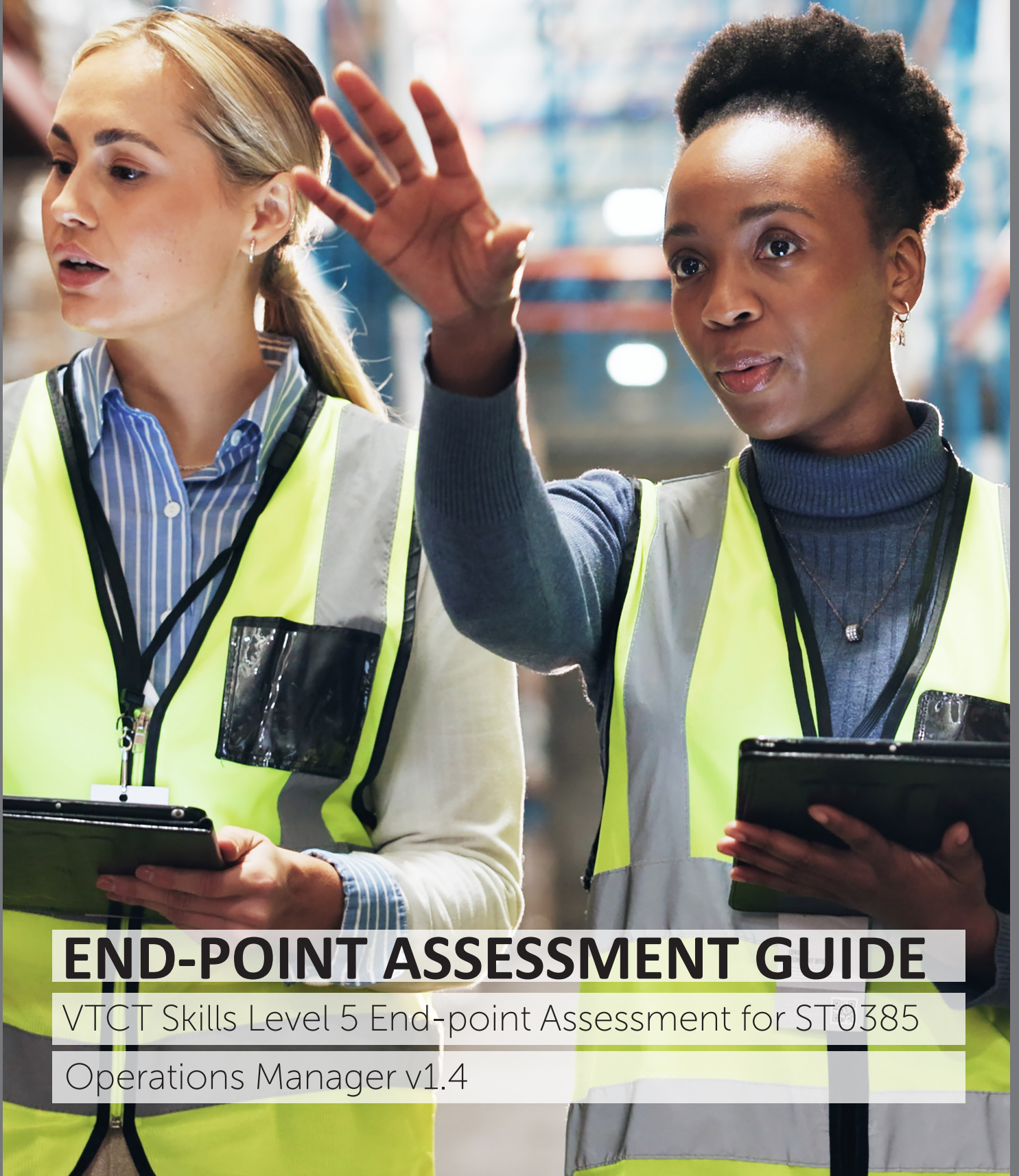# END-POINT ASSESSMENT GUIDE

VTCT Skills Level 5 End-point Assessment for ST0385

Operations Manager v1.4

Please note, the contents of this booklet are subject to change at any time due to regulatory requirements. Therefore, it is imperative for the user of this document to verify they are in fact using the most up to date version. This can be done by checking it matches the version published on **epaPRO**, VTCT Skills online End-point Assessment booking platform.

End-point Assessment Guide - Content

VTCT Skills Level 5 End-point Assessment for ST0385 Operations Manager v1.4

Purpose

This End-point Assessment guidebook outlines the format and the requirements of the End-point Assessment for the Operations Manager v1.4 standard.

Prior to the End-point Assessment period, a full-time apprentice will typically spend 24 months on-programme (before the gateway) to complete the criteria included within the occupational standard.

All apprentices must spend a minimum of 12 months on-programme. Once the on-programme requirements have been met, the apprentice can proceed through the **Gateway Stage** to the End-point Assessment period.

The End-point Assessment will consist of two different Assessment Methods: Project with report and Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

Level 5 Operations Manager
Apprenticeship Standard Summary Table

On-programme Stage *(typically 24 months)*	The apprentice receives training to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) of the apprenticeship standard. Training towards English and mathematics qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules. The apprentice must produce a portfolio of evidence.
End-point Assessment Gateway Stage	The employer must confirm that the apprentice: • is working at or above the occupational standard as an Operations Manager • has the evidence required to pass the gateway and is ready to take the End-point Assessment The apprentice must achieve English and maths qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules. Apprentices must: • have completed an on-programme project, which will form the basis of their written project report in the End-point Assessment • submit a portfolio of evidence to underpin the Professional discussion For the written project report with presentations and questions, the employer, supported by the training provider, must confirm that the project was completed on-programme, is a significant and defined piece of work that has real business application and benefit, and is relevant to the apprentice's occupation and apprenticeship.
End-point Assessment Stage (typically 5 months)	**Assessment Method 1: Project with report** • Fail • Pass • Distinction **Assessment Method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence** • Fail • Pass • Distinction **Overall End-point Assessment and apprenticeship can be graded:** • Fail • Pass • Distinction
Re-sits and re-takes	• Re-take and re-sit grade cap: pass • Re-sit timeframe: typically 2 months • Re-take timeframe: typically 3 months

Operations Manager Apprenticeship Standard

Occupational Profile

This occupation is found in small, medium, large, and multinational organisations in private, public, and third sectors across all areas of the economy.

Operations managers perform leadership and management duties with teams and senior managers to ensure that teams fulfil their roles and meet organisational goals. They are essential to all business models that have an operational area or department with a workforce to lead, manage, and support.

The broad purpose of this occupation is to provide leadership, with both operational and project responsibilities. An operations manager is responsible for managing individuals or a team, offering direction, instructions, and guidance to achieve set goals. They are crucial for the smooth functioning of all departments within an organisation and ensure that their functions are administered and maintained in accordance with legislation and the organisation's policies and procedures. Operations managers provide clear and inclusive leadership and direction within their area of responsibility. This typically involves setting, managing, and monitoring the achievement of core objectives aligned with the organisation's overall strategic goals. In smaller organisations, they are also likely to contribute to the execution and achievement of these strategic objectives.

This extract and further information can be found on the Operations Manager 'Occupational Standard' page on the IfATE website: https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/

Typical job roles on completion of Operations Manager:

- Area Manager

- Department Manager

- General Manager

- Operations Manager

- Regional Manager

- Specialist Manager

Occupational Duties for Operations Manager

Duty	Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours covered
Duty 1 – Provide leadership and people management.	K2 K3 K4 K6 K10 K12 K13 K14 K15 K16 K18 K19 K20 K22 K24 K25 S2 S3 S4 S6 S7 S14 S16 S17 S19 S20 S21 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6
Duty 2 – Keep up to date with IT and digital interventions such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and software that can be used in their sector.	K5 K6 K8 K11 K15 K21 S8 S12 S15
Duty 3 – Analyse, interpret and cascade data to enable tracking, trend analysis and metric reporting to enable decision making for managing objectives and targets.	K1 K4 K5 K6 K7 K8 K9 K13 K15 K16 K21 S1 S3 S4 S5 S8 S9 S10 S13 S16
Duty 4 – Manage and influence activities and projects within budget and resources to deliver change and continuous improvement.	K6 K7 K9 K12 K13 K15 K17 S1 S2 S3 S4 S5 S8 S9 S10 S12 S16 S17 B1 B2 B3 B5 B6
Duty 5 – Collaborate with and manage stakeholder relationships.	K3 K4 K6 K9 K10 K13 K14 K15 K16 K18 S1 S2 S6 S17 B1 B2 B6
Duty 6 – Lead the creation and implementation of their resource plans considering future organisation needs and impact on change requirements.	K2 K3 K4 K6 K7 K8 K11 K15 K17 K18 K20 K22 K25 S1 S2 S5 S10 S13 S15 S21 B3
Duty 7 – Interpret and comply with relevant legislation and regulation and the impact on their organisation.	K2 K3 K6 K18 K19 K22 K23 S1 S11 S13 S15
Duty 8 – Lead and manage the team to ensure the application of equity, diversity, and inclusion principles.	K2 K3 K4 K8 K16 K18 K23 S2 S6 S7 S10 S11 S15 S17 B1 B2 B6
Duty 9 – Lead the team and individual training needs and support continuous professional development.	K3 K4 K8 K20 K24 S2 S3 S4 S7 S10 S19 S20 B4 B6

Duty	Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours covered
Duty 10 – Communicate complex information to build understanding and drive team and organisational performance.	K1 K13 K14 K25 S1 S16 S21
Duty 11 – Manage activities which drive the organisation's sustainability goals.	K2 K6 K8 K11 K12 K15 K17 K19 K22 K23 S2 S3 S8 S9 S10 S11 S13 S15 S18 B5 B6
Duty 12 – Build and manage internal relationships and collaborate with colleagues to enable cross-team working.	K3 K13 K14 K15 K16 K18 S1 S6 S16 S17 B1 B2 B6
Duty 13 – Lead and respond to risk management, assessing the opportunities which could affect individual and team performance, and finding solutions that meet their needs.	K6 K8 K9 K10 K12 K15 K17 K18 K19 K21 S1 S2 S3 S8 S13 S14 B1 B5 B6
Duty 14 – Develop and implement their operational plan that aligns with the strategic direction of the organisation.	K1 K4 K6 K7 K11 K15 K19 K23 K25 S1 S2 S3 S5 S10 S18 S21 B5

The Gateway Stage

To be eligible for the End-point Assessment Stage of the End-point Assessment, the apprentice must meet the following Gateway requirements:

- A full time apprentice will typically spend 24 months on-programme. All apprentices must spend a minimum of 12 months on-programme

- Complete the on-programme stage of the Level 5 Operations Manager Apprenticeship Standard and consistently work at or above the level of the occupational standard

- Submit a portfolio of evidence which will underpin the professional discussion

- Complete an on-programme project, which will form the basis of their written project report in the EPA

- Achieve English and mathematics qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules

In addition to this, the apprentice's employer must formally sign off that they are satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the Operations Manager Occupational Standard, and that the apprentice is deemed to have achieved occupational competence, before the gateway process can be implemented. The apprentice must also confirm that they feel ready to move on to their End-point Assessment.

When making this decision, the employer may take advice from the apprentice's training provider(s); however, the decision must ultimately be made solely by the apprentice's employer. It is important to refer back to the assessment plan when approaching gateway in order to check that the apprentice is able to demonstrate all of the required knowledge, skills and behaviours and can do so in a live End-point Assessment. A copy of the standard can be located through the following link: https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards.

Assessment Method 1:
Project report with presentation and questions requirements

For the written project report with presentation and questions, the employer, supported by the training provider, must confirm that the project completed on programme is a significant and defined piece of work that has real business application and benefit, and is relevant to the apprentice's occupation and apprenticeship.

The written project report will present a typical business task, appropriate for demonstrating the skills and knowledge in the occupational standard. The project completed on-programme will be comparable in terms of content and complexity for all apprentices; it is the context within which the knowledge and skills must be demonstrated that will vary. Each project will typically take six months to complete. It will typically be undertaken on the employer's premises or, where this is not practical, on the training provider's premises.

Assessment Method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

For the professional discussion, the apprentice will be required to submit a portfolio of evidence, which should be compiled during the on-programme period of the apprenticeship. Evidence must be mapped against the KSBs set out in the professional discussion assessment method.

- The professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence can be mapped against more than one Knowledge, Skill or Behavioural requirement

- The portfolio of evidence can be in any format, as long as it is legible and can be uploaded electronically to epaPRO at the Gateway stage

- A Declaration of Authenticity form must be signed by the apprentice, the training provider and the employer. This form should be uploaded alongside the portfolio of evidence.The portfolio of evidence must be submitted to VTCT Skills at the Gateway Stage

- A completed Portfolio of Evidence Mapping Document is required to be uploaded alongside the portfolio of evidence
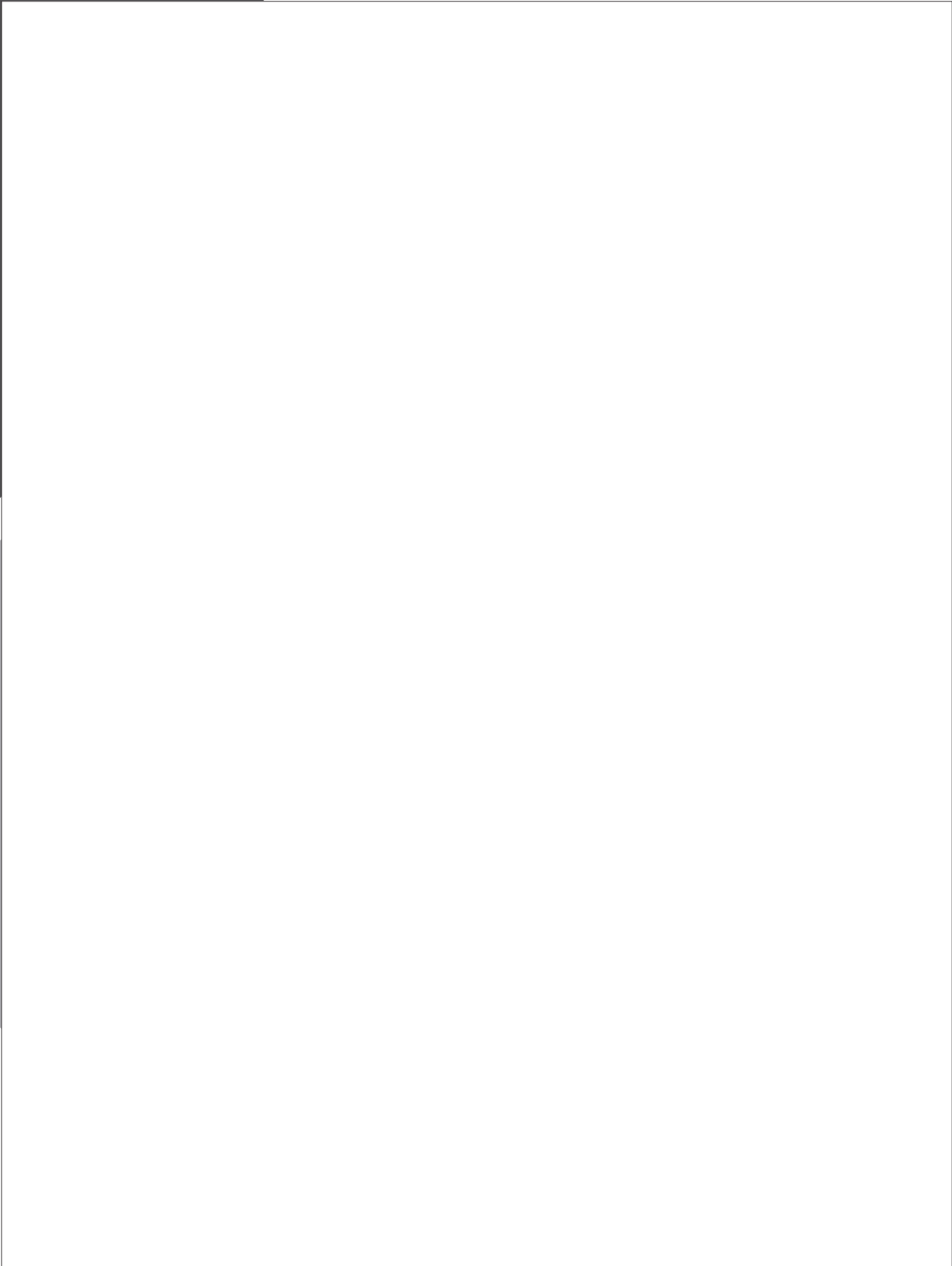
Evidence sources may include:

- Workplace documentation and records, for example:

- Workplace policies and procedures

- Witness statements

- Annotated photographs

- Video clips with a maximum total duration 5 minutes; the apprentice must be in view and identifiable

This is not a definitive list; other evidence sources can be included.

The portfolio of evidence should not include reflective accounts or any methods of self-assessment. Any employer contributions should focus on direct observation of performance, for example, witness statements, rather than opinions. The evidence provided should be valid and attributable to the apprentice. VTCT Skills will not assess the portfolio of evidence directly as it underpins the professional discussion. The Independent Assessor should review the portfolio of evidence to prepare questions for the professional discussion. They are not required to provide feedback after this review. Gateway evidence must be submitted to the VTCT Skills, along with any organisation specific polices and procedures requested by VTCT Skills.

Notes

Scheduling

Registering an Apprentice for End-point Assessment

You can register your apprentices for End-point Assessment via epaPRO. Apprentices can be registered at any time during their apprenticeship at no additional upfront cost.

You will require the apprentice's:

• Unique Learner Number (ULN)

• Name

• Date of birth

Further information on registering your apprentices will be supplied once VTCT Skills has received your signed EPAO agreement.

Scheduling an Apprentice for End-point Assessment

Providers must confirm that the apprentice has completed all of the mandated components of the standard via the apprentice checklist on the booking platform:

• End-point Assessment bookings must be made a minimum of 20 working days in advance of the desired assessment date(s) or within the standard requirement

• You will need to indicate preferred dates of assessment on the epaPRO

• The End-point Assessment team will seek to match an Independent Assessor to your request

• The End-point Assessment team will formally confirm the booking by email and via epaPRO

Reasonable Adjustments

It is the responsibility of the training provider to apply for reasonable adjustments/access arrangements on behalf of the apprentice prior to the End-point Assessment taking place. For more information on reasonable adjustments, please refer to the VTCT Skills Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy or email epa@vtctskills.org.uk for more information.

Remote Assessments

Remote assessments will ordinarily be conducted via a video conferencing platform. The apprentice will receive an automated email containing a link to their video conferencing platform within 72 hours of the assessment being booked. The apprentice will need this link to enter the video conferencing platform and complete their assessment.

Planning End-point Assessment dates

Prior to the End-point Assessment taking place, you will receive automated emails with:

- Confirmed start time and expected duration of the assessments
- Access to all relevant systems and resources

ID requirements

VTCT Skills will verify the identity of the apprentice before they undertake the assessment. All employers are therefore required to ensure that each apprentice has photographic identification with them on the day of assessment.

VTCT Skills will accept the following as proof of identity:

- A valid passport
- A signed UK photo card driving licence
- Employee ID card or travel card

The Independent Assessor will certify that they have seen valid identification before proceeding with an End-point Assessment and confirm the correct spelling of the apprentice's name in readiness for certification.

Cancellation

Under some circumstances, it may be necessary to cancel an End-point Assessment. Should this happen, you must contact the End-point Assessment team immediately. Please note that if a cancellation occurs within 10 working days of the assessment taking place, there will be a cancellation charge applied in line with our Cancellation Policy.

If the customer cancels the End-point Assessment:

- Prior to the date of the End-point Assessment, the customer must inform VTCT Skills by email (epa@vtctskills.org.uk)
- On the day of the End-point Assessment, the customer must inform VTCT Skills by telephone (02380 684502)

Cancellation of an End-point Assessment within 10 working days prior to the assessment taking place will incur the **full cost** of the End-point Assessment. For further details, the cancellation policy is available on the booking platform or on our website.

Should the apprentice wish to re-sit later, a new booking form should be made on epaPRO.

Overview of the End-point Assessment Period

Once the apprentice has submitted their evidence at the End-point Assessment Gateway Stage, they will then enter the End-point Assessment period.

The Operations Manager End-point Assessment consists of **2 Assessment Methods**:

Assessment Method	Assessed by	Overall Grading
Assessment Method 1 Project with report	Independent Assessor	Fail/Pass/Distinction
Assessment Method 2 Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence	Independent Assessor	Fail/Pass/Distinction

Length of End-point Assessment period

The End-point Assessment will be completed within a period lasting typically **5 months**, beginning when VTCT Skills has confirmed that all the gateway requirements have been met by the apprentice.

If an End-point Assessment method is not achieved, the failed assessment method should be re-sat or retaken within the End-point Assessment period, and in accordance with the requirements outlined in the Operations Manager Assessment Plan.

Order of Assessment Methods

The assessment methods for the End-point Assessment can be completed in any order. The result of one assessment method does not need to be known before starting the next.

How the End-point Assessment is graded

The overall grade for the End-point Assessment will be based on the grades achieved in the 2 assessment methods: Project with report and Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

All End-point Assessment methods must be passed for the End-point Assessment to be achieved overall.

Assessment Method 1: Project with report

The Project with report will be graded a Fail/Pass/Distinction against the grading criteria.

Assessment Method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by portfolio of evidence

The Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence will be graded a Fail/Pass/Distinction against the grading criteria.

Overall Grading

Performance in the End-point Assessment determines the overall apprenticeship grade of:

- Fail
- Pass
- Distinction

The grades from each individual assessment method are combined to determine the overall grade. If the apprentice fails one or more assessment methods, they will be awarded an overall End-point Assessment fail.

To achieve an overall pass, the apprentice must achieve at least a pass in all the assessment methods. To achieve an overall EPA distinction, the apprentice must achieve a distinction in all assessment methods.

Grades from the individual assessment methods will be combined in the following way to determine the overall grade of the End-point Assessment:

Professional discussion	Project with report	Overall grading
Fail	Fail	Fail
Fail	Pass	Fail
Pass	Fail	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Pass
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

Assessment Method 1: Project with report

A written project report involves the apprentice completing a significant and defined piece of work that has a real business application and benefit. The written project report must meet the needs of the employer's business and be relevant to the apprentice's occupation and apprenticeship.

This assessment method has 2 components:

1. Written project report

2. Presentation with questions

Together, these components give the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method. They are assessed by an Independent Assessor.

Delivery of the Project with report

The apprentice must complete a written project report. Examples of types of projects that could be used are:

- Introduction of a new process, service or product to the operational area

- Identification and implementation of a change plan to improve efficiency or direct saving (for example, percentage decrease in direct cots, reduction in headcount)

- Implementation of a performance improvement plan for the operational area, that required significant collaboration with wider stakeholders

- Evaluation of an internal communications project that involved communicating change to different stakeholders

The written project report is the focus of the assessment, rather than the project itself. This means that all apprentices will be able to meet the KSBs mapped to the method to the highest available grade.

The project itself should be undertaken and completed on programme and pre-gateway to the EPA. It is not part of the EPA. Training providers should refer to the EPA plan to ensure that the project completed on programme will enable the apprentice to meet the requirements of this assessment method.

The written project report output must be in the form of a report and presentation. The apprentice must start the written project report after gateway. The employer should ensure the apprentice has the time and resources, within the written project report period, to plan and complete their report. The research and project will be completed on programme and before the gateway.

The apprentice may work as part of a team to complete the project, which could include internal colleagues or technical experts. However, the apprentice must complete their written project report and presentation unaided and they must be reflective of their own role and contribution. The apprentice and their employer must confirm this when the written project report and any presentation materials are submitted.

The apprentice may choose to end the assessment method early if they are confident they have demonstrated competence against the assessment requirements for the assessment method. This will be documented by the VTCT Skills Independent Assessor, who may suggest that the assessment continues.

Component 1: Written project report

The report must include at least:

- An executive summary

- An introduction

- The scope and business need of the project
  (including key performance indicators, aims and objectives)

- Research and analysis outcomes

- Project outcomes – Did it deliver the benefits included? Was it completed to time and cost?

- Discussion of findings

- Recommendations and conclusions

- References – from external resources

- Appendix containing mapping of KSBs to the report

The written project report must have a word count of 4000 words. A tolerance of 10% above or below is allowed at the apprentice's discretion. Appendices, references and diagrams are not included in this total. The apprentice must produce and include a mapping document in an appendix, showing how the report evidences the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

The apprentice must complete and submit the written project report and any presentation materials to VTCT Skills by the end of week 12 of the EPA period.

Component 2: Presentation with questions

The presentation with questions will be structured to give the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method to the highest available grade.

The apprentice will prepare and deliver a presentation to the VTCT Skills Independent Assessor. After the presentation, the Independent Assessor will ask the apprentice questions about their project, written project report, and presentation.

The presentation should cover:

- An analysis of the internal and external factors that impacted the choice of project

- A critical evaluation of the project activity justifying the reason for the project

- Detail of the impact the project has had since it was completed

The presentation with questions must last 60 minutes. This will typically include a presentation of 20 minutes and questioning lasting 40 minutes. The Independent Assessor will use the full time available for questioning. The Independent Assessor may increase the time of the presentation and questioning by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last point or respond to a question if necessary.

The Independent Assessor will ask at least 6 questions. Follow up questions are allowed where clarification is required.

The purpose of the Independent Assessor's questions is:

- To verify that the activity was completed by the apprentice

- To seek clarification where required

- To assess those KSBs that the apprentice did not have the opportunity to demonstrate with the report, although these should be kept to a minimum

- To assess level of competence against the grading descriptors

The apprentice must submit any presentation materials to VTCT Skills at the same time as the report – by the end of week 12 of the EPA period. The apprentice must notify VTCT Skills at that point of any technical requirements for the presentation.

During the presentation, the apprentice must have access to (if required):

- Audio-visual presentation equipment

- A flip chart and writing and drawing materials

- A computer

The Independent Assessor must have at least 2 weeks to review the project report and any presentation materials to allow them to prepare questions. The apprentice must be given a least 2 weeks notice of the presentation with questions.

Venue

The End-point Assessment presentation must take place in a suitable venue selected by VTCT Skills (for example the employer's premises). The Presentation with questions can also be conducted by video conferencing. The Presentation with questions must take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence.

Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours

The End-point Assessment Project with report will cover the following criteria:

Knowledge

Knowledge reference	Knowledge criteria
K1	Presentation skills and methods.
K5	IT and software tools used to support the current and future needs of the organisation, including advances in technology.
K6	Methods for researching, analysing, interpreting and evaluating data to inform judgements and enable decision making.
K7	Financial management techniques and implications of decisions for budgets.
K8	How to identify and manage organisational improvement opportunities.
K9	Project management tools and techniques.
K10	Methods used to identify, manage and prioritise stakeholder relationships.
K11	The current and future needs of the sector and the impact on their organisation.
K12	Problem solving and decision-making techniques.
K13	Influencing and negotiation models and techniques.
K15	Communication techniques and approaches.
K17	Change management concepts and methods for implementing change within the organisation.

Skills

Skill reference	Skill criteria
S1	Communicate and present information to stakeholders using different types of media.
S2	Identify problems and provide solutions.
S5	Manage and influence project activity to deliver within budget and resource requirements.
S8	Use digital tools to analyse information and monitor performance and budgets to drive the implementation and delivery of plans and projects.
S9	Research, interpret and analyse information to inform the implementation of business plans or projects.
S10	Evaluate the impact of outcomes from organisational plans or projects to drive the decision-making process.
S12	Manage continuous improvement and change for their team and organisation.
S15	Identify and respond to external factors that may influence the future landscape and evaluate their impact on the organisation.
S16	Influence and negotiate with stakeholders to shape and agree goals and outcomes.

Behaviours

Behaviour reference	Behaviour criteria
B3	Takes accountability and ownership of their own and the team's tasks and workload.
B5	Works flexibly and adapts to circumstances.
B6	Works collaboratively with others across the organisation and stakeholders.

Project with report

Pass criteria

The apprentice will achieve a Pass grade if they provide evidence to meet all the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour requirements set out for the Project with report and all the criteria below:

Theme 1 – Project scope and planning		
Grading criteria	**Fail**	**Pass**
Explains how they identify problems and use methods for researching, analysing interpreting, and evaluating data to inform judgements and provide solutions. (K6, S2)		
Explains how they manage and prioritise stakeholder relationships and influence and negotiate with stakeholders to shape and agree goals and outcomes when identifying and managing organisational improvement opportunities. (K8, K10, S16)		
Describes the change management concepts and the methods they use to implement change within their organisation in line with the project brief. (K17)		
Explains how they identify the current and future needs of the sector and respond to any external factors that may influence the future landscape and evaluates their impact on the organisation. (K11, S15)		

Theme 2 – Project implementation		
Grading criteria	**Fail**	**Pass**
Explains how they use IT and software tools to support the needs of the organisation, including advances in technology, and use digital tools to analyse information and monitor performance and budgets to drive the implementation and delivery of plans and projects. (K5, S8)		
Explains how they apply project and financial management tools and techniques to manage and deliver projects within budget and resource requirements, taking accountability and ownership of their own and the team's tasks and workload. (K7, K9, S5, B3)		
Outlines the problem solving, decision making, influencing, and negotiating models and techniques they used in the project. (K12, K13)		
Explains how they work collaboratively with others to research, interpret, and analyse information which informs the implementation of business plans or projects. (S9, B6)		
Explains how they work flexibly and adapt to change when managing continuous improvement and change for their team and organisation. (S12, B5)		

Theme 3 – Evaluation and recommendations		
Grading criteria	**Fail**	**Pass**
Selects and applies different communication techniques and methods to present information to stakeholders. (K1, K15, S1)		
Evaluates the impact of outcomes from organisational plans or projects to drive the decision-making process. (S10)		

Project with report
Distinction criteria

The apprentice will achieve a Distinction grade if they provide evidence to meet all the Pass criteria and all the Distinction criteria below:

Theme 1 – Project scope and planning	
Grading criteria	**Distinction**
Evaluates the impact of their approach to influencing and negotiating with stakeholders to shape and agree goals and outcomes when identifying and managing organisational improvement opportunities. (K8, S16)	
Critically analyses the current and future needs of the organisation. (K11)	

Theme 2 – Project implementation	
Grading criteria	**Distinction**
Evaluates their approach to managing continuous improvement and change within the project. (S12)	
Evaluates the impact of the project and financial management techniques they have used to deliver projects within resource requirements, suggesting improvements to facilitate the success of future projects. (K7, K9, S5)	

Assessment Method 2:
Professional Discussion underpinned by a
portfolio of evidence

Assessment Method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

In the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence, a VTCT Skills Independent Assessor and the apprentice will have a formal two-way conversation. This assessment method gives the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

The apprentice can refer to an illustrate their answers with evidence from their portfolio of evidence.

Delivery of the Professional discussion

The professional discussion will be structured to give the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method to the highest possible grade.

It will be conducted and assessed by a VTCT Skills Independent Assessor. The purpose of the Independent assessor's questions will be to allow the assessor to ask the apprentice questions relating to:

- Managing and leading a team

- Organisational governance

- Operational planning

- Stakeholder relationships

The Independent Assessor must have at least 2 weeks to review the supporting documentation. The apprentice must have access to their portfolio of evidence during the Profession discussion, and can refer to and illustrate their answers with evidence from their portfolio of evidence.

The Professional discussion must last for **60 minutes**. The Independent Assessor can increase the time of the professional discussion by up to 10% in order to allow the apprentice to respond to a question if necessary.

The Independent Assessor will ask at least **6 questions**. Follow up questions may be asked where clarification is required.

Venue

The End-point Assessment Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence must take place in a suitable venue selected by VTCT Skills (for example the employer's premises). The Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence can also be conducted by video conferencing. The Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence must take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence.

Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours

The End-point Assessment Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence will cover the following Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours:

Knowledge

Knowledge reference	Knowledge criteria
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.

Skills

Skill reference	Skill criteria
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.

Behaviours

Behaviour reference	Behaviour criteria
B1	Acts professionally, ethically and with integrity.
B2	Supports an inclusive culture, treating colleagues and stakeholders fairly and with respect.
B3	Seeks learning opportunities and continuous professional development for self and the wider team.

Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

Pass criteria

The apprentice will achieve a Pass grade if they provide evidence to meet all the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour requirements set out for the Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence and all the criteria below:

Theme 4 – Managing and leading a team		
Grading criteria	**Fail**	**Pass**
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)		

Theme 5 – Organisational governance		
Grading criteria	**Fail**	**Pass**
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 wellbeing. (K3, S6)		

Theme 6 – Operational planning		
Grading criteria	**Fail**	**Pass**
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)		

Theme 7 – Stakeholder relationships		
Grading criteria	**Fail**	**Pass**
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

The apprentice will achieve a Distinction grade in the Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence if they provide evidence to meet all the Pass criteria and all the Distinction criteria below:
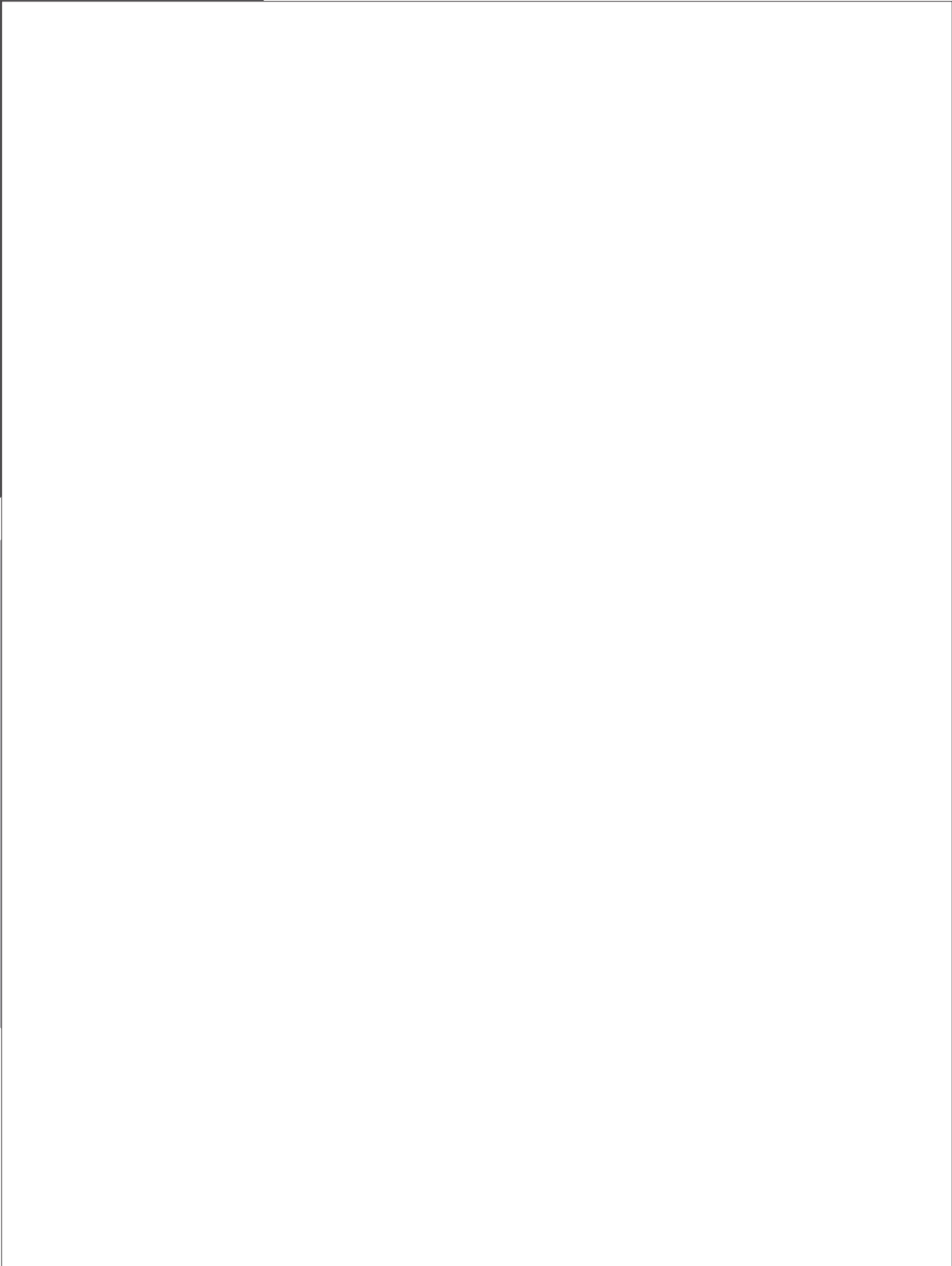
Theme 4 – Managing and leading a team	
Grading criteria	**Distinction**
Critically evaluates their people management approach to motivating team members and individuals. (K4, S7)	
Evaluates the impact coaching and mentoring techniques have on individuals in their team. (K24, S20)	

Theme 5 – Organisational governance	
Grading criteria	**Distinction**
Evaluates their approach to supporting, delivering, and promoting equity, diversity, inclusion, and well-being in terms of impact on the workplace. (K3, S6)	

Theme 6 – Operational planning	
Grading criteria	**Distinction**
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)	

Theme 7 – Stakeholder relationships	
Grading criteria	**Distinction**
Evaluates the impact of their approach to managing stakeholder relationships and recommends improvements. (S17, B2)	

Notes

Re-sits and Retakes

An apprentice who fails one or more assessment method(s) can take a re-sit or a re-take at their employer's discretion. The apprentice's employer needs to agree that a re-sit or re-take is appropriate. A re-sit does not need further learning, whereas a re-take does.

An apprentice should have a supportive action plan to prepare for a re-sit or a re-take.

The employer and VTCT Skills will agree on the timescale for a re-sit or re-take. A re-sit is typically taken within 2 months of the End-point Assessment outcome notification. The timescale for a re-take is dependent on how much re-training is required and is typically taken within 3 months of the End-point Assessment outcome notification. If the apprentice fails the project assessment method, they must amend the project output in line with the Independent Assessor's feedback. The apprentice will be given 4 weeks to rework and submit the amended report. Failed assessment methods must be re-sat or re-taken within a 6-month period from the End-point Assessment outcome notification, otherwise the entire End-point Assessment will need to be re-sat or re-taken in full.

Re-sits and re-takes are not offered to an apprentice wishing to move from pass to a higher grade.

An apprentice will get a maximum End-point Assessment grade of pass for a re-sit or re-take, unless VTCT Skills determines there are exceptional circumstances.

Document history

Version	Details of amendments	Date
1	First Published	26/11/2024