Highfield Level 5 End-Point Assessment for ST0385 Operations Manager

End-Point Assessment Kit

© 2

Highfield Level 5 End-Point Assessment for ST0385 Operations Manager

EPA Kit

Contents

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Versions:

ST0385 / v1.4

OM v7.2

How to use this EPA Kit

Welcome to the Highfield End-Point Assessment Kit for the Operations Manager apprenticeship standard.

Highfield is an end-point assessment organisation that has been approved to offer and carry out end-point assessments for the Level 5 Operations Manager apprenticeship standard.

The EPA Kit is designed to outline all you need to know about the end-point assessments for this standard and will also provide an overview of the on-programme delivery requirements. In addition, advice and guidance for trainers on how to prepare apprentices for the end-point assessment is included. The approaches suggested are not the only way in which an apprentice may be prepared for their assessments, but trainers may find them helpful.

Highfield also offers the Highfield Operations Manager Apprenti-kit that is a comprehensive learning resource, which is designed to be used on-programme.

For more information, please go to the Highfield Products website. Please note that the use of this kit is not a prerequisite for apprentices undertaking the Operations Manager end-point assessment.

In this kit, you will find:

- an overview of the standard and any on-programme requirements
- a section focused on amplification
- guidance on how to prepare the apprentice for gateway
- detailed information on which part of the standard is assessed by which assessment method
- suggestions on how to prepare the apprentice for each part of the end-point assessment
- a section focused on the end-point assessment method where the assessment criteria are presented in a format suitable for carrying out 'mock' assessments

Introduction

Standard overview

Operations managers undertake leadership and management duties with teams and senior managers where there is a requirement to ensure that teams carry out their role to meet organisational goals. They are a key component of all types of business model where there is an operational area or department with a workforce to lead, manage and support.

In their daily work, an employee in this occupation interacts with their colleagues from other internal departments such as operational functions, human resources, finance, legal, IT, sales and marketing and project groups. Operations managers also interact with external stakeholders such as customers, clients, or suppliers. They may work in varied environments including in an office, onsite, or remotely and demonstrate a high level of flexibility and adaptability to meet the needs of the organisation.

An employee in this occupation will be responsible for leading and managing their operational function which includes accountability for developing team members, managing projects, planning and reviewing workloads and resources, delivering operational plans, resolving problems and building relationships internally and externally.

Roles/occupations may include area manager, department manager, general manager, operations manager, regional manager and specialist manager.

On completion, apprentices may choose to register with either the Chartered Management Institute for Member, as well as Chartered Manager status where they can evidence 3+ years management experience, or the Institute of Leadership for Member.

On-programme requirements

Although learning, development and on-programme assessment is flexible, and the process is not prescribed, the following is the recommended baseline expectation for an apprentice to achieve full competence in line with the Operations Manager apprenticeship standard.

The on-programme assessment approach will be agreed between the training provider and employer. The assessment will give an ongoing indication of an apprentice's performance against the final outcomes defined in the standard. The training provider will need to prepare the apprentice for the end-point assessment, including preparation for the professional discussion and collation of the portfolio of evidence (such as a provision of recordings of professional discussions or workplace evidence).

The training programme leading to end-point assessment should cover the breadth and depth of the standard using suggested on-programme assessment methods that integrate the knowledge, skills and behaviour components, and which ensure that the apprentice is sufficiently prepared to undertake the end-point assessment. Training, development and ongoing review activities should include:

- achievement of level 2 English and maths. If the apprentice began their apprenticeship training before their 19th birthday, they will still be subject to the mandatory requirement to study towards and achieve English and maths. The requirements for English and maths are optional for apprentices aged 19+ at the start of their apprenticeship training.
- any qualifications specified by the employer
- completion of a portfolio through which the apprentice gathers evidence of their progress
- study days and training courses
- mentoring/buddy support
- regular performance reviews undertaken by the employer
- structured one-to-one reviews of their progress with their employer and/or training provider

Portfolio of evidence

The apprentice must compile a portfolio of evidence during their time on-programme that is mapped against the knowledge, skills and behaviours assessed in the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

It will typically contain **16 discrete pieces of evidence**. Evidence may be used to demonstrate more than 1 knowledge, skill or behaviour as a qualitative approach is suggested as opposed to a quantitative approach.

Evidence sources for the portfolio may include:

- workplace documentation and records, for example:
    - workplace policies and procedures
    - witness statements
    - annotated photographs
    - video clips with a maximum total duration of 5 minutes (the apprentice must be in view and identifiable)

This is not a definitive list and other evidence sources are possible.

The portfolio 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 portfolio must be accompanied by a portfolio matrix. This can be downloaded from our website. The portfolio matrix must be fully completed including a declaration by the employer and the apprentice to confirm that the portfolio is valid and attributable to the apprentice.

The portfolio of evidence must be submitted to Highfield at gateway. It is not directly assessed but underpins the professional discussion.

Written 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 6 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.

Use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the EPA

Assessments must be carried out in accordance with the published assessment plan and all work submitted must be the apprentice's own. AI tools must not be used to generate evidence in its entirety or to replace the apprentice's own judgement, performance or competence. Any use of AI must be transparent, limited and properly referenced.

Where AI has been used by the apprentice as part of normal work activity (for example, drafting a document, worksheet or PowerPoint) this may form part of the portfolio provided that:

The apprentice has materially authored, verified and taken responsibility for the content:

- AI use is clearly declared and referenced within the work (include tool name, purpose and how outputs were verified)
- Source prompts, system settings and the portions influenced by AI are retained and available for review
- AI outputs must not substitute for authentic demonstration of competence against the standard

If an AI tool is used at any stage of an assessment method (for example, to prepare a presentation outline or to organise notes), its use must be fully referenced in the submission or assessor records, and must not compromise authenticity, validity or security. Assessors must be satisfied that decisions remain rooted in the apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviours, and in direct evidence gathered through observation, questioning and professional discussion.

AI tools must not be used to produce assessment evidence end-to-end, to fabricate logs/records or to simulate performance.

Additional, relevant on-programme qualification

There are no mandatory qualifications for apprentices for this standard. Employers may wish to choose the Highfield Level 5 Diploma in Operations Management (RQF) to help structure the on-programme delivery. This qualification is recognised by Ofqual and equate to 470 hours of total qualification time (47 credits).

Readiness for end-point assessment

For an apprentice to be ready for the end-point assessments:

- the apprentice must have achieved level 2 English and maths. The requirements for English and maths are mandatory for all apprentices aged between 16-18 at the start of their apprenticeship training. The requirements for English and maths are optional for apprentices aged 19+ at the start of their apprenticeship training.
- the apprentice must have gathered a **portfolio of evidence** against the required elements to be put forward to be used as the basis for the professional discussion.
- the apprentice must have completed an on-programme project which will form the basis of their written project report in the EPA
- the apprentice must have gathered their organisation's policies and procedures as requested by Highfield. For guidance, a list of examples has been provided below.
    - Health and safety policies and procedures
    - Equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace
    - Conflict resolution and mediation processes
    - Sustainability practices

  This list is not definitive. The policies and procedures may already be included as part of the portfolio of evidence.
- the line manager (employer) must be confident that the apprentice has developed all the knowledge, skills and behaviours defined in the apprenticeship standard and that the apprentice is competent in performing their role. To ensure this, the apprentice must attend a formal meeting with their employer to complete the Gateway Readiness Report.
- the apprentice and the employer should then engage with Highfield to agree a plan and schedule for each assessment activity to ensure all components can be completed within a **mandated** end-assessment window. Further information about the gateway process is covered later in this kit.

If you have any queries regarding the gateway requirements, please contact your EPA Customer Engagement Manager at Highfield Assessment.

Order of end-point assessments

There is no stipulated order of assessment methods. This will be discussed with the apprentice, training provider and/or employer with our scheduling team when scheduling the assessments to ensure that the learner is provided with the best opportunity to attempt the assessment.

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The Highfield approach

This section describes the approach Highfield has adopted in the development of this end-point assessment in terms of its interpretation of the requirements of the end-point assessment plan and other relevant documents.

Specific considerations

Highfield's approach does not deviate from the assessment plan.

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Gateway

How to prepare for gateway

After apprentices have completed their on-programme learning, they should be ready to pass through 'gateway' to their end-point assessment.

Gateway is a meeting that should be arranged between the apprentice, their employer and training provider to determine that the apprentice is ready to undertake their end-point assessment. The apprentice should prepare for this meeting by bringing along work-based evidence, including:

- customer feedback
- recordings
- manager statements
- witness statements

As well as evidence from others, such as:

- mid and end-of-year performance reviews
- feedback to show how they have met the apprenticeship standards while on-programme

In advance of gateway, apprentices will need to have completed the following. The requirements for English and maths listed below are mandatory for all apprentices aged between 16-18 at the start of their apprenticeship training. The requirements for English and maths listed below are optional for apprentices aged 19+ at the start of their apprenticeship training.

- Achieved level 2 English
- Achieved level 2 maths
- Submitted a suitable portfolio of evidence to be used as the basis for the professional discussion (see the portfolio matrix)
- Completed an on-programme project that will form the basis of the written project report
- Submitted their organisation's policies and procedures as requested by Highfield

Therefore, apprentices should be advised by employers and providers to gather this evidence and undertake these qualifications during their on-programme training. It is recommended that employers and providers complete regular checks and reviews of this evidence to ensure the apprentice is progressing and achieving the standards before the formal gateway meeting is arranged.

The gateway meeting

The gateway meeting should be attended by the apprentice and a representative from the employer and training provider.

The **Gateway Readiness Report** should be used to log the outcomes of the meeting and agreed by all 3 parties. This report is available to download from the Highfield Assessment website.

The report should then be submitted to Highfield. If you require any support completing the Gateway Readiness Report, please contact your EPA customer engagement manager at Highfield Assessment.

Reasonable adjustments
Highfield Assessment has measures in place for apprentices who require additional support. Please refer to the Highfield Assessment Reasonable Adjustments policy for further information/guidance.

ID requirements
Highfield Assessment will complete an identification check before starting any assessment and will accept the following as proof of an apprentice's identity:

- a valid passport (any nationality)
- a signed UK photocard driving licence
- a valid warrant card issued by HM forces or the Police
- another photographic ID card, such as an employee ID card or travel card

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The Operations Manager apprenticeship standard

Below are the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) from the standard and related assessment criteria from the assessment plan. On-programme learning will be based upon the KSBs and the associated assessment criteria are used to assess and grade the apprentice within each assessment method.

Project scope and planning	
Knowledge	**Skills**
K6 Methods for researching, analysing, interpreting and evaluating data to inform judgements and enable decision making **K8** How to identify and manage organisational improvement opportunities **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 **K17 Change management concepts** and methods for implementing change within the organisation	**S2** Identify problems and provide solutions **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
Project with report	
Pass criteria	***Distinction criteria***
PS1 Explains how they identify problems and use methods for researching, analysing interpreting, and evaluating data to inform judgements and provide solutions (K6, S2) **PS2** Explains how they manage and prioritise stakeholder relationships and **influence and negotiate with stakeholders** to shape and agree goals	***PS5*** *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)*

and outcomes when identifying and managing organisational improvement opportunities (K8, K10, S16) **PS3** Describes the **change management concepts** and the methods they use to implement change within their organisation in line with the project brief (K17) **PS4** 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)	***PS6*** *Critically analyses the current and future needs of the organisation (K11)*

Amplification and guidance

Change management concepts

- Consider organisational change:
  - culture
  - needs
  - drivers
- Potential external influences for change:
  - regulatory
  - political
  - legislative
  - social change
  - consumer behaviour
  - competitor analysis
- Resistance to change
- Change models such as:
  - Kotter's 8 step change model:
    - create a sense of urgency

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        - build a guiding coalition
        - form a strategic vision
        - enlist a volunteer army
        - enable action by removing barriers
        - generate short-term wins
        - sustain acceleration
        - institute change
    - Kurt Lewin's 3-step change model:
        - unfreeze
        - change
        - refreeze

Influence and negotiate with stakeholders

- Stakeholder prioritisation
- Impact of approach
- Influence techniques - stages of models such as McKinsey's:
    - foster understanding and conviction
    - reinforce with formal mechanisms
    - developing talent and skills
    - role modelling
- Negotiation theories:
    - rapport, analysis, debate, proposal, agreement, close (RADPAC)

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Project implementation</th></tr>
<tr><th>Knowledge</th><th>Skills</th><th>Behaviours</th></tr>
<tr><td>K5 IT and software tools used to support the current and future needs of the organisation, including advances in technology

K7 Financial management techniques and implications of decisions for budgets

K9 Project management tools and techniques

K12 Problem solving and decision-making techniques

K13 Influencing and negotiation models and techniques</td><td>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

S12 Manage continuous improvement and change for their team and organisation</td><td>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</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Project with report</th></tr>
<tr><th>Pass criteria</th><th>Distinction criteria</th></tr>
<tr><td>PI1 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)

PI2 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)</td><td>PI6 Evaluates their approach to managing continuous improvement and change within the project (S12)

PI7 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)</td></tr>
</table>

PI3 Outlines the problem solving, decision making, influencing, and negotiating models and techniques they used in the project (K12, K13) **PI4** Explains how they work collaboratively with others to research, interpret, and analyse information which informs the implementation of business plans or projects (S9, B6) **PI5** Explains how they work flexibly and adapt to change when managing **continuous improvement** and change for their team and organisation (S12, B5)	

Amplification and guidance

Financial management techniques

- Return on capital employed (ROCE)
- Return on Investment (ROI)
- Financial techniques:
  - monitoring
  - controlling
  - protecting
  - reporting:
    - sales
    - margins
    - costs
    - Delphi method
    - project baseline
- Budgeting
- Forecasting

Budgets

- How to plan and set an accurate budget

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- Ensuring regular reporting to it
- Planning corrective actions where necessary
- Bottom-up and top-down methods

Project management tools and techniques

- Gantt charts
- Program evaluation review technique (PERT) charts
- Process flow charts
- Critical path analysis
- Product breakdown structure (PBS)
- Work breakdown structure (WBS)
- RACI matrix
- Project charter
- Project initiation document (PID)

Problem solving and decision-making techniques

- Problem/root cause analysis
- Cause and effect
- Pareto principle
- Theory of inventive problem solving (TRIZ), the central analytical tool of which is the algorithm of incentive problem solving (ARIZ)
- Evaluating 'pros and cons'
- Decision trees
- Paired comparison analysis and grid analysis

Continuous Improvement

- Total quality management (TQM)
- Plan, do, check, act (PDCA) model
- Six Sigma
- Kaizen
- Lean production methods

- Political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental (PESTLE) analysis
- Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT) analysis
- Kotter's 8 step change model
- Porter's 5 forces analysis

Evaluation and recommendations	
Knowledge	**Skills**
K1 Presentation skills and methods **K15 Communication techniques** and approaches	**S1** Communicate and present information to stakeholders using different types of **media** **S10** Evaluate the impact of outcomes from organisational plans or projects to drive the **decision-making process**
Project with report	
Pass criteria	***Distinction criteria***
ER1 Selects and applies different **communication techniques** and methods to present information to stakeholders (K1, K15, S1) **ER2** Evaluates the impact of outcomes from organisational plans or projects to drive the **decision-making process** (S10)	*No distinction criteria*
Amplification and guidance	

Presentation skills

- Engaging language
- Eye contact
- Body language
- Expressive speech

Communication techniques

- Verbal
- Non-verbal
- Active listening
- Written

- Visual
- Engaging with the audience

Media

- Electronic presentations:
    - PowerPoint
- Verbal presentations
- Paper-based hand-outs
- Visual:
    - Zoom
    - Teams

Decision-making process

- Define the problem
- Clarify the question
- Identify the decision to be made
- Gather relevant information
- Evaluate possible options
- Identify alternative solutions
- Take action
- Review and evaluate your decision and impact
- Use appropriate decision-making technique, for example:
    - decision tree
    - cost/benefit analysis
    - heuristic method
    - tiered voting
    - pros and cons

Managing and leading a team		
Knowledge	**Skills**	**Behaviours**
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 **K20** The continuous development requirements and learning needs of their team **K24 Coaching and mentoring techniques**	**S3** Manage and set goals and accountabilities for individuals and teams **S4** Analyse **performance data** for individuals and teams to identify areas for improvement **S7 Motivate** team members and individuals through collaborative activities, for example one-to-one coaching and team meetings, to achieve organisational goals **S19** Manage and facilitate learning and continuous professional development for their team **S20** Coach and mentor individuals within their team	**B1** Acts professionally, ethically and with integrity **B4** Seeks learning opportunities and continuous professional development for self and the wider team

Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence	
Pass criteria	***Distinction criteria***
ML1 Analyses **performance data** for individuals and teams to identify areas for improvement, continuous development requirements and learning needs (K20, S4) **ML2** Proactively seeks, manages, and facilitates learning opportunities and continuous professional development for themselves and their wider team. (S19, B4)	***ML5*** *Critically evaluates their people management approach to motivating team members and individuals (K4, S7)* ***ML6*** *Evaluates the impact* ***coaching and mentoring techniques*** *have on individuals in their team (K24, S20)*

ML3 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) **ML4** 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)	

Amplification and guidance

Performance management, reward, and talent management

- Appraisals
- Recognition
- Retention
- Identify talent
- Succession planning
- Skills matrix
- Talent management models such as Josh Bersin's Talent Management:
    - talent strategy and planning
    - sourcing and recruiting
    - performance management
    - learning and development
    - succession planning
    - leadership development
    - compensation

Conflict resolution and mediation processes

- Conflict theories such as Thomas-Kilmann conflict mode:
    - avoiding

  - accommodating
  - competing
  - collaborating
  - compromising
- Different stages of conflict resolution
- Behaviours required to support conflict techniques, for example:
  - questioning techniques
  - active listening

Ethics

- The set of principles that guide the organisation in its programs and policies and decisions for the business, linking to corporate social responsibility

Coaching and mentoring techniques

- One-to-ones
- Shadowing
- Grow model
- SMART plans
- Personal development plans (PDP)
- Behaviours to support coaching and mentoring, for example:
  - questioning techniques

Performance data

- Balanced scorecards
- Key performance indicators (KPIs):
  - leading
  - lagging
- Skills matrix

Motivate

- Identifying individual motivators
- Identifying strengths of team members and enabling development while being aware of ‘hygiene factors’
- Theories such as:
    - Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory
    - Belbin’s Team Roles
    - Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Organisational governance	
Knowledge	**Skills**
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 **K22 Organisational policies and procedures**, for example health and safety	**S6** Lead and influence the team and individuals to support an inclusive culture of equity, diversity, and the promotion of well-being **S11** Interpret and implement the practical application of regulation, legislation and organisational policies for stakeholders
Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence	
Pass criteria	***Distinction criteria***
OG1 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) **OG2** 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)	***OG3*** *Evaluates their approach to supporting,* ***delivering, and promoting equity, diversity, inclusion****, and wellbeing in terms of impact on the workplace (K3, S6)*
Amplification and guidance	

Relevant regulation and legislation

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act) Act:

- protected characteristics, such as:
  - age
  - disability
  - gender
  - marriage and civil partnership
  - pregnancy and maternity
  - race
  - religion or belief
  - sex
  - sexual orientation
- Care Act:
  - empowerment
  - prevention
  - proportionality
  - partnership
  - accountability
- Mental Health Act

Organisational policies and procedures

- Health and safety policy
- Recruitment policy
- Internet and email policy
- Code of conduct

Delivering, and promoting equity, diversity, inclusion

- Be aware of unconscious bias
- Acknowledge religious and cultural holidays
- Encourage employee feedback

- Strive for a multigenerational workforce
- Celebrate differences

Operational planning	
Knowledge	**Skills**
K19 The sector in which the organisation operates and its impact on their role **K21 Business continuity principles**, including **risk** assessment, contingency planning and disaster recovery **K23** Responsible organisation policies and practices covering social, environmental, and economic factors, including sustainability **K25** The strategic direction of the organisation and the impact on operational plans	**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 **S18** Deliver **sustainable services and solutions** which allow the organisation to respond to changes in social, economic and environmental factors **S21** Develop and implement operational plans that align with the strategic direction of the organisation
Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence	
Pass criteria	***Distinction criteria***
OP1 Analyses and prioritises organisational activities in response to the **operating environment** and the impact this has on their role (K19, S13) **OP2** Justifies the **business continuity principles** they apply to ensure the uninterrupted operation of critical functions (K21, S14) **OP3** 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 factor (K23, S18)	***OP5*** *Evaluates the extent to which* ***business continuity principles*** *they apply have ensured the uninterrupted operation of critical functions (K21, S14)* ***OP6*** *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)*

OP4 Evaluates the degree to which operational plans they have developed and implemented align with the strategic direction of the organisation (K25, S21)	

Amplification and guidance

Business continuity principles

- Contingency planning
- Assessing risks and tools to support, such as risk registers, control measures, RAID log, and so on
- The four P's - people, processes, premises and providers
- Emergency, crisis or disaster planning

Risk

- Risk assessment processes and matrices:
  - qualitative
  - quantitative
- Risk registers
- Identification and implementation of control measures to mitigate risk

Prioritise

- Undertaking a situation appraisal to recognise concerns
- Separate concerns into manageable sections/parts which can be prioritised based on urgency
- Pareto's principle (80:20) can inform the priorities set

Operating environment

- Factors which affect and influence a business:
  - internal:
    - employees
    - resources
    - financial

        - culture
    - external:
        - customers
        - markets
        - trends
        - competition
    - political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental (PESTLE) analysis

Sustainable services and solutions

- Service and solutions which respond and impact the social, economic, environmental factors
- Pillars of sustainability:
    - environmental
    - economic
    - social

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Stakeholder relationships</th></tr>
<tr><th>Skills</th><th>Behaviours</th></tr>
<tr><td>S17 Manage relationships across multiple and diverse stakeholders</td><td>B2 Supports an inclusive culture, treating colleagues and stakeholders fairly and with respect</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</th></tr>
<tr><th>Pass criteria</th><th>Distinction criteria</th></tr>
<tr><td>SR1 Explains how they manage relationships across multiple and diverse stakeholders, ensuring they are treated fairly, inclusively and with respect (S17, B2)</td><td>SR2 Evaluates the impact of their approach to managing stakeholder relationships and recommends improvements (S17, B2)</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Amplification and guidance</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Manage relationships
Negotiation
Influencing
Effective networking
Build trust
Create a positive working environment
Stakeholders
Internal
External
Stakeholder engagement:
5 levels:
unaware
resistant
neutral</td></tr>
</table>

        - supportive
        - leading
- Stakeholder mapping:
    - low to high power/low to high influence:
        - low influence/low power – monitor relationship
        - low influence/high power – keep satisfied
        - high influence/low power – keep informed
        - high influence/high power – manage closely
- Identify and prioritise key stakeholder relationships
- Clearly communicate project scope to stakeholders
- Gain stakeholder trust from the beginning
- Be consistent in communication and messaging
- Meet the stakeholders who are resistant to change
- Create a platform to record the relationship
- Do not avoid problems from the start

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Assessment summary

The end-point assessment for the Operations Manager apprenticeship standard is made up of 2 assessment methods:

1. A 4,000 word (+/-10%) written project report with presentation and questions lasting 60 minutes
2. A 60-minute professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

As an employer/training provider, you should agree a plan and schedule with the apprentice to ensure all assessment components can be completed effectively.

Each component of the end-point assessment will be assessed against the appropriate criteria laid out in this kit, which will be used to determine a grade for each individual. The grade will be determined using the combined grades.

Project with report

All assessment methods are weighted equally. Apprentices will be marked against the pass and distinction criteria outlined in this kit.

- To achieve a **pass**, apprentices must achieve all of the pass criteria
- To achieve a **distinction**, apprentices must achieve all of the pass criteria **and** all of the distinction criteria
- **Unsuccessful** apprentices will not have achieved all of the pass criteria

The written project report and any presentation materials must be submitted by week 12 of the EPA period and the presentation should be conducted in a suitable location such as an employer's or training provider's premises. The presentation with questions can be conducted via video conferencing.

Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

All assessment methods are weighted equally. Apprentices will be marked against the pass and distinction criteria outlined in this kit.

- To achieve a **pass**, apprentices must achieve all of the pass criteria
- To achieve a **distinction**, apprentices must achieve all of the pass criteria **and** all of the distinction criteria
- **Unsuccessful** apprentices will not have achieved all of the pass criteria

The professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence may be conducted using technology such as video link, as long as fair assessment conditions can be maintained.

Grading

The apprenticeship includes pass and distinction grades, with the final grade based on the apprentice's combined performance in each assessment method.

To achieve a pass, the apprentice is required to pass both assessment methods.

To achieve a distinction, the apprentice must achieve a distinction in the project with report and the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

The overall grade for the apprentice is determined using the matrix below:

Project with report	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence	Overall grade awarded
Fail	Fail	**Fail**
Any grade	Fail	**Fail**
Fail	Any grade	**Fail**
Pass	Pass	**Pass**
Distinction	Pass	**Pass**
Pass	Distinction	**Pass**
Distinction	Distinction	**Distinction**

Retake and resit information

If an apprentice fails 1 or both end-point assessment methods, they can take a resit or retake at their employer's discretion. The employer needs to agree that a resit or retake is appropriate. If a resit is chosen, please call the Highfield scheduling team to arrange the resit. If a retake is chosen, the apprentice will require a period of further learning and will need to complete a retake checklist. Once this is completed, please call the Highfield scheduling team to arrange the retake.

A resit is typically taken within **2 months** of the EPA outcome notification. The timescale for a retake will be dependent on how much retraining is required but is typically taken within **3 months** of the EPA outcome notification.

When undertaking a resit or retake, the assessment method(s) will need to be reattempted in full, regardless of any individual assessment criteria that were passed on any prior attempt. The EPA report will contain feedback on areas for development and resit or retake guidance.

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.

Any EPA component resit/retake must be taken within a **6-month** period from the EPA outcome notification, otherwise, the entire EPA must be retaken in full. Apprentices should have a supportive action plan to prepare for the resit/retake.

Apprentices who achieve a pass grade cannot resit or retake the EPA to achieve a higher grade. Where any assessment method has to be resat or retaken, the apprentice will be awarded a maximum grade of pass, unless there are exceptional circumstances that are beyond the control of the apprentice as determined by Highfield.

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Assessing the project with report

This end-point assessment method consists of 2 components:

- written project report
- presentation with questions

Component 1: Written project report

The project is undertaken and completed on-programme and pre-gateway to the EPA. The apprentice must start the written project report after gateway. It is recommended that training providers 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 employer should ensure the apprentice has the time and resources, within the written project report period, to plan and complete their project. The research and project will be completed before the gateway.

Examples of types of projects that could be used for the written project report 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 costs or a 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 project output must be in the form of a report and presentation where the apprentice will present evidence from their real work that illustrates their application of the knowledge, skills and behaviours.

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 **4,000 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 mapping 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 Highfield by the end of week 12 of the EPA period.

The apprentice may work as part of a team to complete the project, which could include internal colleagues or technical experts. The apprentice must, however, complete their written project report and presentation unaided and they must be reflective of their own role and contribution.

The report must be uploaded in PDF format and must be accompanied by the **written submission sheet** which is available to download from the Highfield Assessment website. On the written submission sheet, the apprentice and their employer must verify that the submitted report is the apprentice's own work and must map how it evidences the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours for this assessment method, as outlined in this kit.

Component 2: Presentation with questions

The apprentice must prepare and deliver a presentation to an independent assessor. After the presentation, the independent assessor must ask the apprentice questions about their project, written project report and presentation. The presentation will be based on the project report and 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 must be submitted with the project report by week 12 of the EPA period after gateway and before the presentation with questioning. The apprentice must notify Highfield, at that point, of any technical requirements for the presentation. The presentation will be presented to an end-point assessor, either face-to-face in a suitable controlled environment or via online video conferencing. The way in which the content of the presentation is delivered is not prescriptive.

The presentation and questioning will last **60 minutes**, typically including a **20-minute** presentation followed by **40 minutes** of questioning, where the end-point assessor will ask a minimum of **6 questions**. Follow-up questions are allowed where clarification is required. The end-point assessor can 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.

To deliver the presentation, the apprentice will need to have access to the following as required:

- audio/visual presentation equipment
- a flip chart and writing and drawing materials
- a computer

The apprentice must be given at least 2 weeks' notice of the presentation with questions.

Before the assessment

Employers/training providers should:

- give the apprentice time to work on their project and report during the end-point assessment window
- ensure the apprentice knows the date, time and location of the assessment
- ensure the apprentice knows which Operations Manager criteria will be assessed (outlined on the following pages)
- encourage the apprentice to reflect on their experience and learning on-programme to understand what is required to meet the standard and identify real-life examples
- be prepared to provide clarification to the apprentice, and signpost them to relevant parts of their on-programme experience as preparation for this assessment

Grading the project with report

Apprentices will be marked against the pass and distinction criteria included in the tables on the following pages (under project with report criteria).

- To achieve a **pass**, apprentices must achieve all of the pass criteria
- To achieve a **distinction**, apprentices must achieve all of the pass criteria **and** all of the distinction criteria
- **Unsuccessful** apprentices will have not achieved all of the pass criteria

Project with report mock assessment

It is suggested that a mock assessment is carried out by the apprentice in advance of the end-point assessment with the training provider/employer giving feedback on any areas for improvement. It is the employer/training provider's responsibility to prepare apprentices for their end-point assessment and Highfield recommends that the apprentice experiences a mock presentation with questions in preparation for the real thing. The most appropriate form of mock assessment will depend on the apprentice's setting and the resources available at the time.

When planning a mock assessment, the employer/training provider should include the following elements:

- the mock presentation with questions should be **60 minutes**, typically with the presentation lasting **20 minutes** followed by **40 minutes** of questioning.
- consider a recording of the mock assessment and allow it to be played back to other apprentices, especially if it is not practicable for the employer/training provider to carry out a separate mock assessment with each apprentice.
- ensure that the apprentice's performance is assessed by a competent trainer/assessor, and that feedback is shared with the apprentice to complete the learning experience. Mock assessment sheets are available to download from the Highfield Assessment website and may be used for this purpose.
- use structured, 'open' questions that do not lead the apprentice but allow them to express their knowledge and experience in a calm and comfortable manner. For example:
    - Explain the methods you used to implement change in your organisation to achieve a project brief.
    - Tell me about a time you prioritised stakeholder influence to agree goals and outcomes.
    - Tell me about a time where you applied a project management tool to help you deliver a project within budget.
    - How do you work collaboratively with others in your organisation to implement a business plan or project?
    - What communication methods do you use to present information to stakeholders?
    - Tell me about a time you evaluated the impact of a project outcome to inform a future decision-making process.

Project with report criteria

Throughout the project with report, the assessor will review the apprentice's competence in the criteria outlined below.

Apprentices should prepare for the project with report by considering how the criteria can be met and reflecting on their past experiences.

Project scope and planning
To pass, the following must be evidenced.
PS1 Explains how they identify problems and use methods for researching, analysing interpreting, and evaluating data to inform judgements and provide solutions (K6, S2) **PS2** 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) **PS3** Describes the change management concepts and the methods they use to implement change within their organisation in line with the project brief (K17) **PS4** 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)
To gain a distinction, the following must be evidenced
***PS5** 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)* ***PS6** Critically analyses the current and future needs of the organisation (K11)*

Project implementation
To pass, the following must be evidenced.
PI1 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) **PI2** 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) **PI3** Outlines the problem solving, decision making, influencing, and negotiating models and techniques they used in the project (K12, K13) **PI4** Explains how they work collaboratively with others to research, interpret, and analyse information which informs the implementation of business plans or projects (S9, B6) **PI5** Explains how they work flexibly and adapt to change when managing continuous improvement and change for their team and organisation (S12, B5)
To gain a distinction, the following must be evidenced
PI6 *Evaluates their approach to managing continuous improvement and change within the project (S12)* ***PI7*** *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)*

Evaluation and recommendations
To pass, the following must be evidenced.
ER1 Selects and applies different communication techniques and methods to present information to stakeholders (K1, K15, S1) **ER2** Evaluates the impact of outcomes from organisational plans or projects to drive the decision-making process (S10)
To gain a distinction, the following must be evidenced
No distinction criteria

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Assessing the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

In the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence, the assessor and the apprentice will have a formal 2-way conversation. It will consist of the independent assessor asking the apprentice questions to assess their competence against the relevant criteria outlined in this kit.

Apprentices must have access to their portfolio of evidence during the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence. Apprentices can refer to and illustrate their answers with evidence from their portfolio of evidence during the professional discussion. However, the portfolio of evidence is not directly assessed.

The professional discussion will take place in a suitable environment and can be conducted by video conferencing. It will last for **60 minutes**. The independent assessor can increase the time of the professional discussion by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to respond to a question if necessary. The assessor will ask **at least 6 questions**. Follow up questions are allowed where clarification is required.

The purpose is to assess the apprentice's competence against the following themes:

- managing and leading a team
- organisational governance
- operational planning
- stakeholder relationships

The apprentice must have 2 weeks' notice of the professional discussion.

Before the assessment

Employers/training providers should:

- ensure the apprentice knows the date, time and location of the assessment
- ensure the apprentice knows which criteria will be assessed (outlined on the following pages)
- encourage the apprentice to reflect on their experience and learning on-programme to understand what is required to meet the standard
- be prepared to provide clarification to the apprentice, and signpost them to relevant parts of their on-programme experience as preparation for this assessment

Grading the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

Apprentices will be marked against the pass and distinction criteria included in the tables on the following pages (under 'Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence criteria').

- To achieve a **pass**, apprentices must achieve all of the pass criteria
- To achieve a **distinction**, apprentices must achieve all of the pass criteria **and** all of the distinction criteria
- **Unsuccessful** apprentices will have not achieved all of the pass criteria

Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence mock assessment

It is the employer/training provider's responsibility to prepare apprentices for their end-point assessment. Highfield recommends that the apprentice experiences a mock professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence in preparation for the real thing. The most appropriate form of mock professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence will depend on the apprentice's setting and the resources available at the time.

In designing a mock assessment, the employer/training provider should include the following elements in its planning:

- the mock professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence should take place in a suitable location.
- a **60-minute** time slot should be available to complete the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence, if it is intended to be a complete professional discussion covering all relevant standards. However, this time may be split up to allow for progressive learning.
- consider a video or audio recording of the mock professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence and allow it to be available to other apprentices, especially if it is not practicable for the employer/training provider to carry out a separate mock assessment with each apprentice.
- ensure that the apprentice's performance is assessed by a competent trainer/assessor, and that feedback is shared with the apprentice to complete the learning experience. Mock assessment sheets are available to download from the Highfield Assessment website and may be used for this purpose.

- use structured, ‘open’ questions that do not lead the apprentice but allow them to express their knowledge and experience in a calm and comfortable manner. For example:
    - managing and leading a team
        - Tell me about a time when you have analysed performance data for individuals or teams to identify areas for improvement.
        - Tell me about a time where you have proactively facilitated continuous professional development for yourself.
    - organisational governance
        - How do you apply organisational policies while considering their impact on the team?
    - operational planning
        - Tell me about an occasion when you have prioritised organisational activities in response to the operating environment.
        - Tell me about a time where you followed organisational practices to deliver a sustainable service.
    - stakeholder relationships
        - Tell me about a time you have managed multiple and diverse teams to ensure they are treated fairly.

Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence criteria

Throughout the **60-minute** professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence, the assessor will review the apprentice's competence in the criteria outlined below.

Apprentices should prepare for the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence by considering how the criteria can be met.

Managing and leading a team
To pass, the following must be evidenced.
ML1 Analyses performance data for individuals and teams to identify areas for improvement, continuous development requirements and learning needs (K20, S4) **ML2** Proactively seeks, manages, and facilitates learning opportunities and continuous professional development for themselves and their wider team (S19, B4) **ML3** 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) **ML4** 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)
To gain a distinction, the following must be evidenced.
ML5 *Critically evaluates their people management approach to motivating team members and individuals (K4, S7)* ***ML6*** *Evaluates the impact coaching and mentoring techniques have on individuals in their team (K24, S20)*

Organisational governance
To pass, the following must be evidenced.
OG1 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) **OG2** 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)
To gain a distinction, the following must be evidenced.
OG3 *Evaluates their approach to supporting, delivering, and promoting equity, diversity, inclusion, and wellbeing in terms of impact on the workplace (K3, S6)*

Operational planning
To pass, the following must be evidenced.
OP1 Analyses and prioritises organisational activities in response to the operating environment and the impact this has on their role (K19, S13) **OP2** Justifies the business continuity principles they apply to ensure the uninterrupted operation of critical functions (K21, S14) **OP3** 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) **OP4** Evaluates the degree to which operational plans they have developed and implemented align with the strategic direction of the organisation (K25, S21)
To gain a distinction, the following must be evidenced.
OP5 *Evaluates the extent to which business continuity principles they apply have ensured the uninterrupted operation of critical functions (K21, S14)* ***OP6*** *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
To pass, the following must be evidenced.
SR1 Explains how they manage relationships across multiple and diverse stakeholders, ensuring they are treated fairly, inclusively and with respect (S17, B2)
To gain a distinction, the following must be evidenced.
SR2 *Evaluates the impact of their approach to managing stakeholder relationships and recommends improvements (S17, B2)*

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