

Apprentice Preparation Guide



Professional Discussion underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence

End-point Assessment Operations Manager

Assessment Method: Professional Discussion underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence

Preparing for your End-point Assessment

This document is designed to support you in preparing for the **VTCT Skills Level 5 Operations Manager v1.4** End-point Assessment.

During your End-point Assessment, one of the two assessment methods that you will undertake is a Professional Discussion underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence.

You will use the Portfolio of Evidence you collated during the on-programme stage of the apprenticeship standard, which will be submitted at the Gateway stage, to support the Professional Discussion.

Overview of a Professional Discussion underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence

A Professional Discussion is a planned, in-depth, two-way conversation between the Independent Assessor and yourself. It is an effective way of assessing your complex understanding and knowledge.

Delivery of the Professional Discussion

The Professional Discussion will be conducted as follows:

- a 1:1 conversation, with no other parties involved
- completed in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence, in a controlled environment
- you and the Independent Assessor may refer to your Portfolio of Evidence to support the Professional Discussion underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence

What is a controlled environment?

A controlled environment for an assessment refers to a setting where specific conditions are monitored to ensure fairness, security, and reliability in the assessment process across apprentices.

The Professional Discussion will include:

- A structured discussion lasting **60 minutes** (with a 10% +/- tolerance) with you and your VTCT Skills Independent Assessor. You may choose to end the assessment early; if you choose to do so, you must be confident you have demonstrated competence against the assessment requirements.
- The Independent Assessor will ask you a minimum of **6 questions** in relation to the following themes:
 - Managing and leading a team
 - Organisational governance
 - Operational planning
 - Stakeholder relationships

When completing the Professional Discussion, you will:

- describe activities that you completed from your Portfolio of Evidence. You will discuss each activity in its entirety covering all applicable KSBs.
- describe your understanding of your job role, duties and responsibilities, specific parts of the training you have received, your personal development, and reflection on the training you have received.

You can refer to and illustrate your answers with evidence from your Portfolio of Evidence; however, the Portfolio of Evidence is not directly assessed.

Please note: the Professional Discussion will be recorded.

Portfolio of Evidence

The Portfolio of Evidence that you complete during the on-programme stage is not assessed or graded by the Independent Assessor; however, it is used to inform your Professional Discussion.

The following criteria for the Portfolio of Evidence is as follows:

- The content must be sufficient to evidence that you can demonstrate all of the KSBs mapped to the Professional Discussion assessment method.
- Your Portfolio of Evidence can be in any format, as long as it is legible and can be uploaded electronically to epaPRO.
- Your Portfolio of Evidence should contain written accounts of activities that you have completed and mapped against the KSBs, supported by appropriate evidence, including photographic evidence and work products.
- Progress review documentation, witness testimonies, and feedback from colleagues and/or customers can also be included.
- A Declaration of Authenticity Form must be signed by yourself, your training provider and your employer and be submitted with your Portfolio of Evidence.
- The Portfolio of Evidence must be submitted to the epaPro system at the Gateway stage.
- You should not include reflective accounts or self-evaluation documentation as evidence within your Portfolio of Evidence.

- A completed VTCT Skills Portfolio of Evidence Mapping Document is required to be uploaded alongside your Portfolio of Evidence. An example of how the evidence can be mapped to the KSBs can be found in Appendix 1.
- One piece of evidence can be mapped against more than one Knowledge, Skill or Behavioural requirement

Preparing for a Professional Discussion

During the Professional Discussion, you must demonstrate a proficient understanding of the requirements in the End-point Assessment Plan.

To prepare for the Professional Discussion, it is essential that the grade descriptors on pages 5-7 are considered. The grade descriptors include areas that must be covered throughout the Professional Discussion.

You should ensure you are familiar with your Portfolio of Evidence before your Professional Discussion. This is because during the Professional Discussion, the Independent Assessor will allow you to lead the discussion and to refer to your Portfolio of Evidence. When the Independent Assessor asks you questions, you can refer to your Portfolio of Evidence to support your answers.

How is the Professional Discussion graded?

The Independent Assessor will use the grading criteria on pages 5-7 to assess the Professional Discussion underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence.

Professional Discussion grading criteria

Pass criteria

You will achieve a pass grade if you provide evidence to meet all the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour requirements set out for the Professional Discussion and all of the criteria below:

Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours requirements	Grading criteria
Managing and leading a team K4 K14 K16 K18 K20 K24 S3 S4 S7 S19 S20 B1 B4	Analyses performance data for individuals and teams to identify areas for improvement, continuous development requirements and learning needs. (K20, S4)
	Proactively seeks, manages, and facilitates learning opportunities and continuous professional development for themselves and their wider team. (S19, B4)
	Evaluates how their use of leadership and management tools and techniques helps them to lead and manage a team ethically, set goals and accountabilities, and mediate and resolve any conflicts. (K14, K16, K18, S3, B1)
	Outlines the people management techniques and collaborative activities they use to coach, mentor, and motivate individuals in their team to achieve organisational goals. (K4, K24, S7, S20)
Organisational governance K2 K3 K22 S6 S11	Applies organisational policies and procedures, and relevant regulatory and legislative requirements while considering their impact on the team, the individual, their role, and the organisation, and interprets and communicates the practical implications of these for stakeholders. (K2, K22, S11)
	Proactively applies organisational policies and legislative guidelines to lead and influence the team and individuals to support an inclusive culture of equity, diversity, and the promotion of well-being. (K3, S6)
Operational planning K19 K21 K23 K25 S13 S14 S18 S21	Analyses and prioritises organisational activities in response to the operating environment and the impact this has on their role. (K19, S13)
	Justifies the business continuity principles they apply to ensure the uninterrupted operation of critical functions. (K21, S14)
	Explains how organisation policies and practices were followed to deliver sustainable services and solutions which enable the organisation to respond to changes in social, economic, and environmental factors. (K23, S18)
	Evaluates the degree to which operational plans they have developed and implemented align with the strategic direction of the organisation. (K25, S21)
Stakeholder relationships S17 B2	Explains how they manage relationships across multiple and diverse stakeholders, ensuring they are treated fairly, inclusively and with respect. (S17, B2)

Professional Discussion underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence

Distinction criteria

You will achieve a distinction grade for the Professional Discussion if you provide evidence to meet all the pass criteria and also all of the additional criteria below:

Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours requirements	Grading criteria
Managing and leading a team K4 K24 S7 S20	Critically evaluates their people management approach to motivating team members and individuals. (K4, S7) Evaluates the impact coaching and mentoring techniques have on individuals in their team. (K24, S20)
Organisational governance K3 S6	Evaluates their approach to supporting, delivering, and promoting equity, diversity, inclusion, and well-being in terms of impact on the workplace. (K3, S6)
Operational planning K21 K23 S14 S18	Evaluates the extent to which business continuity principles they apply have ensured the uninterrupted operation of critical functions. (K21, S14) Evaluates the extent to which organisation policies and practices followed to deliver sustainable services and solutions enabled the organisation to respond to changes in social, economic, and environmental factors. (K23, S18)
Stakeholder relationships S17 B2	Evaluates the impact of their approach to managing stakeholder relationships and recommends improvements. (S17, B2)

Please follow the guide outlined below to support your preparation

What can I do to prepare for my End-point Assessment?	Completed Yes/No
1. Access and familiarise yourself with the Mock Assessment Form for the Professional Discussion.	
2. Refer to the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours that may be assessed during the Professional Discussion. These are outlined in the table below.	
3. Collate pieces of evidence for your Portfolio of Evidence that demonstrate the relevant Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour which will be discussed in your Professional Discussion.	
4. Collaborate with others to seek constructive feedback on your performance.	
5. Practice questions and answers with peers/assessors in preparation for your Professional Discussion using the sample questions provided.	
6. Incorporate any feedback from your peers/assessor to enhance your approach and to address any identified areas for improvement in readiness for your Professional Discussion.	
7. Practise effective time management during the Professional Discussion. Allocate appropriate time to each task and ensure completion within the given timeframe.	
8. Approach the Professional Discussion with confidence. Remember that it is an opportunity to showcase your knowledge and skills.	
9. Stay calm under pressure and communicate effectively throughout the Professional Discussion.	
10. Remember to bring your identification with you on the day of your End-point Assessment. This can be one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving licence • Employee ID • Passport 	

Planning and Preparing for your Professional Discussion

KSB Ref	Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours that may be assessed during the End-point Assessment.	What do I need to remember?
Knowledge		
K2	Relevant regulation and legislation requirements, and their impact on their team, the individual, their role and the organisation.	
K3	Legislation and organisational policies relating to equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and their impact on the organisation and stakeholders.	
K4	Approaches to people management, for example recruitment, performance management, reward, and talent management and resource planning.	
K14	Conflict resolution and mediation processes.	
K16	Ethics and values-based leadership theories and principles, for example employee wellbeing.	
K18	Leadership and management tools and techniques.	

K19	The sector in which the organisation operates and its impact on their role.	
K20	The continuous development requirements and learning needs of their team.	
K21	Business continuity principles, including risk assessment, contingency planning and disaster recovery.	
K22	Organisational policies and procedures, for example health and safety.	
K23	Responsible organisation policies and practices covering social, environmental, and economic factors, including sustainability.	
K24	Coaching and mentoring techniques.	
K25	The strategic direction of the organisation and the impact on operational plans.	

KSB Ref	Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours that may be assessed during the End-point Assessment.	What do I need to remember?
Skills		
S3	Manage and set goals and accountabilities for individuals and teams.	
S4	Analyse performance data for individuals and teams to identify areas for improvement.	
S6	Lead and influence the team and individuals to support an inclusive culture of equity, diversity, and the promotion of well-being.	
S7	Motivate team members and individuals through collaborative activities, for example one-to-one coaching and team meetings, to achieve organisational goals.	
S11	Interpret and implement the practical application of regulation, legislation and organisational policies for stakeholders.	
S13	Analyse and prioritise organisation activities in response to the operating environment.	

S14	Implement business continuity plans, including risk assessment, contingency planning and disaster recovery, to ensure the uninterrupted operation of critical functions.	
S17	Manage relationships across multiple and diverse stakeholders.	
S18	Deliver sustainable services and solutions which allow the organisation to respond to changes in social, economic and environmental factors.	
S19	Manage and facilitate learning and continuous professional development for their team.	
S20	Coach and mentor individuals within their team.	
S21	Develop and implement operational plans that align with the strategic direction of the organisation.	

KSB Ref	Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours that may be assessed during the End-point Assessment.	What do I need to remember?
Behaviours		
B1	Acts professionally, ethically and with integrity.	
B2	Supports an inclusive culture, treating colleagues and stakeholders fairly and with respect.	
B4	Seeks learning opportunities and continuous professional development for self and the wider team.	

Following your End-point Assessment:

What happens following my End-point Assessment?	You will receive the results from your End-point Assessment within 10 working days.
What happens if I do not achieve my End-point Assessment?	If you do not achieve a pass result within this assessment method, you will be able to re-sit this assessment.

Appendix 1 – Portfolio of Evidence Mapping Document

Portfolio of Evidence Mapping Document

Level 5 Operations Manager

All columns of this mapping document are to be completed prior to the Gateway stage and submitted with the portfolio of evidence for each apprentice. Please refer to the End-point Assessment Guidebook and the Professional Discussion Apprentice Guidance Document when completing this Portfolio of Evidence Mapping Document.

Please note: It is a requirement of the training provider to submit all the evidence electronically, via the 'Documents tab' on the apprentice's dashboard within the epaPRO system. This must be in a scanned format, allowing the evidence package to be viewed remotely. VTCT Skillsfirst will not accept a link to an apprentice's individual e-portfolio.

Evidence number	KSBs:	Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours criteria:	Type of evidence submitted:	Reference number:
Example:				
1	K2	Relevant regulation and legislation requirements, and their impact on their team, the individual, their role and the organisation.	<i>Workplace policies and procedures</i>	1.1
2	S3	Manage and set goals and accountabilities for individuals and teams.	<i>Team brief/ minutes of meetings</i>	1.2
Evidence number	KSBs:	Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours criteria:	Type of evidence submitted:	Reference number:
	K2	Relevant regulation and legislation requirements, and their impact on their team, the individual, their role and the organisation.		
	K3	Legislation and organisational policies relating to equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and their impact on the organisation and stakeholders.		

Document amendment history page

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
1	21/11/2024	First published	Product Manager