

DELIVERY RISKS

Team leader

ST0384 · Level 3 · Business and administration

Occupation-specific risks, mitigations and early warning signs

STANDARD

ST0384

VERSION

1.4

LEVEL

3

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DURATION

15 months

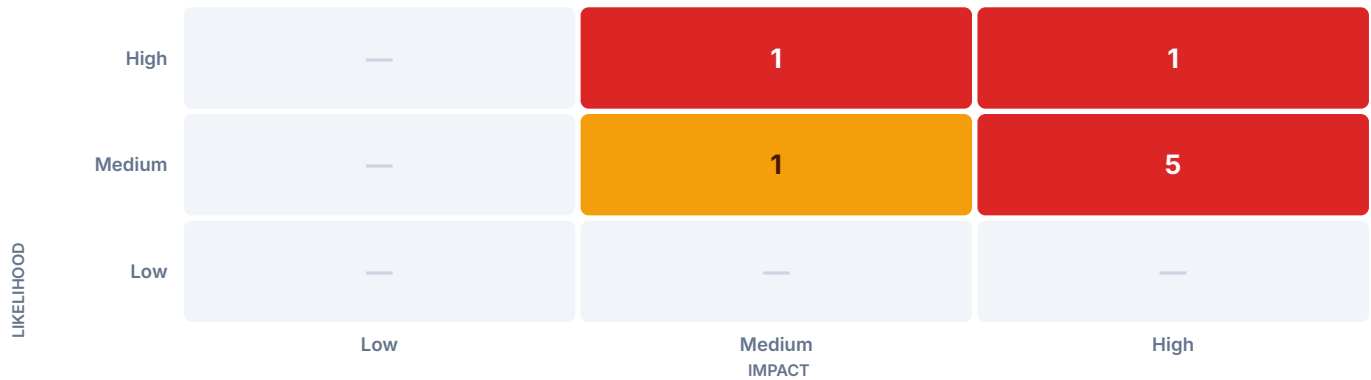
MIN. HOURS

348 hours

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Key risks to programme delivery with likelihood assessments, mitigation strategies, and early warning signs.

Risk Matrix



Risk Overview

RISK	CATEGORY	LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT	RATING
Coaching and performance conversation skills remain theoretical rather than practised, leaving apprentices unable to demonstrate genuine people development competence at EPA	Curriculum	High	High	High / High
Apprentices conflate organisational strategy with operational instruction, failing to develop the analytical thinking needed to translate strategic priorities into team-level action	Curriculum	Medium	High	Medium / High
Apprentice's role lacks sufficient scope for genuine first-line management responsibility, preventing development of the leadership and people-management KSBs central to this standard	Employer	Medium	High	Medium / High
Employer does not provide sufficient cross-functional or stakeholder exposure, leaving gaps in KSBs related to collaboration, influencing, and external relationship management	Employer	Medium	Medium	Medium / Medium

Apprentices with prior supervisory experience overestimate their existing competence and engage superficially with the programme, resulting in thin portfolio evidence and weak analytical depth at EPA	Learner	Medium	High	Medium / High
Apprentices in high-pressure operational roles disengage from off-the-job learning during periods of business intensity, creating gaps in KSB development that are difficult to recover before gateway	Learner	High	Medium	High / Medium
Planned off-the-job learning hours are met on paper but delivered through passive or generic activities that do not build the occupational competence required for this standard	Compliance	Medium	High	Medium / High
Tutors without recent first-line management experience are unable to contextualise the standard's people-leadership and operational KSBs convincingly, reducing the quality of challenge and feedback across the programme	Resource	Medium	High	Medium / High

Risk Detail & Mitigation

Coaching and performance conversation skills remain theoretical rather than practised, leaving apprentices unable to demonstrate genuine people development competence at EPA

high high

curriculum

Why it matters

Team leaders are expected to assess learning needs, provide in-the-moment coaching, and hold meaningful feedback conversations — K1, K2, S4 — capabilities that cannot be developed through knowledge delivery alone and that must be evidenced across EPA, with S9 assessed in the presentation with questions.

Mitigation

Design curriculum so that coaching techniques, feedback frameworks, and development conversations are introduced early and then repeatedly practised through role play, peer observation, and structured workplace tasks across the whole programme. Treat these as skills to be grown through iterative application rather than knowledge to be covered and moved on from.

Early Warning Sign

The apprentice can name coaching models and explain feedback techniques but struggles to describe a real conversation they initiated with a team member to address performance or support development.

Apprentices conflate organisational strategy with operational instruction, failing to develop the analytical thinking needed to translate strategic priorities into team-level action

medium high

curriculum

Why it matters

A defining responsibility of this role is connecting the organisation's direction to what the team actually does day-to-day — K6, K21, S11 — and this analytical translation skill must be evidenced in the apprentice's EPA, with S11 assessed in the professional discussion, where apprentices must demonstrate analytical reasoning about operational context, not just describe what they were told to do.

Mitigation

Build curriculum around analysis of real organisational documents — such as strategy statements, operational plans, or performance reports — so apprentices practise interpreting strategic intent rather than receiving it as instruction. Sequence this early so workplace tasks are understood through a strategic lens from the outset.

Early Warning Sign

When discussing their team's objectives, the apprentice describes tasks and outputs but cannot articulate how those connect to wider organisational goals or external pressures affecting the business.

Apprentice's role lacks sufficient scope for genuine first-line management responsibility, preventing development of the leadership and people-management KSBs central to this standard

medium

high

employer

Why it matters

Team leader roles vary considerably — some carry real authority over objectives, feedback, and team coordination, while others are largely coordinator or admin roles where the apprentice observes management rather than exercising it, making it impossible to develop K17, K18, S9, B1 through workplace experience alone.

Mitigation

Confirm at the start that the apprentice's role includes authentic responsibility for directing others, managing performance, and making operational decisions within agreed boundaries. Where the role evolves or narrows during the programme, work with the employer to restore meaningful management scope rather than compensating through classroom content alone.

Early Warning Sign

The apprentice consistently refers to what their manager decided rather than describing situations where they directed, challenged, or supported a team member themselves.

Employer does not provide sufficient cross-functional or stakeholder exposure, leaving gaps in KSBs related to collaboration, influencing, and external relationship management

medium

medium

employer

Why it matters

Team leaders are expected to coordinate effort across departments, manage stakeholder expectations, and navigate competing priorities outside their direct team — K11, K19, S14, S16 — but employers in operationally siloed environments may limit apprentices to inward-facing team tasks with little cross-boundary contact.

Mitigation

Agree with the employer at the start what cross-functional opportunities the apprentice will have — such as involvement in interdepartmental projects, supplier liaison, or senior stakeholder briefings — and ensure these are built into the training plan as deliberate development activities rather than incidental experience.

Early Warning Sign

The apprentice's workplace examples are drawn entirely from within their immediate team and they cannot describe a situation where they influenced someone outside their direct line of responsibility.

Apprentices with prior supervisory experience overestimate their existing competence and engage superficially with the programme, resulting in thin portfolio evidence and weak analytical depth at EPA

medium high

learner

Why it matters

Many team leader apprentices are experienced supervisors who have managed people informally for years — this means the initial skills scan must distinguish between habitual practice and the deliberate, critically informed leadership that KSBs such as K17, S7, and B4 require, which is a harder standard to meet than simply having done the job.

Mitigation

Use the initial skills scan to identify not just what the apprentice has done but how deeply they understand their own leadership practice — probing for analysis and reasoning, not just experience. Design stretch activities that require experienced apprentices to examine and improve their existing approaches rather than simply documenting what they already do.

Early Warning Sign

The apprentice produces evidence that describes their routine management activity accurately but without analysis, critical evaluation, or reference to alternative approaches they considered.

Apprentices in high-pressure operational roles disengage from off-the-job learning during periods of business intensity, creating gaps in KSB development that are difficult to recover before gateway

high medium

learner

Why it matters

Team leaders sit closest to operational delivery — they are the people employers pull back from development activity when demand spikes, cover is short, or a team crisis arises — making consistent off-the-job learning harder to protect for this occupational group than for roles with less operational exposure.

Mitigation

Work with employers to establish a shared understanding that off-the-job learning is a protected programme commitment, not a discretionary activity. Design the programme with sufficient flexibility in how planned OTJ hours are scheduled so that temporary disruption can be absorbed without permanently compressing the depth of KSB coverage.

Early Warning Sign

The apprentice frequently reports that workplace demands prevented them from completing planned learning activities, and their workplace evidence is increasingly drawn from reactive situations rather than planned development.

Planned off-the-job learning hours are met on paper but delivered through passive or generic activities that do not build the occupational competence required for this standard

medium

high

compliance

Why it matters

Because team leader programmes span a wide sector range, there is a temptation to fill planned OTJ hours with broadly relevant business content — such as generic communication or time management modules — that does not develop the specific judgements around delegation, performance management, and operational decision-making that define this role's KSBs.

Mitigation

Audit the planned OTJ learning activity against the specific KSBs of this standard to ensure that hours are generating genuine occupational formation rather than generic management content. Prioritise activity that requires apprentices to apply leadership and operational thinking to real situations drawn from their own workplace.

Early Warning Sign

The apprentice accumulates learning hours but cannot connect what they studied in off-the-job sessions to decisions or challenges they have faced in leading their team.

Tutors without recent first-line management experience are unable to contextualise the standard's people-leadership and operational KSBs convincingly, reducing the quality of challenge and feedback across the programme

medium

high

resource

Why it matters

Effective delivery of this standard requires tutors who can interrogate an apprentice's account of a performance conversation, a resource allocation decision, or a change implementation — K13, S7, S9, S16 — with the occupational credibility to push beyond surface description into genuine critical analysis of leadership judgement.

Mitigation

Ensure that tutors delivering this standard have demonstrable experience of first-line management practice, not just knowledge of management theory. Where tutor occupational currency is limited, build in structured peer review, industry practitioner input, or employer-led sessions that bring authentic operational challenge into the learning experience.

Early Warning Sign

Apprentices receive feedback on their leadership practice that focuses on whether they followed a model or framework correctly rather than on the quality of judgement they exercised in a real situation.