

End Point Assessment for Improvement Practitioner Level 4

Guidance Pack



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Introduction

These guidance notes are designed to support the apprentice and the employer through the End Point Assessment Process. The employer must select an End Point Assessor Organisation from the register of approved assessors, and the Training Provider must contract with the End Point Assessor Organisation within three months of the start of the apprenticeship programme.

The Institute of Six Sigma Professionals has many years' experience of assessing improvement specialists and understands the needs of delegates as well as how to approach assessments. These guidance notes are designed to provide clear guidance for the Improvement Practitioner Apprentices, right from the start of the programme. This helps focus attention on the outcomes required and how to best record and present learning throughout the programme, in order to meet the End Point Assessment requirements.

Details of the Standard

Overview of the Improvement Practitioner Standard

Improvement Practitioners use a blend of Lean and Six Sigma, project and change management principles and tools to identify and lead the delivery of change across organisational functions and processes. Improvement Practitioners can be found across all sectors and functions including automotive, banking, engineering, food products, IT, property, retail, telecoms etc.

Typically, Practitioners lead smaller projects and/or play a key supporting role in a larger programme – tackling issues that may require swift problem solving, or re-occurring challenges that require in-depth analysis and the implementation of a range of effective and sustainable countermeasures. They are the focal point for all stakeholders and responsible for communication throughout a project. Typical activities include:

- Identifying potential opportunities, diagnosing issues, proposing solutions and implementing changes and controls
- Coaching teams and sharing best practice
- When leading projects they may manage small teams ensuring motivation and momentum, and be responsible for the successful

There are a variety of job titles associated with the occupation, these include, but are not limited to: Business Improvement Practitioner, Continuous Improvement Manager, Process Excellence Manager, Lean Six Sigma Green Belt and Quality Control Senior Analyst.

Duration:

Full time apprentices will typically spend 14 to 18 months on-programme working towards the apprenticeship standard, with a minimum of 20% of this time being off-the-job training. The apprentice may start the end point assessment after 14 months.

Entry requirements:

Individual employers will set their own entry requirements

Qualifications:

Apprentices without English and mathematics at level 2 must achieve level 2 prior to taking their EPA; either before or during their apprenticeship. Evidence of this must be presented as part of the Gateway Review.

Overview of the Assessment Process

Overview

The Improvement Practitioner standard is assessed through an End-Point Assessment (EPA): an assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) that an apprentice has learned throughout an apprenticeship, which confirms that they are occupationally competent.

The EPA must be conducted by an end-point assessment organisation (EPAO) approved to offer services against this standard, as selected by the employer from the Education & Skills Funding Agency's (ESFA) Register of End Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO). The EPAO must be selected by the employer organisation, and the training provider must contract with them on the employer organisation's behalf within three months of the apprenticeship starting.

The EPA should only start once the employer is satisfied that gateway requirements for EPA have been met and that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the standard. The Gateway Review triggers the EPA.

The EPA consists of three distinct assessment methods:-

- Multiple choice examination – to assess knowledge elements of the standard
- Project report, presentation & questioning – to holistically assess knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) in the standard
- Professional discussion underpinned by log – to holistically assess KSBs across the standard.

Performance in the EPA will determine the apprenticeship grade of fail, pass, merit or distinction. Each assessment methods' contribution to the overall grade of the EPA/apprenticeship is set out in the following table:

Multiple Choice Examination	Project Report, Presentation & Questioning	Professional Discussion, underpinned by log
10%	60%	30%

When the apprentice successfully completes their apprenticeship and passes their EPA, they'll be awarded a certificate. The EPAO will request this certificate on their behalf.

Project and Programme Requirements

The pace of the apprenticeship programme is driven by the individual apprentices, as well as operational opportunities; but is typically completed within 14-18 months. The apprentice may start the EPA typically after 14 months.

The EPA is focussed around the application of Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) as outlined in annex 1, through the implementation of a business-related improvement project. During the EPA, the apprentice must be able to clearly explain the reasons for project selection, how each improvement tool was used, business benefit of the project including a key performance indicator measure (for example, hours saved, money saved) and how the apprentice worked with a team of people during this project.

In order to pass the EPA, the apprentice must demonstrate that the project:

- addresses a substantive business problem/opportunity in the apprentice's workplace
- delivered sustainable business benefits into the business as a result of any project(s) carried out, as confirmed in writing by the apprentice's employer
- applied a recognised methodology (e.g. PPS, DMAIC, 8D)
- correctly applied and/or interpreted Lean, Six Sigma, Project and Change Management tools
- demonstrates data-backed decision making to support definition, measurement, analysis and improvement or equivalent phases of the recognised methodology being applied.

The apprentice must also be able to demonstrate their role in setting-up and leading others in an improvement team (i.e. worked with others, with communication and consultation throughout the project.)

Example improvement project idea are shown in the table below:

Project Area	Key Metric
Accounts	Invoice Processing time – days
Finance / Control	Cash flow – monthly overdraft limit/cost
HR / Training	Availability of required skill set - %
Logistics	Quality of product received from Tier 1
Purchasing	Spend on materials, services and utilities - £
Quality	Removal of major non-conformances
Sales	Enquiry to order processing time – days
Resource / Equipment	Scrap material reduction - £
Product / Service Quality	Supplier Quality Performance - %
Design	Product Approval leadtime for export - days

The apprentice must spend a minimum of 20% of their time in off-the-job training, for a period of 14-18 months. This includes learning through application of problem solving tools and

methodology to the project. The project therefore requires managerial support and commitment in order to maximise the benefits to the organisation and to enable the apprentice to complete the standard effectively.

The apprentice must:

- Record their time spent off-the-job training. This should be monitored through the training provider.
- Maintain a learning log with typically between 13 and 15 pieces of evidence that holistically map against all the KSBs listed in the standard, as shown in Annex 1. This log will be used to underpin the EPA professional discussion.
- Complete a project portfolio to evidence completion of an improvement project(s). This will support the project presentation and questioning.
- Create a project report, comprising of a series of pieces of work, or sections on the report, related to each one of the steps of one of the recognised problem solving methodologies. This evidence will be generated over the period of the project activities.
- Submit their log and project report to the EPAO within one month of the EPA gateway.
- Prepare and deliver a project presentation, based on the project report and supported by the project portfolio
- Present evidence that they have attained Level 2 in English and Mathematics
- Provide suitable identification documents prior to each part of the EPA.

Employers may therefore like to consider the following:

- Centralised support for project selection
- Providing guidance for managers with responsibility for apprentices
- Setting progress objectives for the duration of the programme
- Regular reviews of progress involving managers, apprentices, and other key stakeholders

Details of the Gateway

The End Point Assessment (EPA) can only start once the employer is satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the standard. Employers may wish to take advice from their apprentice's training provider(s).

Employers must ensure that the apprentice has met the following requirements prior to EPA taking place, and provide a signed declaration confirming this to the EPAO in order to trigger the EPA:-

- Completion of a log, typically referencing 13-15 pieces of evidence, holistically mapped against the KSBs listed in the standard. This log will be used to underpin the Professional Discussion.
- Completion of a project portfolio to evidence completion of a substantial improvement project following a recognised improvement methodology. The improvement project(s) will be the basis of a project report, and the subject of the presentation and questioning.
- Attained Level 2 English and Maths

Receipt of this signed declaration will trigger the EPA process and there are then two months in which to fully complete the EPA. The EPAO will contact the employer to arrange dates, times and locations for the required EPA.

Within the first month after the Gateway review, employers must:

- Confirm arrangements with EPAO for the EPA (who, when, where)
 - The EPA must take place within the second month after the Gateway Review, while giving the apprentice at least two weeks' notice
 - Any reasonable adjustments required for fair access must be agreed
 - Any equipment required for the presentation must be requested by the apprentice
- Ensure apprentice is aware of the EPA, is prepared and ready, and ensure attendance
- Review the apprentice's project report and project presentation, before signing a statement authenticating both the project report and the presentation, and confirming business benefits associated with the improvement project
- Select an appropriate employee (supervisor or above) to attend the presentation & questioning and the professional discussion to ensure accuracy and veracity of the apprentice's presentation and statements.

Within the first month after the Gateway review, the apprentice must submit their project report and log to the EPAO.

The End Point Assessment (EPA)

The EPA consists of three distinct assessment methods:-

- Multiple choice examination – to assess knowledge elements of the standard
- Project report, presentation & questioning – to holistically assess knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) in the standard
- Professional discussion underpinned by log – to holistically assess KSBs across the standard.

Performance in the EPA will determine the apprenticeship grade of fail, pass, merit or distinction. Each assessment methods' contribution to the overall grade of the EPA/apprenticeship is set out in the following table:

Multiple Choice Examination	Project Report, Presentation & Questioning	Professional Discussion, underpinned by log
10%	60%	30%

Each of the three assessment methods of the EPA needs to be passed in order to gain a minimum grade of 'pass' for the EPA and thus the apprenticeship.

Pass, merit and distinction criteria for each of the above assessment methods are shown in Annex 2.

The grade from each assessment method is combined reflecting its weighting to determine the EPA grade of pass, merit or distinction.

The EPA must be completed within 2 months of completion of the EPA gateway. By the end of month one, the apprentice must have submitted their log and project portfolio to their EPAO and have prepared their project report and presentation. The project report, presentation & questioning and professional discussion underpinned by the log will take place during month two with a minimum notice period of 2 weeks required. The multiple choice examination can take place at any point during the EPA period.

It is anticipated that the report presentation and questioning, and professional discussion underpinned by log will take place on the same day however, this is not a requirement. The multiple choice examination can take place at any point during the EPA period. A matrix showing the KSBs assessed by each of the assessment methods is shown in Annex 1.

Details of the multiple choice examination

Content and Time Limit

The multiple choice examination will contain 40 knowledge-based questions and be time limited to 40 minutes. It may be an on-line or paper-based test. Each question will present the apprentice with four options to be selected, (a) - (d), from which the candidate must select one option. The candidate may refer to training material/reference books but may not access computer search engines or similar. This is in line with existing practice for assessment in the subject. The multiple choice examination is not a memory test and the ability to refer to material reflects real working environment where improvement practitioners would look things up to inform the right answer. Given the time restraints apprentices will not be able to refer to notes for every answer.

Sample questions will be available.

Administration/Invigilation

An EPAO appointed administrator/invigilator must be present (physical or virtual) in the examination room throughout the duration of the examination. The administrator/invigilator must read from a script to provide apprentice instruction at the commencement of the examination. The administrator/invigilator must also confirm the apprentice's identity through examination of a suitable identity document to be provided by the apprentice (i.e. photo driving license, passport). A maximum of 12 apprentices per administrator/invigilator are allowed, excepting any cases of remote administration/invigilation of on-line tests where a maximum of 4 apprentices per invigilator are permitted.

Marking

EPAOs will mark the examination. Each correct answer to be assigned one mark, any incorrect or missing answers to be assigned 0 marks. Where an apprentice selects more than one option to any single question, 0 marks are to be awarded. Electronic marking is permissible.

Grading Criteria

Multiple Choice Examination (maximum obtainable = 40 marks)		
Pass Criteria	Merit Criteria	Distinction Criteria
25 to 29 marks	30 to 35 marks	36 marks or greater
Fail Criteria – Fewer than 25 marks		

Project Report, Presentation and Questioning

The apprentice must complete an improvement project(s) to demonstrate the KSBs required by the standard. The improvement project(s) will be the subject of a project report to be produced during the EPA period and the subject of the presentation and questioning. The improvement project must:-

- Clearly demonstrate delivery of business improvement benefit as confirmed in writing by the apprentice's employer
- Be completed in the apprentice's workplace.
- Address substantive business problem(s)
- Follow each step of one of a recognised improvement methodology

The purpose of the report, presentation and questioning method of End Point Assessment is to holistically assess the KSBs required by the standard as set by the coverage matrix in Annex 1. It is expected that the evidence for many of these KSBs will naturally occur in the report and as the apprentice makes their presentation, but it is accepted that there will be some 'gaps'. For each of the required KSBs which are not naturally evidenced through the report and presentation, the independent assessor will ask follow up questions to elicit evidence that the KSBs have been attained, or otherwise. In addition, the independent assessor will ask questions to enable accurate assessment against the pass/merit/distinction criteria where further information is required to address any 'gaps'.

Details of the Project Report

The project report detailing the improvement project(s) carried out by the apprentice is to be submitted to the EPAO by the apprentice within one month following the EPA gateway. The project report will then be read by the independent assessor prior to the presentation and questioning. This report will also be the subject of the presentation. Questioning on the report will follow the presentation.

The evidence contained in the report will comprise of a series of pieces of work, or sections on the report, related to each one of the steps of one of the recognised problem solving methodologies. This evidence will be generated over the period of the project activities.

The project report must be authorised by means of a 'signed statement' from the apprentice's line manager to confirm authenticity and business benefit.

Report Format

The report should:

- Be a concise, visual summary
- Follow the principles of "A3 Thinking"
- Convey key points in a way that enables messages to be grasped "within 3 seconds"

- Be typically one to three sides of A3
- Include any support documents in an annex which must be submitted with the report and which must be distinct from documents included in the project portfolio

The report MUST follow each step of one of the recognised problem solving methodologies, e.g.

‘Define, Measure, Analyse, Improve, Control’ (DMAIC), ‘8 Disciples (8D), ‘Practical Problem Solving’ (PPS), and holistically demonstrate how each of the KSB’s listed in Annex 1 have been achieved.

Details of the Project Presentation

Project Presentation Content / Scope

The presentation made must be on the project(s) which is the subject of the apprentice’s project report, and as such detail the improvement project(s) carried out by the apprentice. It is up to the apprentice how this information is presented, for example through PowerPoint, through a large copy of the project ‘A3’ report, images or charts. The apprentice must inform the EPAO of their selected method of presenting to allow the EPAO to organise any IT equipment required. It is up to the apprentice to bring all materials to the presentation. The scope of the presentation is limited to the improvement project(s) carried out by the apprentice and should be presented following linearly the steps of the applicable improvement methodology applied to the project(s).

The apprentice should clearly explain the reasons for project selection, how each improvement tool was used, business benefit of the project including a key performance indicator measure (for example, hours saved, money saved) and how the apprentice worked with a team of people during this project.

Project Presentation format.

The presentation may be in any format (employers have differing ‘house styles’ and preferred presentation methods) and there are no word or content restrictions. However, the presentation MUST follow each step of one of the recognised problem solving methodologies (e.g. DMAIC, 8D, PPS). Also, the presentation must be authorised by means of a signature from the apprentice’s line manager to confirm authenticity and business benefit.

Project portfolio.

The apprentice must bring their project portfolio of evidence to the presentation & questioning and be prepared to show extracts from these to the independent assessor if required during the questioning. If the apprentice does not bring the portfolio to the assessment, then the assessment will have to be rescheduled and a charge may be made. If it is not possible to reschedule the assessment within the second month after the Gateway Review, then a Fail grade may be issued.

Questioning specification.

For each of the required KSBs which are not naturally evidenced through the report and presentation, the independent assessor will ask follow up questions to elicit evidence that the KSBs have been attained, or otherwise. In addition, the independent assessor should ask

questions to enable accurate assessment against the pass/merit/distinction criteria where further information is required to address any 'gaps'.

Open questions will be used, for example:

Explain in detail...

Give an example...

Describe...

Demonstrate...

Take us through your calculation of...

How did you...

Where do you find...

What was the objective...

Timing

Presentation by apprentice:- 30-40 minutes

Questioning by independent assessor:- 25-35 minutes

Hence the report, presentation and questioning method has a maximum time limit of 75 minutes.

Audience

The audience for the presentation & questioning must include one employer representative (usually supervisor of the apprentice or above). Their role is to confirm validity of the information provided in the question and answer section, provide guidance to the assessor in terms of employer policy and practice where requested and to create a realistic presentation environment. The employer must not amplify or clarify points made by the apprentice. Note that the EPAO judgement lies solely with the independent assessor who alone 'marks' the report, presentation and questioning. Quality assurance staff (internal or external) may also be in attendance.

Grading criteria

Grading criteria for this element of the EPA are shown in Annex 2.

Details of the Professional Discussion, underpinned by log

The purpose of the professional discussion is to holistically assess the KSBs required by the standard as set by the coverage matrix in Annex 1. The independent assessor will typically ask 13 to 15 open questions and can ask follow up questions for clarification to elicit evidence that the KSBs have been attained, or otherwise and to enable accurate assessment against the pass/merit/distinction criteria. It will take place in a quiet private room.

Details of the Log

The log will typically include one piece of evidence for each KSB that is assessed by the professional discussion, as shown in the coverage matrix in Annex 1. Evidence must be holistically mapped against the KSBs. For example, the apprentice may write up a meeting held with stakeholders to demonstrate team working and communication, and/or examples of application of learning to the wider job role. The log will typically reference between 13 and 15 pieces of evidence. The log will be used to underpin the EPA professional discussion.

The log is to be submitted to the EPAO by the apprentice within one month following the EPA gateway. The log will be reviewed by the independent assessor prior to the professional discussion.

The apprentice must bring a copy of their log to the professional discussion and be prepared to show extracts from these to the independent assessor if required. If the apprentice does not bring the log to the assessment, then the assessment will have to be rescheduled and a charge may be made. If it is not possible to reschedule the assessment within the second month after the Gateway Review, then a Fail grade may be issued.

It is not possible to specifically state the questions to be asked at the professional discussion, as these will depend on the results of the review of the log previously carried out by the independent assessor to identify where KSB's required have sufficient evidence or are not sufficiently evidenced. The apprentice will be asked, with reference to their log, to explain how KSB's required were practically achieved.

Open questions will be used, for example:

Explain in detail...

Give an example...

Describe...

Demonstrate...

Take us through your calculation of...

How did you...

Where do you find...

What was the objective...

Timing

The professional discussion will last approximately 50 - 60 minutes.

Audience

The audience for the professional discussion must include one employer representative (usually supervisor of the apprentice or above). Their role is to confirm validity of the information provided in the professional discussion and provide guidance to the assessor in terms of employer policy and practice where requested. The employer must not amplify or clarify points made by the apprentice. Note that the EPA judgement lies solely with the independent assessor who alone 'marks' the professional discussion. Quality assurance staff (internal or external) may also be in attendance.

Grading criteria

Grading criteria for this element of the EPA are shown in Annex 2.

End Point Assessment – Grading

Each assessment method will be individually graded – fail, pass, merit, distinction. A fail in one or more of the assessment methods will result in a fail in the EPA.

Points will be awarded for each grade as follows:

Grade	Fail	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Points Awarded	0	1	2	3

The points achieved for each method will be multiplied in line with the weighting of the assessment method in terms of its contribution to the EPA/apprenticeship grade, as follows.

	Multiple Choice Examination	Project Report, Presentation and Questioning	Professional Discussion, underpinned by log
Weighting	10%	60%	30%
Pass	10	60	30
Merit	20	120	60
Distinction	30	180	90

Boundaries for overall pass, merit or distinction are set as follows, with ‘merit’ being set at 50-79% of the range and distinction being set at 80% or greater of the range.

	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Lower Boundary	100	200	260
Upper Boundary	199	259	300

Each potential combination of grades for each individual method of assessment have been tabulated below to show the overall grade to be awarded:

Results for each assessment method			Overall Grade to be awarded
Multiple Choice Examination (10%)	Project Report, Presentation and Questioning (60%)	Professional Discussion, underpinned by log (30%)	
FAIL	Any	Any	FAIL
Any	FAIL	Any	FAIL
Any	Any	FAIL	FAIL
PASS	PASS	PASS	PASS
PASS	PASS	MERIT	PASS
PASS	PASS	DISTINCTION	PASS
PASS	MERIT	PASS	PASS
PASS	MERIT	MERIT	PASS
PASS	MERIT	DISTINCTION	MERIT
PASS	DISTINCTION	PASS	MERIT
PASS	DISTINCTION	MERIT	MERIT
PASS	DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION
MERIT	PASS	PASS	PASS
MERIT	PASS	MERIT	PASS
MERIT	PASS	DISTINCTION	PASS
MERIT	MERIT	PASS	PASS
MERIT	MERIT	MERIT	MERIT
MERIT	MERIT	DISTINCTION	MERIT
MERIT	DISTINCTION	PASS	MERIT
MERIT	DISTINCTION	MERIT	DISTINCTION
MERIT	DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION
DISTINCTION	PASS	PASS	PASS
DISTINCTION	PASS	MERIT	PASS
DISTINCTION	PASS	DISTINCTION	PASS
DISTINCTION	MERIT	PASS	PASS
DISTINCTION	MERIT	MERIT	MERIT
DISTINCTION	MERIT	DISTINCTION	MERIT
DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION	PASS	MERIT
DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION	MERIT	DISTINCTION
DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION

Reasonable adjustments

Should an apprentice be declared by the employer as having special needs, e.g. Dyslexia, English not as a first language, then appropriate reasonable adjustment will be made.

ISSP are committed to ensuring that we meet the needs of an individual apprentice without affecting the integrity of the end point assessment. Our access arrangements ensure that we comply with the Equality Act 2010.

We aim to involve apprentices and their employing organisation in any decisions about adjustments/adaptations. This will ensure that individual needs can be met, whilst still bearing in mind the specified assessment criteria for a particular qualification. As the needs and circumstances of each apprentice are different, a request for a reasonable adjustment is done on a case by case basis. We expect the learning provider/employer to provide evidence of need before we agree or take steps to make the necessary adjustments or modifications. We aim to do this at least six weeks before an assessment. Any additional costs to the assessment will be added to the assessment fee.

Reasonable adjustments may include the following, but others may be available depending upon the needs of the apprentice:

- Supervised rest breaks
- Extra time
- Computer reader/reader
- Read aloud and/or the use of an examination reading pen
- Scribe/Speech recognition technology
- Word processor
- Prompter
- Oral Language Modifier
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Practical assistant
- Alternative site for the conduct of examinations

Record of the evidence and the agreed adjustment are to be stored with the apprentice assessment data and is to be made available to the relevant External Quality Assurance body.

Resits and Retakes

End Point Assessment – Final Judgement

The decision on the apprentice's performance in the EPA will be determined solely by an EPAO's independent assessor, subject to moderation.

It is anticipated that the same independent assessor will mark the project report, presentation & questioning and professional discussion underpinned by log, although this is not a requirement to allow EPAOs flexibility. The independent assessor that conducts the report, presentation and professional discussion assessment will combine the results from each assessment method to determine the EPA/apprenticeship grade as described later in this document.

The apprentice should be notified of the EPA outcome in writing within 4 weeks of the completion of the EPA, including detail of areas for further development and improvement where they have failed.

Failure/Re-sit and Re-take information

Apprentices that fail the EPA will have the opportunity to re-sit/re-take. Re-sits/re-takes are not to be offered to apprentices wishing to move from pass to merit/distinction or merit to distinction. A re-sit does not require further learning, whereas a re-take does. The conditions relating to re-sits/re-takes are outlined below.

Apprentices who fail any one EPA method will be offered the opportunity to take a re-sit/re-take for that one method. The re-sit/re-take must be taken within one month of notification of the result of the original EPA, otherwise the entire EPA must be retaken. The re-sit/re-take will be graded pass/merit/distinction and combined with the grades for the other 2 assessment methods to determine the EPA grade. If an apprentice fails the re-sit/re-take they will be required to re-take the EPA in full after a period of further learning.

Apprentices who fail more than one of the EPA methods or who have to re-take the EPA in full due to conditions described above will be required to re-take the entire EPA after a period of further learning and the maximum grade awarded will be 'pass', unless the EPAO establishes that the reason for the original fail was for reasons beyond the apprentice's control.

In all cases the apprentice's employer will need to agree that a re-sit or re-take is an appropriate course of action.

Alternate question sets will be used in re-sits and re-takes.

Complaints and Appeals

Complaints or appeals will only be considered from the applicant or candidate concerned and not from any third party. Full details of how to make a complaint or appeal are found in annex 3.

Complaints

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the work undertaken within our End-Point Assessment services. A complaint can be received

verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. If it is to be investigated further, then the complaint needs to be in writing.

An applicant/candidate wishing to make a complaint should do so within 21 days of the matter with which the complaint is concerned. ISSP will add details of the complaint to the ISSP Complaints/Appeal Log, and will acknowledge the complaint in writing within 1 working day of receipt.

ISSP will have 28 days to investigate further and to respond in writing.

A complaint may be about:

- the administration of an application
- the training and support received whilst on the programme
- The assessment process
- a perception that an ISSP or national policy or relevant legal requirement has not been correctly implemented or adhered to when dealing with an application or candidate.

Appeals

An appeal is when an apprentice considers that the End-Point Assessment decision is incorrect.

An applicant/candidate wishing to lodge an appeal should do so within 21 days of the final component of the End-Point Assessment.

ISSP reserves the right to levy a charge for an appeal subject to the component and/or Apprenticeship Standard. Upon receipt of a request to invoke the appeal process ISSP will invoice the appellant or their employer or other representative and the appeal fee must be paid within 7 working days.

An appeal is defined as:

- a request for reconsideration of a decision to reject an application or remove (withdraw) a candidate from the programme. Should a rejected applicant or a withdrawn candidate consider that either:
 - ISSP has not adhered to its own policies or procedures or is in breach of any national policies or relevant legal requirements: or
 - There is evidence of bias or prejudice against the applicant/candidate
- a request for reconsideration of a 'Not Met' outcome of summative assessment based on the view of the candidate that either:
 - ISSP has not adhered to its own marking policy or process
 - the mark scheme has not been correctly applied
 - there is evidence of bias or prejudice against the applicant/candidate

The principle we follow in appeals is to enable the apprentice to re-present their assessment evidence and to give apprentices the best opportunity for successful completion of the End-Point Assessment as soon as possible after an assessment decision is made.

A further principle, in the case of a dispute over result, is to offer the apprentice the opportunity to retake the relevant component of the End-Point Assessment.

Annex 1 – Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours

Key	Method of Assessment
E	Multiple Choice Examination
R	Report Presentation and Questioning
P	Professional Discussion underpinned by log

Assessment Method	Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours	Details	
E	K1. Compliance	K1.1 Legislative requirements including health and safety	
E		K1.1 Customer requirements including health and safety	
R P	K2. Team formation and Leadership	K2.1 Decision-making techniques e.g. consensus, authority rule, majority rule	
E	K3. Project management	K3.1 Business case	
E		K3.2 Risk analysis and management	
E		K3.3 Project Planning Tools - toll-gate reviews, work breakdown structure	
E		K3.4 Pilot Studies	
E		K3.5 Project Reviews - lessons learned, process management and measures, benefits tracking	
R P		K4. Presentation and Reporting	K4.1 Reporting templates
R P			K4.2 Message mapping
R P	K4.3 Case for change		
E	K5. Change Management	K5.1 Stakeholder identification, analysis and management (RACI).	
E		K5.2 Change curve, resistance characteristics	
E		K5.3 Change sponsorship	
E		K5.4 Compelling point of view	
E	K6. Principles and Methods	K6.1 Business value of Lean and Six Sigma	
E		K6.2 8D and practical problem solving	
E		K6.3 DMAIC	
E	K7. Project Selection and Scope	K6.4 Design for Six Sigma	
E		K7.1 $Y=f(x)$	
E	K8. Problem definition	K7.2 business scorecard cascade	
E		K8.1 Cost of Poor Quality	
E	K9. Process mapping and Analysis	K8.2 Problem Analysis models, such as Is/Is Not	
E		K9.1 Swim lane	
E		K9.2 Value stream map	

E		K9.3 Performance metrics - continuous
E		K9.4 Parameter diagram
E		K9.5 Takt time
E		K9.6 OEE
E		K9.7 Theory of constraints
E		K9.8 Kanban
E	K10. Data Analysis	K10.1 Spreadsheets and pivot table analysis
E		K10.2 Statistical analysis software
E	K11. Measurement systems	K11.1 Repeatability and reproducibility
E	K12. Basic Statistics and measures	K12.1 Control charts
E		K12.2 Control charts - attribute data
E		K12.3 Principles of normality
E	K13. Data analysis – statistical methods	K13.1 Measures of central tendency and spread
E	K14. Process capability and Performance	K14.1 Capability analysis - continuous data for normal distribution
E	K15. Root cause analysis	K15.1 Key principles including symptoms
E		K15.2 Failure mode
E		K15.3 Potential/verified cause
E		K15.4 Critical inputs
E		K15.5 Escape point
E		K15.6 Dot plots
E		K15.7 Scatter plot
E		K15.8 Box plots
E	K16. Experimentation	K16.1 Active versus passive analytics
E		K16.2 Design of experiments
E		K16.3 Experiment plan
E	K17. Identification and prioritisation	K17.1 Selection and prioritisation matrix
E		K17.2 FMEA
R	S1. Compliance	S1.1 Work in accordance with organisational controls and statutory regulations
P	S2. Communication	S2.1 Speak and write clearly
P		S2.2 Influence others
P		S2.3 Question effectively.
P		S2.4 Plan and deliver meetings presenting insight to engage audiences
R	S3. Coaching	S3.1 Observe, listen, use questioning, provide feedback
R		S3.2 Spot Learning Opportunities
R P	S4. Project management	S4.1 Define, sequence, plan and schedule activities with phases and milestones.
R P		S4.2 Estimate effort and duration
R P		S4.3 Create and update project charter.
R P		S4.4 Review progress

R P	S5. Change management	S5.1 Sponsorship contract
R P		S5.2 Surface and manage resistance
R P		S5.3 Build compelling narratives for change
R P		S5.4 Assess change impact
R	S6. Principles and Methods	S6.1 Select and apply a structured method
R		S6.2 Select and apply appropriate improvement tools
R		S6.3 Engage with SMEs to deliver business benefits
R	S7. Problem Selection and Scoping	S7.1 Identify improvement opportunity
R		S7.2 Scope improvement project
R	S8. Problem Definition	S 8.1 Problem/opportunity statements
R	S9. Voice of the Customer	S9.1 Identify customers
R		S9.2 Prioritise customers
R		S9.3 Identify and prioritise customer requirements
R		S9.4 Voice of the business
R	S10. Process Mapping and Analysis	S10.1 Measure and analyse flow and value
R		S10.2 Identify interfaces
R		S10.3 Identify functional responsibilities and ownership
R		S10.4 Use insight to identify potential opportunities
R		S10.5 Map future state
R	S11. Lean Tools	S11.1 Understand value
R		S11.2 Value stream
R		S11.3 Seek in-process waste
R	S12. Measurement Systems	S12.1 Plan, carry out and assess results of a measurement system study
R	S13. Data Acquisition for Analysis	S13.1 Develop a sampling strategy
R	S14. Basic Statistics and Measures	S14.1 Use graphical analysis to understand distribution
R		S14.2 Use graphical analysis to understand stability
R	S15. Data Analysis – Statistical Methods	S15.1 Identify data types
R		S15.2 Select analysis methods and tools based on data types
R		S15.3 Assess time series data stability
R		S15.4 Analyse data making relevant insight
R	S16. Process capability and performance	S16.1 Select metrics for analysis
R		S16.2 Select methods for analysis
R	S17. Root Cause Analysis	S17.1 Select and apply appropriate graphical tool dependent on data type

R		S17.2 Identify patterns, trends and signals to establish hypothesis
R P	S18. Experimentation and Optimisation	S18.1 Plan designed experiment with clear objectives and appropriate levels of MSA
R P		S18.2 Analyse experiment data
R P		S18.3 Optimise based on experiment data
R	S19. Identification & Prioritisation	S19.1 Identify and prioritise factors
R		S19.2 Identify and prioritise ideas
R		S19.3 Identify and prioritise solutions
R	S20. Data Analysis – SPC	S20.1 Select and apply appropriate tools
R		S20.2 Analyse and interpret control charts
P	S21. Benchmarking	S21.1 Conduct structured benchmarking to support target setting
R	S22. Sustainability and Control	S22.1 Identify failure modes
R		S22.2 Embed learning from improvements
P	B1. Drive for results	B1.1 Continuous drive for change
P		B1.2 Encourage others to deliver results
P		B1.3 Capture and standardise best practice
P	B2. Team-working	B2.1 Awareness of own and others' working styles
P		B2.2 Create high performing team
P	B3. Professionalism	B3.1 Promotes moral, legal and socially appropriate working manner
P		B3.2 Aligns behaviours to the organisation's values
P		B3.3 Maintains flexibility to needs of project
P	B4. Continuous Development	B4.1 Proactively seeks and acts on feedback
P		B4.2 Reflects on performance and has a desire for development
P		B4.3 Adapts quickly to working with new situations / stakeholders / challenges
P	B5. Safe Working	B5.1 Ensures safety of self and others
P		B5.2 Speaks out to challenge safety issues

Annex 2 – Pass, Merit and Distinction Criteria

Multiple Choice Examination

Multiple Choice Examination (maximum obtainable = 40 marks)		
Pass Criteria	Merit Criteria	Distinction Criteria
25 to 29 marks	30 to 35 marks	36 marks or greater
Fail Criteria – Fewer than 25 marks		

Project Report, Presentation and Questioning

Fail Criteria

The apprentice will be deemed as a 'fail' for the project report element if the criteria for 'Pass' grade are not met, specifically the apprentice will fail should they meet any one or more of the criteria below:-

- Not submit their project report to the EPAO within one month following the gateway
- Not provide a statement signed by their employer authenticating the project report and presentation and confirming business benefits associated with the improvement project
- Not demonstrate their role in setting-up and leading others in an improvement team (i.e. worked alone without communication and consultation throughout the project)
- Fail to address a substantive business problem/opportunity in the workplace
- Are unable to demonstrate that sustainable business benefits have been delivered into the business as a result of any project(s) carried out
- Not demonstrate that they have applied a recognised methodology (e.g. PPS, DMAIC, 8D)
- Not correctly applied and/or interpreted Lean, Six Sigma, Project and Change Management tools
- Fail to demonstrate data-backed decision making to support definition, measurement, analysis and improvement or equivalent phases of the recognised methodology being applied.
- Not present the project using a concise, visual format
- Not demonstrate holistically through the project report, presentation and questioning, their knowledge and skills as set out in Annex 1 and as detailed in the apprenticeship standard

Pass Criteria

Apprentices must demonstrate all the following criteria

1. Prepare, submit and present a project report to agreed timescales that details one improvement project. The project must:

- Show business benefit to the apprentice's employer (S22)
- Follow the steps of a recognised Problem Solving methodology (e.g. PPS, DMAIC, 8D) with a clear flow from one step to another and supported by the application/interpretation of appropriate Lean, Six Sigma, Project and Change Management tools (S1, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S19, S22)
- Demonstrate data-backed decision making to support definition, measurement, analysis and improvement (S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18, S20)

2. Present the project using a concise, visual format and include:

- Explanation of how they chose and scoped the project (S7)
- How they used each tool (S6)
- How they led a cross-functional team during the project (K2, K4)

3. How they coached colleagues in the application of improvement tools (S3)

Merit Criteria

In addition to satisfying all criteria for a Pass:

1. Clearly explains how the outputs of each tool are used to inform the next step (S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18, S19, S20, S22)
2. Identifies and takes the opportunity to share and/or replicate the improvements made to one other area / system where there are differences in the solutions/controls required to deliver successful outcomes (B1)

Distinction Criteria

In addition to satisfying all criteria for a Pass and Merit:

1. Identifies and takes the opportunity to share and/or replicate the improvements made to one other area / system where there are differences in baseline metrics (B1)
2. Seeks opportunities to apply Lean, Six Sigma, Project and Change Management tools in daily work (B4)

Professional Discussion underpinned by Log

Fail Criteria

The apprentice will be deemed as a 'fail' for the professional discussion element if the criteria for 'Pass' grade are not met, specifically the apprentice will fail should they meet any one or more of the criteria below:-

- Not submit their CPD log to the EPAO within one month following the gateway
- Not demonstrate holistically, their knowledge skills and behaviours as set out in Annex 1 and as detailed in the Level 4 standard
- Not explained how they involved others in decision making and how they influenced others
- Not clearly planned the management of the project and the management of change

Pass Criteria

1. Provide evidence of their behaviours as detailed in the L4 standard (B1, B2, B3, B4, B5)
2. Clearly explain:
 - Methods used for making decisions in the project team (K2)
 - How they engaged and influenced others (S2)
 - Their coaching skills as set out in the Level 4 standard (S3)
 - Their approach to Project Management (S4)
 - Their approach to Change Management (S5)
 - Their approach, results and learning relating to developing skills in Experimentation and Optimisation as set out in the Level 4 standard (S18)
 - Their use of benchmarking to inform target setting and improvement options (S21)
3. Critically evaluates their improvement journey and identifies recommendations for improvement/change (e.g. "If I were to do this again I would...") (B4)

Merit Criteria

In addition to satisfying all criteria for a Pass:

1. Identifies opportunities for cross-functional improvement (B1)
2. Supports delivery of business-wide improvement projects led by Improvement Experts (B4)

Distinction Criteria

In addition to satisfying all criteria for a Pass and Merit:

1. Takes the opportunity to prepare and/or deliver training to upskill colleagues (B1)
2. Seeks opportunities to involve others in building a Continuous Improvement culture (B4)

Annex 3 - Complaints and Appeals Process

How to make a complaint

Complaints or appeals will only be considered from the applicant or candidate concerned and not from any third party. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. If it is to be investigated further, then the complaint needs to be in writing.

An applicant/candidate wishing to make a complaint should do so within 21 days of the matter with which the complaint is concerned. ISSP will add details of the complaint to the ISSP Complaints/Appeal Log, and will acknowledge the complaint in writing within 1 working day of receipt.

ISSP will have 28 days to investigate further and to respond in writing.

The investigation of a complaint will result in either the complaint being rejected or upheld wholly or in part. Should a complaint be rejected, the applicant or candidate will be informed accordingly with a statement as to why the complaint has been rejected.

If the investigation determines that the complaint be upheld in whole or in part, an apology will be issued to the applicant/candidate.

If the complaint has occurred due to an organisational error, supplier error or poor service, the matter is brought to the attention of the Programme Director (as appropriate) who will decide upon the appropriate action. Should the findings suggest that changes to procedures or policies are appropriate; this will be stated in any correspondence to the applicant.

If the complainant / individual appealing is not satisfied with the outcome, they have a right to appeal the complaint in writing to ISSP's Managing Director within 7 days of the response.

ISSP's Managing Director will respond to the complaint / further appeal within 7 days.

If the complainant is still unhappy with the response, they are free to seek advice from the Institute of Apprenticeships.

How to make an appeal

An applicant/candidate wishing to lodge an appeal should do so within 21 days of the final component of the End-Point Assessment.

ISSP reserves the right to levy a charge for an appeal subject to the component and/or Apprenticeship Standard. Upon receipt of a request to invoke the appeal process ISSP will invoice the appellant or their employer or other representative and the appeal fee must be paid within 7 working days.

The appeal must follow the three stages outlined below:

1. Apprentice appeals to their Independent Assessor.

The apprentice, their employer or other representative must provide a statement regarding the grounds on which the appeal is based, clearly identifying the component of the End-Point Assessment for which they are making the appeal.

ISSP will add details of the complaint to the ISSP Complaints/Appeal Log, and will acknowledge the appeal in writing within 1 working day of receipt.

The independent assessor (IA) will review the original evidence and, referring to the relevant quality assurance and assessment information within the assessment plan, re-consider the assessment decision.

ISSP will communicate the result to the apprentice within two weeks of the appeal.

Where the decision is that the candidate have not provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the 'grounds for appeal' have been met, the appellant may either provide further information and request that the decision be reviewed in the light of that information provided; or else appeal against that decision.

If the apprentice remains dissatisfied with the assessment decision they may, within two weeks, go to stage 2 of the appeal process.

2. Apprentice appeals to the Lead IA

The apprentice and the independent assessor must both provide a statement regarding the grounds on which the appeal is based. The Lead IA (or Director if the IA was also the Lead IA) will review the original evidence and referring to quality assurance and assessment information within the relevant apprenticeship standard assessment plan reconsider the assessment decision.

ISSP will communicate the result to the apprentice within two weeks of the stage 2 of the appeal.

Where it is determined that there are sufficient grounds to allow an appeal, if necessary, arrangements will be made for the apprentice to be re-assessed. This may or may be undertaken by a different independent assessor depending on the circumstances of the appeal.

If the apprentices remain dissatisfied with the assessment decision, they may request within two weeks, to go to stage 3 of the appeals process.

3. Apprentice appeals to an independent panel.

ISSP will convene a panel within four weeks of the apprentices' stage 2 request. The panel will comprise a minimum of two people; the Director and one independent person who has a sound working knowledge of the apprenticeship standard undertaken by the appellant. This person will have had no part in the assessment or delivery of the apprenticeship provided to the apprentice.

Information on appeals will be made available to the relevant External Quality Assessor body upon request.

Please note that the appeal is against the original assessment decision. Any new evidence provided by the candidate will not be considered as part of the reassessment process. If a candidate intends to supply new evidence in support of the assessment, they or their employer may be required to pay an additional fee.

Where the appeal is directed at the knowledge exam, the questions identified will be reviewed and if necessary removed from the bank on the advice of the IQA. The IQA may award additional marks if he/she feels that the apprentice may have been disadvantaged.

Escalation

If the complainant / individual appealing is not satisfied with the outcome, they have a right to appeal the complaint in writing to ISSP's Managing Director within 7 days of the response.

ISSP's Managing Director will respond to the complaint / further appeal within 7 days.

If the complainant is still unhappy with the response, they are free to seek advice from the Institute of Apprenticeships.

Complaints, appeals and customer feedback are included in monthly programme reports and reviewed at senior management level also on a monthly basis.

Any training needs that are highlighted as a result of complaints or appeals are addressed immediately.