Level 4 Software Developer

EPA Overview

July 2024

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1. EPA headlines

- Must be on programme 366 days before entering gateway
- Must have: Work-based Portfolio and Checklist, Project Proposal (approved), EPA Gateway Form, Employer Declaration and FS Level 2 math and English completed prior to gateway
- Project Proposal - Max 500 words +/- 10%
- EPA window 6 months which includes resit/retake if needed
- 2 x Assessment methods at EPA – AM1. Project Report with Questioning, AM2. Professional Discussion underpinned by the portfolio
  - Project must start within the EPA window and must be submitted to EPAO after a max of 9 weeks
  - AM1 Project Report (EPA) - Max 4500 words +/- 10%
  - AM1 Questioning Lasts 60 Mins with a discretionary 10% allowance
  - AM1 will have a minimum of 12 questions based around the Project Report and KSBs of AM1
- AM2 Professional Discussion Lasts 60 mins with a discretionary 10% allowance – Underpinned by Work-based Portfolio
  - Professional Discussion - Minimum of 12 open ended questions around the KSBs of AM2
- Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be offered the opportunity to take a resit or a retake at the employer's discretion

2. Gateway

Gateway is the point that the employer is satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard. In making this decision, the employer may take advice from the training provider, but the decision must ultimately be made by the employer.

Apprentices must have been on programme for at least 366 days prior to entering gateway, and must also meet the following gateway requirements for Level 4 Software Developer programme:

- Portfolio of evidence
- Portfolio checklist
- Project proposal
- EPA gateway form
- Employer declaration
- Level 2 English and Maths evidence

The EPAO determines when all gateway requirements have been met, and the EPA period will only commence once the EPAO has confirmed this.

3. End Point Assessment

The EPA window for Level 4 Software Developer is a <u>maximum of 6 months</u>.

For the End Point Assessment, the learner must complete the following assessments:

- Assessment method 1: Work-based Project with Questioning
- Assessment method 2: Professional Discussion underpinned by Portfolio

Assessment Method 1: Project Report with Questioning

The Work-based Project with Questioning assessment is graded Pass, Distinction or Fail. This assessment has 2 components.

Component 1: Project Report

The project is compiled after the apprentice has gone through the gateway process. Apprentices will conduct a project and deliver the outcome in the form of an electronic based report, which must be submitted to the EPAO after a maximum of 9 weeks of the EPA start date. The project will typically take 7 weeks and the report will typically take a further 2 weeks to write.

The employer must ensure the apprentice has sufficient time and the necessary resources, within this period, to plan and undertake the project and write the report. Whilst completing the project, the apprentice should be subject to normal workplace supervision.

The work-based project should be designed to ensure that the apprentice's work meets the needs of the business, is relevant to their role and allows the relevant KSBs to be demonstrated for the EPA.

The project may be based on any of the following:
- A specific problem
- A recurring issue
- An idea/opportunity

As a minimum all project reports must include:
- An introduction
- The scope of the project (including key performance indicators)
- A project plan
- Consideration of legislation, regulation, industry and organisational policies, procedures, and requirements
- Analysis and problem solving in response to challenges within the project
- Research and findings
- Project outcomes explained by referencing artefacts within the appendices to convey the software solution and design of the software development outputs
- Recommendations and conclusions
- An explanation of how the stages of the software development lifecycle which are involved in the project have been evidenced e.g.
  - Planning
  - Analysis
  - Design
  - Implementation/build
  - Test
  - Deploy
  - Maintain

The project report has a maximum word limit of 4,500. A tolerance of plus or minus 10% is allowed. Appendices, references and diagrams etc will not be included in this total. The appendices must include artefacts comprising examples of relevant coding undertaken and visual infographics conveying the software solution and design of the software development outputs sufficient to demonstrate the KSBs assigned to this method. The project must map, in an appendix, how it evidences the relevant KSBs for this assessment method.

The apprentice may work as part of a team which could include technical internal or external support however the report will be the apprentice's own work and will be reflective of their own role and contribution

Component 2: Questioning

The project questioning is carried out with an Independent Assessor sourced by the EPAO. The questioning will last 60 minutes, with a discretionary 10% additional time to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer. The apprentice will be asked a minimum of 12 questions based on the knowledge, skills, and behaviours identified for this assessment method.

Assessment Method 2: Professional Discussion underpinned by Portfolio

The Professional Discussion underpinned by Portfolio assessment is graded Pass, Distinction or Fail.

The professional discussion is carried out with an Independent Assessor sourced by the EPAO. The professional discussion will last 60 minutes, with a discretionary 10% additional time to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer. The apprentice will be asked a minimum of 12 open questions based on the knowledge, skills, and behaviours identified for this assessment method.

The portfolio will be compiled by the learner whilst on programme and should relate to the KSBs for this assessment. The portfolio underpins the professional discussion but is not directly assessed and therefore will not be marked. A copy of the portfolio must be available to the apprentice during the professional discussion.

4. Grading

Work-based Project with Questioning	Professional Discussion underpinned by Portfolio	Final Grade
Fail	Any grade	**Fail**
Any grade	Fail	**Fail**
Pass	Pass	**Pass**
Pass	Distinction	**Merit**
Distinction	Pass	**Merit**
Distinction	Distinction	**Distinction**

5. Resit and Retakes

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be offered the opportunity to take a resit or a retake at the employer's discretion. The employer will need to agree that either a resit or retake is an appropriate course of action. A resit does not require further learning, whereas a retake does.

Apprentices will have a supportive action plan to prepare for a resit or a retake of any failed assessment. All assessments must be successfully completed within the maximum EPA window, otherwise the full EPA will need to be resat or retaken.

Where any assessment method must be resat or retaken, the apprentice will be awarded a maximum EPA grade of Distinction.

Further information on the Level 4 Software Developer EPA can be found in the assessment plan. A full list of the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) can be found on the Institute for Apprenticeships website here.