

# Team leader

ST0384 · Level 3 · Business and administration

End-point assessment readiness, gateway checklist and method guidance

STANDARD

**ST0384**

VERSION

**1.4**

LEVEL

**3**

GENERATED

**30 March 2026**

DURATION

**15 months**

MIN. HOURS

**348 hours**

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The Team Leader / Supervisor apprenticeship (Level 3) develops first-line management competence across operational planning, team leadership, and organisational change. The typical programme duration is 15 months on-programme, followed by an EPA period of approximately 3 months, with a minimum of 348 hours off-the-job learning required. The EPA comprises two methods: a Presentation with questions and a Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

## EPA Plan Requirements

### Presentation with questions

Presentation

Duration: 50 minutes

KSBs: K3, K5, K6, K9, K11, K12, K15, K16, K19, K20, K21, S3, S5, S9, S15, S17, S18, B2, B5

Grading: fail, pass, distinction

### Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

Professional discussion

Duration: 60 minutes

KSBs: K1, K2, K4, K7, K8, K10, K13, K14, K17, K18, K22, K23, S1, S2, S4, S6, S7, S8, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S16, S19, B1, B3, B4

Grading: fail, pass, distinction

### Overall Grading

Grades: fail, pass, distinction

If the apprentice fails one assessment method or more, they will be awarded an overall fail. To achieve an overall pass, the apprentice must achieve at least a pass in all assessment methods. To achieve an overall distinction, the apprentice must achieve a distinction in all assessment methods.

### Gateway Requirements

- Employer confirms the apprentice is occupationally competent
- Apprentice confirms readiness for EPA
- English and maths qualifications achieved in line with funding rules
- Portfolio of evidence submitted

## What to Build into the Programme

- The main provider, or the employer where they have taken on that role, must select an approved EPAO at least 6 months before the apprentice reaches gateway — this is a funding-rule requirement and must be factored into programme planning.
- The EPA plan requires a minimum of 12 months on-programme before gateway; the governing funding-rule floor is 8 months minimum practical period — both apply and neither overrides the other.
- The EPAO assigns one of four specified presentation topics; apprentices cannot choose their own, so curriculum must build confident analytical and communication skills across all four topic areas.
- The portfolio of evidence underpins the professional discussion and is not itself directly assessed; it must be submitted at gateway and the apprentice must have access to it during the professional discussion.
- If an apprentice fails the Presentation with questions, they must be given a new topic for the re-sit or re-take; if any failed method is not re-sat or re-taken within 6 months of the EPA outcome notification, the entire EPA must be redone.
- Re-sits require no further learning; re-takes require further learning — curriculum planning should distinguish clearly between the two when supporting apprentices after a fail outcome.

## Gateway Essentials

The employer must confirm the apprentice is occupationally competent before gateway can be reached.

The apprentice must confirm their own readiness for EPA.

A portfolio of evidence must be submitted at gateway; allowed evidence types are workplace documentation and records, workplace policies and procedures, witness statements, annotated photographs, and video clips (maximum 5 minutes total with the apprentice in view and identifiable). Reflective accounts and any methods of self-assessment are not permitted.

English and maths must be evidenced in line with funding rules: for 16–18 apprentices, the required qualification must be achieved; for 19+ apprentices where standalone English and/or maths is included, gateway evidence is of attempted assessment rather than achievement unless the standard specifically requires achievement.

The governing minimum for the practical period is the funding-rule floor of 8 months; the EPA plan also states a minimum of 12 months on-programme before gateway — both conditions must be satisfied.

## Assessment Method Preparation

### Presentation with questions

#### EPA plan requirement:

- The EPAO assigns one of four specified topics: (1) reviewing ways to reduce cost and increase efficiency in a business environment, (2) using data and technology to support organisational goals, (3) improving team performance to support organisational goals, (4) leading and supporting a team through a period of change within the organisation.
- Presentation materials must be submitted to the EPAO by the end of week 4 of the EPA period.
- The apprentice must notify the EPAO of any technical requirements for the presentation at the same point.
- The independent assessor must have at least 2 weeks to review the presentation materials before delivery.
- The EPAO must give the apprentice at least 1 week's notice of the presentation assessment.
- The apprentice must have access to audio-visual presentation equipment, a flip chart, writing and drawing materials, and a computer during the presentation.
- The assessment can be conducted by video conferencing with identity verification and checks that the apprentice is not being aided.
- The total assessment time is 50 minutes and can be increased by up to 10%.

#### Provider guidance

Ensure apprentices can construct a structured, evidence-based argument across all four topic areas, drawing on real workplace data and analytical reasoning, so they are prepared regardless of which topic is assigned.

#### Red flags and invalidity risks

- Presentation materials submitted after the end of week 4 of the EPA period may not allow the independent assessor the required 2-week review period.
- The presentation must be based on one of the four listed topics (or an EPAO-added topic that still covers the relevant KSBs) — a topic not on the list is not valid.
- The apprentice must not be aided during a remote or video-conferenced assessment.

## Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

### EPA plan requirement:

- The professional discussion is 60 minutes; the independent assessor can increase this by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to respond to a question if necessary.
- The portfolio underpins the professional discussion and is not directly assessed.
- The apprentice must have access to their portfolio of evidence during the professional discussion.
- The independent assessor must have at least 2 weeks to review the supporting documentation before the discussion.
- The EPAO must give the apprentice 1 week's notice of the date of the professional discussion.
- The assessment can be conducted by video conferencing with identity verification and checks that the apprentice is not being aided.
- Discussion themes include: building a high performing team, communicating and implementing operational plans, managing change and continuous improvement, using technology, and contributing to a project.
- The portfolio typically contains around 16 pieces of evidence drawn from permitted evidence types.

### Provider guidance

Curriculum should develop apprentices' ability to articulate, explain, and reflect verbally on their practice across all five discussion themes, since it is the spoken discussion — not the written portfolio — that is assessed.

### Red flags and invalidity risks

- Because the portfolio is not directly assessed, a portfolio that is comprehensive but not practised as a discussion aid does not in itself demonstrate the apprentice's readiness for the professional discussion.
- The apprentice must not be aided during a remote or video-conferenced assessment.
- Reflective accounts and self-assessment materials are not permitted evidence types in the portfolio.

## Funding Notes

- The minimum off-the-job learning for this standard is 348 hours; providers must plan delivery to meet this threshold and should not rely on RPL to reduce below it without careful documented justification.
- The absolute funding-rule floor for the minimum practical period is 8 months; no apprentice may proceed to gateway before completing this, regardless of any other programme arrangement.
- At least 6 months before the apprentice reaches gateway, the main provider (or the employer where acting as provider) must have selected the EPAO — this timing obligation sits with the main provider in the default case.
- Apprentices working fewer than 30 hours per week or on zero-hours contracts require careful duration-setting at the outset to ensure the minimum hours and practical period can be achieved realistically.
- An apprentice may complete before their planned end date once they have met at least 8 months' practical period and the minimum off-the-job hours — early completion is possible where the EPA plan duration conditions are also satisfied.

## Ofsted Notes

- The curriculum should be sequenced so that underpinning knowledge of operational planning, data analysis, and change management is secured before apprentices are expected to apply these skills in their team leader role — depth before breadth avoids surface-level coverage.
- Sufficient time must be built in for apprentices to revisit complex areas such as leading change and performance management, which draw on multiple KSBs simultaneously and typically require repeated practice in varied workplace contexts.
- Starting points should be assessed at the outset, particularly for apprentices who already hold supervisory experience, so that curriculum breadth is genuinely stretching rather than revisiting what is already known.
- Progress across the full KSB range should be assessed regularly throughout the programme, including behaviours (B1–B5), which are often underweighted in delivery relative to knowledge and skills.
- The curriculum should ensure all four presentation topic areas receive genuine attention, since an apprentice whose programme has emphasised only one or two themes may be underprepared when the EPAO assigns a different topic.

## Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Apprentices who can describe leadership and management concepts but cannot apply or articulate them fluently in a verbal discussion are unlikely to perform well in the professional discussion, regardless of the quality of their portfolio.
- Narrowing delivery to only one or two of the four presentation topic areas leaves apprentices significantly underprepared for the EPAO-assigned topic.
- Treating the portfolio as the primary assessed artefact leads to over-investment in written evidence at the expense of developing the verbal reasoning and communication skills the professional discussion actually assesses.
- Underweighting behaviours (B1–B5) in curriculum design and progress assessment means apprentices may arrive at EPA with demonstrable knowledge and skills but insufficient evidence of professional conduct in their discussion responses.
- Failing to expose apprentices to data collection, benchmarking, and analytical reasoning throughout the programme leaves them poorly equipped for the data-focused themes in both assessment methods.

This guide reflects the EPA plan and funding rules current at the time of writing. Providers should verify all details against the latest published EPA plan for ST0384 and the current DfE apprenticeship funding rules before using this guide to plan or modify delivery.