

Apprentice Preparation Guide



Professional Discussion

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 3 Recruiter v1.0 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. The professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence will allow Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) that may not occur regularly in every workplace to be assessed.

You will use the portfolio of evidence that you collated during the on-programme period of the apprenticeship standard, which is 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 an assessment method which 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 Underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence

The professional discussion will be conducted as follows:

- A 1:1 conversation, with no other parties involved
- Completed in an appropriate environment which is free from distractions and interruptions
- You and the Independent Assessor may refer to your portfolio of evidence to support the Professional discussion

Where Will the Professional Discussion Underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence Take Place?

The Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence will take place in your employer's workplace or your training provider's premises. It may be conducted remotely by video conferencing.

The Professional discussion should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence, in a controlled environment.

- **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, who will conduct this assessment either remotely or face to face, in a controlled environment. 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 for the professional discussion.
- The Independent Assessor will ask you a **minimum of six questions** in relation to the following themes:
 - Stakeholder engagement and management
 - Recruitment market and models
 - Organisational strategy
 - Policy, regulations, and legislation
 - Recruitment processes

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 for quality and safeguarding purposes.

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 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. An example of how the evidence can be mapped to the KSBs, can be found in Appendix 1
- Your portfolio of evidence can be in any format, as long as it is legible and can be uploaded electronically to epaPRO
- Evidence sources may include workplace documentation and records, for example, workplace policies and procedures, witness statements and annotated photographs. Progress review documentation and feedback from colleagues and/or customers can also be included. This is not a definitive list; other evidence sources can be included
- One piece of evidence can be mapped against more than one KSBs requirement
- A completed VTCT Skills Level 3 Recruiter 'Portfolio of Evidence Mapping Document' (Appendix 1) is required to be uploaded alongside your portfolio of evidence
- A 'Declaration of Authenticity' on the 'Portfolio of Evidence Mapping Document' must be signed by yourself, your training provider and your employer alongside the portfolio of evidence submitted
- The portfolio of evidence must be submitted by uploading to the epaPRO system at the gateway stage
- VTCT Skills will send the portfolio of evidence to the Independent Assessor at least two weeks prior to the professional discussion
- You should not include reflective accounts or self-evaluation documentation as evidence within your portfolio of evidence

Preparation for a Professional Discussion Underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence

During the Professional discussion, you must demonstrate a proficient understanding of the requirements for the technical skills outlined in the 'End-point Assessment Plan.

To prepare for the Professional discussion, it is essential that the grade criteria on pages 5-6 are considered. The grade criteria 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 assessor asks you questions, you can refer to your portfolio of evidence to support your answers.

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

How is the Professional Discussion Underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence Graded?

The Independent Assessor will use the grading criteria to assess the Professional discussion. To achieve a Pass, you must achieve all the Pass criteria. To achieve a Distinction, you must achieve all the Pass criteria and all the Distinction criteria.

Professional Discussion Grading Criteria

Pass Criteria

You will achieve a Pass grade if you provide evidence to meet all the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour (KSBs) requirements set out for the professional discussion and all of the criteria below:

KSB Requirements	Grading Criteria
Stakeholder engagement and management K3 K15 K16 K17 K25 S11 S22 B1	Outlines the negotiating and influencing techniques they use to help support stakeholder requirements, including sales and marketing activities. (K3 K15 K16)
	Explains the different methods and media they use to facilitate understanding when communicating information and interacting with candidates and other stakeholders. (K17 S11)
	Demonstrates how they follow their organisation's complaint handling process and act professionally, ethically and with integrity when responding to, and when escalating stakeholder complaints. (K25 S22 B1)
Recruitment market and models K2 K5 S1	Describes the different types of recruitment organisations and models and how these impact on their own brand and service offering when identifying, progressing, and converting leads into new candidates, placements, or clients. (K2 K5 S1)
Organisational strategy K7 K8 K20 S17 S20	Explains the impact of the organisation's resource strategy and goals on their role and the principles they use to assess labour market conditions and identify and maximise opportunities to support the organisation's business strategy. (K8 K20 S20)
	Explains the external influences on the recruitment market and how they identify future changes in the sector that may impact the organisation. (K7 S17)
Policy, regulations and legislation K6 K24 S4 S16 S18 B2	Explains their approach to challenging and escalating poor practice and non-compliance with the recruitment process, and how they advise stakeholders on the practical application of regulation and legislation relevant to their work within the organisation. (K6 S4 S16)
	Explains how they interpret policies to support and promote the delivery of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace, and how they monitor their impact on the organisation and recruitment activities. (K24 S18 B2)
Recruitment processes K9 K11 S7 S8 S9 S14 B5	Proactively seeks to be flexible with work routines and responds to changing circumstances when applying methods to assess candidates and place them into roles that match their skills and stakeholder requirements. (K11 S14 B5)
	Demonstrates the methods they use to process, review, and progress candidate applications to create and present a shortlist of candidates to stakeholders, and how they inform and advise candidates on the outcome of their application. (K9 S7 S8 S9)

Professional Discussion Grading Criteria

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:

KSB Requirements	Grading Criteria
Stakeholder engagement and management K3 K15 K16 K17 S11	Evaluates the extent to which their negotiating and influencing techniques have helped to support stakeholder requirements, including sales and marketing activities. (K3 K15 K16)
	Justifies the methods and media they have used to communicate and interact with stakeholders and candidates, suggesting improvements to facilitate understanding. (K17 S11)
Organisational strategy K8 K20 S20	Evaluates the extent to which they have maximised opportunities to support the organisation's business strategy. (K8 K20 S20)
Policy, regulations and legislation K24 S18 B2	Evaluates the impact on organisational culture and recruitment activities of their approach to supporting and promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace. (K24 S18 B2)
Recruitment processes K9 K11 S7 S8 S9 S14	Justifies the selection of techniques they use to assess candidates in terms of successfully placing them into roles that match their skills and stakeholder requirements. (K11 S14)
	Justifies the methods they have used to process, review, and progress candidate applications when shortlisting for stakeholders. (K9 S7 S8 S9)

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 (KSBs) 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 Behaviours (KSBs) 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. Practice 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	KSB that may be assessed during the End-point Assessment	What do I need to remember?
Knowledge		
K2	Different types of recruitment organisations, including their own organisation’s brand and service offering.	
K3	Stakeholder requirements, for example consultation, salary benchmarking, market trends analysis, competitor analysis, sourcing candidates and job roles.	
K5	Recruitment models, including permanent, temporary, fixed term, managed service provider (MSP) contracts, and recruitment process outsourcing (RPO) contracts.	
K6	Regulations, legislation, and codes of practice that impact their role and the organisation, and the implications of non-compliance, including data protection, the Employment Agencies Act and the Equality Act.	
K7	External influences on the recruitment market, including social, economic, legislative, political, and technology.	

K8	Principles of assessing labour market conditions, including identifying shortages for specific roles and demand for candidates with transferrable skills to move from the legacy carbon economy into green economy jobs.	
K9	Methods used for assessing candidates, for example planning and facilitating assessment centres, interview panels, informal telephone conversations, and how to support the candidate experience, including those requiring reasonable adjustments.	
K11	Principles and techniques of candidate assessment, including assessing transferable skills to fulfil stakeholder requirements, for example to identify candidates with skills that could transfer into new green economy jobs.	
K15	Sales and marketing activities that support stakeholder requirements.	
K16	Negotiating and influencing techniques.	
K17	Methods for communicating information and interacting with candidates and other stakeholders to facilitate understanding, for example face-to-face or online meetings, emails, reports, and presentations.	

K20	<p>The organisation's resource strategy and goals, and how this impacts their role.</p>	
K24	<p>Principles and policies of equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace, and their impact on the organisation and recruitment activities.</p>	
K25	<p>The complaint handling process for their organisation.</p>	

KSB Ref	KSB that may be assessed during the End-point Assessment	What do I need to remember?
Skills		
S1	Identify, progress, and convert leads into new candidates, placements, or clients.	
S4	Interpret and apply regulation and legislation, share best practice, and advise stakeholders on their application.	
S7	Process, review, and progress candidate applications.	
S8	Create and present diverse short lists of candidates to stakeholders.	
S9	Inform and advise candidates on the outcome of their application at the individual stages of the recruitment process, including those that have been unsuccessful.	
S11	Communicate information through different media, for example face-to-face or online meetings, emails, reports, and presentations.	

S14	Place candidates into roles that match their skills and stakeholder requirements.	
S16	Challenge poor practice and non-compliance with the recruitment process and escalate where appropriate.	
S17	Identify future changes in the sector that may impact the organisation, for example technology advances.	
S18	Interpret policies to support and promote the delivery of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace, and monitor their impact on recruitment activities.	
S20	Identify and maximise opportunities to support the organisation's business strategy, for example growing client or candidate pipelines.	
S22	Respond to stakeholder complaints and escalate where appropriate.	

KSB Ref	KSB 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.	
B5	Works flexibly and adapts to changing circumstances.	

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 - Professional Discussion Mapping Document with a Declaration of Authenticity

Professional Discussion Mapping Document

VTCT Skills Level 3 Recruiter

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 'Professional Discussion 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 Skills 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.	Workplace policies and procedures	1.1
2	S3	Manage and set goals and accountabilities for individuals and teams.	Team brief/minutes of meetings	1.2
	K3	Stakeholder requirements, for example consultation, salary benchmarking, market trends analysis, competitor analysis, sourcing candidates and or job roles.		
	K15	Sales and marketing activities that support stakeholder requirements.		
	K16	Negotiating and influencing techniques.		
	K17	Methods for communicating information and interacting with candidates and other stakeholders to facilitate understanding, for example face-to-face or online meetings, emails, reports, and presentations.		
	S11	Communicate information through different media, for example face-to-face or online meetings, emails, reports, and presentations.		

Professional Discussion Mapping Document_v0.6
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Declaration of Authenticity

The work submitted for the portfolio of evidence must be the Apprentice's own work. Should this evidence be copied from someone else or plagiarised in any other way, the Apprentice's End-point Assessment result may be void.

Apprentice Declaration

I confirm that all of the evidence submitted to VTCT Skills for my portfolio of evidence is my own work.

Apprentice name:	
Apprentice signature:	
Date:	

Training Provider/Employer Declaration

The following declaration can be provided by the training provider or the employer.

I have authenticated the Apprentice's work, and I am satisfied that to the best of my knowledge, the work submitted is solely that of the Apprentice.

Training provider/employer name:	
Training provider/employer signature:	
Date:	

Document History

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V1	18/02/2025	First published	Qualification Development Manager