessment.
- c) The development of protocols covering how the assessment will be administered.
- d) Moderation and standardisation of a sample of outcomes.
- e) Recording presentations, interviews and discussions for moderation and quality control purposes.
- f) Monitoring of outcomes by the board of examiners and the board of studies.
- g) Using the CPMR process to review outcomes and to use the learning from this to improve practice.

## GLOSSARY

Term	Meaning
Apprenticeship Agreement	The document where the arrangements between the apprentice and the employer and the employer are confirmed. The University should hold a copy of it and any subsequent revisions.
Assessment Organisation	The organisation selected by the employer and procured by the main provider to deliver the End Point Assessment
Assessment Plan	A detailed document that accompanies each Apprenticeship Standard that sets out each element of the Gateway requirements and the methods of synoptic assessment to be used at the End Point Assessment.
Apprenticeship Standard	A statement of the duties and knowledge skills and behaviours that an apprentice will need to demonstrate at the end of the apprenticeship through an end-point- assessment
Commitment Statement	The Commitment Statement sets out how the employer and training provider will support the apprentice. There should be signed and dated copies for each of employer, apprentice and training provider. The statement should be kept with or in the Written Agreement. There is a template for the Commitment Statement.
Degree Apprenticeship	A higher apprenticeship where the main learning includes a mandatory HE qualification at level 6 or 7
End Point Assessment (EPA)	A synoptic assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that have been learnt throughout the apprenticeship. The purpose of the assessment is to make sure the apprentice meets the standard set by employers and are fully competent in the occupation.
EPA Gateway	The point at which the employer is confident that the apprentice is occupationally competent and ready to undertake the EPA
EPA Gateway Period	The period during which the requirements set out in the Assessment Plan must be met by the apprentice prior to undertaking End Point Assessment of the apprenticeship standard.
EPA Gateway Requirements	Any requirements that should be completed before an apprentice can undertake EPA. For example, English and Maths qualifications, mandatory qualifications approved and detailed in the standard, any requirements or outputs that underpin an EPA method such as a portfolio demonstrating particular aspects of the standard, confirmation from the employer that the apprentice is ready for EPA.
EPA Organisation	The organisation that must be listed on the Register of Endpoint Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO) which can conduct EPA for specific apprenticeships. This means that higher education providers delivering integrated Degree Apprenticeships must be listed on the RoEPAO to be able to conduct EPA for their own degree awards. For non- integrated Degree Apprenticeships and all other apprenticeships that include higher education, EPA must be conducted by a separate organisation from the higher education provider that delivered the apprenticeship programme.
EPA Plan	A document prepared as part of the approval of the programme setting out details of the EPA including the EPA delivery plan.

ESFA - Education and Skills Funding Agency	An executive agency, sponsored by the Department for Education, which brings together the former responsibilities of the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to create a single agency accountable for funding education and skills for children, young people and adults. The ESFA administers contracts for funding and the Digital Apprenticeship Service for Levy payments to Apprenticeship Providers.
Independent EPA	Where the End Point Assessment is a separate assessment carried out by a third-party organisation after the completion of the University qualification; also known as non-integrated EPAs
Integrated apprenticeship standard/Integrated apprenticeship	Where the EPA is incorporated into the main learning aim (usually a degree or other full HE qualification). In these cases there is no need for an additional independent assessment.
IFA - Institute for Apprenticeships	The Institute for Apprenticeships is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Education, which ensures high-quality apprenticeship standards and advises government on funding for each standard
KSBs - Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours	The elements of competence that the Apprenticeship learner will achieve during the Apprenticeship and need to evidence at the End Point Assessment in order to complete the Apprenticeship