

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

# Team leader

ST0384 · Level 3 · Business and administration

Suggested assessment activities and progress check points

STANDARD

**ST0384**

VERSION

**1.4**

LEVEL

**3**

GENERATED

**30 March 2026**

DURATION

**15 months**

MIN. HOURS

**348 hours**

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Formative assessment on this programme should do more than check whether an apprentice can complete tasks; it should reveal whether they understand the leadership judgement behind the task, can apply that judgement in the workplace, and can explain their decisions with growing confidence. The assessment pattern should therefore move from foundational understanding of the team leader remit into increasingly authentic workplace application, using short cycles of observation, questioning, practical artefact review, and scenario-based discussion. Early phases should surface misconceptions about authority, people management and operational control before they become habits. Mid-programme assessment should check whether classroom learning is transferring back into live work on planning, performance, data, communication, compliance and improvement. Later phases should deliberately combine earlier KSBs in more complex, synoptic situations so apprentices practise the kind of analysis, justification and professional dialogue needed for gateway and EPA. Throughout, feedback should be specific, action-oriented and linked to the next workplace performance, with portfolio evidence gradually curated from normal work outputs rather than assembled at the end.

## Phase 1: The team leader remit and professional expectations

**Assessment focus:** Check that the apprentice understands the scope of the team leader role, the limits of their authority, how leadership approach varies by situation, and how people policies, integrity, accountability and self-development shape day-to-day leadership behaviour.

### Structured questioning using short workplace scenarios

Clarify where the apprentice has discretion, when escalation is needed, and how to justify a leadership response that is consistent with values and policy.

### Workplace observation of routine leadership interactions

Refine the apprentice's tone, consistency, fairness and confidence when giving direction, handling routine people issues, and following policy in practice.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

### Professional discussion on role remit and behaviours

Strengthen the apprentice's ability to explain their accountability, describe how they learn from feedback, and identify how their role supports wider organisational objectives.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

**EPA readiness** — This phase establishes the vocabulary and professional frame that later evidence will rely on. It helps the apprentice move from describing themselves as a colleague who helps out to articulating themselves as a leader with responsibility, judgement and accountability.

## Phase 2: Organising daily work, time and resources

**Assessment focus:** Check whether the apprentice can translate operational priorities into a workable plan, use time and resource tools appropriately, and make proportionate choices within budget and workload constraints.

### **Practical planning exercise using a rota, task board or workload plan**

Improve sequencing, prioritisation, contingency thinking and the justification for allocating work to people, time or budget.

### **Review of digital planning artefacts and scheduling outputs**

Strengthen accuracy in using tools, visibility of workload, and the link between plan changes and operational consequences.

### **Short case discussion on resources and efficiency**

Help the apprentice spot avoidable waste, recognise constraints early, and explain how resource decisions support targets and standards.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

**EPA readiness** — The apprentice begins to show that they can organise work rather than simply receive tasks. This creates the operational foundation needed before they are asked to lead people, interpret data, or manage change in more complex settings.

## Phase 3: Coaching performance and growing capability

**Assessment focus:** Check whether the apprentice can spot performance or development needs, give useful feedback, support learning through coaching, and respond inclusively when people need help or change is unsettling.

### **Observed performance conversation or coaching dialogue**

Improve listening, questioning, use of evidence, agreement of clear next steps, and the balance between challenge and support.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

### **Scenario-based role play on underperformance or development needs**

Strengthen the apprentice's ability to diagnose the issue, choose an appropriate response, and keep the conversation fair, respectful and purposeful.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

### **Reflective professional discussion on supporting change and inclusion**

Help the apprentice explain how they adapted their style for different individuals and how they ensured people were treated fairly and with respect.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

**EPA readiness** — This phase builds the human side of the role: the apprentice learns to lead through others rather than just through tasks. It contributes directly to later readiness because it develops the evidence, language and confidence needed for the professional discussion.

## Phase 4: Using data to improve operational decisions

**Assessment focus:** Check whether the apprentice can gather relevant information, identify patterns or trends, decide what matters for a given audience, and turn data into a clear and proportionate recommendation.

### **Data interpretation task using operational reports, spreadsheets or dashboards**

Improve accuracy in reading the data, selecting the right measures, and avoiding unsupported conclusions.

EPA — presentation with questions

### **Concise written or verbal summary for a specific audience**

Strengthen structure, clarity and the ability to tailor the message for senior managers, colleagues or other stakeholders.

EPA — presentation with questions

### **Structured questioning on decision-making and problem-solving**

Develop the apprentice's explanation of why a recommendation is proportionate, what alternatives were considered, and what evidence supported the choice.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

**EPA readiness —** This phase begins to bridge technical analysis and leadership communication. It supports later EPA readiness by requiring the apprentice to turn live data into a defensible message rather than merely producing a report.

## Phase 5: Influencing across teams and stakeholders

**Assessment focus:** Check whether the apprentice can brief different audiences clearly, coordinate across functions, negotiate workable outcomes, and maintain relationships when priorities or interests conflict.

### **Stakeholder briefing with challenge questions**

Improve clarity, concision, adaptation to audience and handling of follow-up questions under pressure.

EPA — presentation with questions

### **Negotiation or cross-functional coordination simulation**

Strengthen the apprentice's ability to hold a position, find common ground, and agree practical next steps without damaging relationships.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

### **Observation of stakeholder communication in the workplace**

Refine how the apprentice builds trust, manages expectations, and keeps different parties focused on the shared outcome.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

**EPA readiness —** The apprentice starts to operate as a connector between teams and interests. This phase is important for EPA readiness because it develops the confidence to explain decisions, justify trade-offs and respond to questioning in a professional setting.

## Phase 6: Applying policy and compliance in practice

**Assessment focus:** Check whether the apprentice can identify relevant legislation, regulation and internal policy, apply them to routine operational decisions, and communicate expectations so others understand what compliance looks like in practice.

### Case-based compliance review

Improve accuracy in identifying which requirements apply, what the risks are, and how to respond proportionately when standards are not being met.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

### Workplace observation of policy application or escalation

Strengthen judgement, consistency and the apprentice's ability to explain decisions clearly and professionally.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

### Scenario questioning on legal and policy decisions

Help the apprentice distinguish between policy, process and regulation, and explain how they would advise others without overstepping their authority.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

**EPA readiness** — This phase deepens occupational judgement by asking the apprentice to apply rules rather than recite them. It contributes to gateway and EPA readiness by building confidence in explaining compliance-based decisions with clarity and credibility.

## Phase 7: Leading projects, change and improvement

**Assessment focus:** Check whether the apprentice can use project and improvement tools, monitor progress, spot risk or drift, adapt plans, and support others through change while keeping delivery on track.

### Project or change update presentation

Improve the apprentice's ability to summarise progress, explain risks, justify corrective action and present a confident status update to stakeholders.

EPA — presentation with questions

### Improvement case study using live workplace evidence

Strengthen root-cause thinking, use of project tracking tools, and clarity about the impact of the improvement on performance or service.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

### Observation of implementation or change support activity

Refine how the apprentice maintains momentum, addresses resistance, and adjusts their approach when circumstances change.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

**EPA readiness** — This phase is where earlier learning becomes more synoptic. The apprentice should start operating with greater independence, combining planning, communication, data and people skills to deliver improvement and explain their contribution convincingly.

## Phase 8: Strategic and integrated team leadership

**Assessment focus:** Check whether the apprentice can bring together strategy, external context, sustainability, EDI, data, problem-solving, leadership approach and accountability in complex live situations, while showing readiness to articulate and defend their decisions.

### **Mock presentation with questions using a synoptic workplace theme**

Sharpen the apprentice's analytical structure, executive summary, evidence use and ability to respond confidently to probing questions.

EPA — presentation with questions

### **Mock professional discussion using portfolio evidence**

Improve depth of explanation, selection of relevant evidence, use of context notes and the ability to connect individual actions to organisational outcomes.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

### **Integrated case review drawing on strategy, sustainability, EDI and change**

Strengthen the apprentice's judgement in balancing competing priorities, showing accountability, and explaining how earlier decisions affected wider outcomes.

EPA — professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

**EPA readiness** — This final phase should function as a capstone. It brings the apprentice close to gateway judgement by testing whether they can present, discuss and justify occupationally credible performance using authentic evidence from their normal work, with increasing independence and confidence.

## Portfolio Expectations by Phase

### Phase 1: The team leader remit and professional expectations

#### Evidence types

- role clarification notes with context annotation
- examples of routine people-policy application
- feedback records showing how practice has been improved
- meeting notes or messages that evidence professional communication

Evidence should show the apprentice understanding their remit in context and acting consistently with values, policy and accountability. Good evidence is authentic, clearly dated through normal work, and includes a brief note explaining what the apprentice did, why it mattered and which KSBs it supports.

### Phase 2: Organising daily work, time and resources

#### Evidence types

- task plans or rota outputs
- resource or budget allocation records
- screenshots or exports from planning tools
- short explanations of planning decisions and adjustments

Evidence should demonstrate how the apprentice turns priorities into workable plans and adapts them when demand, absence or resource constraints change. Strong evidence shows the reasoning behind the plan, not just the finished schedule.

### Phase 3: Coaching performance and growing capability

#### Evidence types

- notes from performance or coaching conversations
- development actions agreed with team members
- examples of informal coaching support or signposting
- records showing inclusive handling of change or difficulty

Evidence should show live management practice, with context notes that make the apprentice's contribution clear. It should demonstrate how they supported improvement in others while treating people fairly and respectfully.

## Phase 4: Using data to improve operational decisions

### Evidence types

- operational data extracts
- reports, summaries or dashboards created by the apprentice
- emails or briefing notes communicating findings
- worked examples of interpreting trends or anomalies

Evidence should show the apprentice selecting relevant data, drawing accurate conclusions and tailoring communication for a specific audience. Good evidence demonstrates analysis in action, not just a copied report.

## Phase 5: Influencing across teams and stakeholders

### Evidence types

- briefing materials or presentation slides
- stakeholder communication records
- meeting notes showing coordination across teams
- examples of negotiation or resolution of competing priorities

Evidence should show the apprentice working across boundaries and maintaining constructive relationships. It should include a clear explanation of the apprentice's role, the stakeholder context and the outcome achieved.

## Phase 6: Applying policy and compliance in practice

### Evidence types

- policy or legislation application examples
- risk or compliance notes
- communications used to brief colleagues on requirements
- records of escalation, challenge or corrective action

Evidence should be tied to real organisational rules and show how the apprentice used them to guide action. Strong evidence includes a short rationale showing why the requirement mattered and how it affected decisions or behaviour.

## Phase 7: Leading projects, change and improvement

### Evidence types

- project plans or trackers
- risk logs or change actions
- improvement artefacts showing before and after
- updates or summaries of corrective action and progress

Evidence should show the apprentice contributing to planning, monitoring and adaptation rather than simply attending a project. Good evidence demonstrates initiative, response to risk and the practical effect of improvement work.

## Phase 8: Strategic and integrated team leadership

### Evidence types

- synoptic workplace outputs that connect strategy to action
- evidence of sustainability or EDI in operational decisions
- data-led recommendations or briefings
- examples of complex decisions, trade-offs and accountability

Evidence should be curated, not compiled at the last minute. It should show breadth across the standard, with context notes and brief explanations that make the apprentice's judgement, contribution and impact easy to discuss in the professional discussion.

## Portfolio Guidance

The portfolio should be developed progressively from authentic workplace outputs gathered across the programme, with light-touch annotation that explains the context, the apprentice's contribution, the impact and the KSBs evidenced. It should not become a reflective diary or a collection of generic templates. The most useful portfolio contains varied examples of real leadership practice, selected because they show increasing complexity, better judgement and stronger independence over time. By the later phases, the portfolio should give the apprentice a credible evidence base for discussing how they lead people, manage work, influence others and improve performance in their own organisation.