Highfield Level 5 End-Point Assessment for ST0385 Operations or Departmental Manager

End-Point Assessment Kit

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EPA Kit

Contents

Please click on the headings below to navigate to the associated section of the EPA kit.

How to use this EPA kit

Welcome to the Highfield End-Point Assessment Kit for the Operations or Departmental Manager Apprenticeship Standard. This kit relates to assessment plan AP04.

Highfield is an independent end-point assessment organisation that has been approved to offer and carry out the independent end-point assessments for the Level 5 Operations or Departmental Manager Apprenticeship Standard. Highfield internally quality assures all end-point assessments in accordance with its IQA process, and additionally, all end-point assessments are externally quality assured by the relevant EQA organisation.

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 as a starting point.

Highfield also offers the Highfield Operations or Departmental Manager Apprenti-kit, 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 or Departmental Manager end-point assessment.

Key facts

Apprenticeship Standard:	Operations or Departmental Manager
Level:	5
On Programme Duration:	Typically 30 months
EPA Window:	5 months
Grading:	Pass/Distinction
End-Point Assessment Methods:	Project proposal, presentation and questioning Professional discussion, underpinned by portfolio of evidence

In this kit, you will find:

- an overview of the standard and any on-programme requirements
- a section focused on delivery, where the standard and assessment criteria are presented in a suggested format that is suitable for delivery
- 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

An Operations or departmental manager is someone who manages teams and/or projects, and achieving operational or departmental goals and objectives, as part of the delivery of the organisation's strategy. They are accountable to a more senior manager or business owner. Working in the private, public or third sector and in all sizes of organisation, specific responsibilities and job titles will vary, but the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed will be the same.

Key responsibilities may include creating and delivering operational plans, managing projects, leading and managing teams, managing change, financial and resource management, talent management, coaching and mentoring.

Roles may include operations manager, regional manager, divisional manager, department manager and specialist managers.

On completion, apprentices may choose to register as full members with the Chartered Management Institute or the Institute of Leadership & Management.

On-programme requirements

Although learning, development and on-programme assessment are 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 or Departmental 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 practising presentation skills and collation of the portfolio of evidence (e.g. 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.

Throughout the period of learning and development, and at least every 2 months, the apprentice should meet with the on-programme assessor to record their progress against the standard. At these reviews, evidence should be discussed and recorded by the apprentice. The maintenance of an on-programme record is important to support the apprentice, on-programme assessor and employer in monitoring the progress of learning and development and to determine when the apprentice has achieved full competence in their job role and is therefore ready for end-point assessment.

While on-programme, the apprentice must collate a portfolio of evidence and create a project proposal.

Portfolio of evidence

The portfolio of evidence gathered on-programme will be used by the apprentice during the professional discussion. It is not formally assessed, however, apprentices may refer to it during the discussion by showing the assessor examples of their work or by talking through their experiences.

The portfolio of evidence requirements are as follows.

- The format and structure of the portfolio must be agreed between the employer and apprentice, and ideally, will be presented electronically.
- There must be at least one piece of evidence relating to each knowledge, skill and behaviour mapped to the professional discussion. Each piece of evidence can be referenced against more than one knowledge, skill or behavioural requirement. It will typically contain 20 pieces of evidence.
- Reflective accounts and self-evaluation cannot be included as evidence and the portfolio should **not** include any methods of self-assessment, except when creating evidence for the Self-awareness section of the standard.
- The portfolio should contain accounts of activities that have been completed and should be referenced against the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours that will be assessed by the professional discussion. Evidence sources may include:
    - workplace documentation or records, such as workplace policies, procedures or records
    - witness statements - feedback from managers, supervisors or peers
    - annotated photographs
    - video/audio extracts (maximum 20 minutes)
    - written statements
    - project plans
    - reports
    - minutes
    - observation reports
    - presentations
    - papers or reports written by the apprentice

- CPD log
- personal development plan (PDP)
- performance reviews

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

- Any employer contributions should focus only on direct observation of evidence (for example witness statements) rather than opinions.
- The evidence provided must be valid and attributable to the apprentice, and the portfolio of evidence must contain a statement from the employer confirming this.
- The portfolio of evidence must be submitted to Highfield at gateway.

A portfolio matrix sheet is available to download from the Highfield Assessment website and should be used to map the apprentice's portfolio of evidence to the Operations or Departmental Manager standards and accompany the portfolio when submitted to Highfield Assessment.

Project proposal

A project proposal must be developed by the apprentice while on-programme and should cover a relevant and defined piece of work that has a real business benefit and should demonstrate that the project will provide sufficient opportunity for the apprentice to cover the criteria mapped to the project proposal, presentation and questioning assessment component. The proposal should contain a brief summary of what the project will cover and will be submitted to Highfield at gateway. The project proposal should include the following:

- Project title
- Project scope

The project proposal is **not** assessed and should be **no more than 500 words**.

A **project proposal approval form** should be completed by the apprentice which includes a declaration from the employer that the project provides a real business benefit. This form is available to download from the Highfield Assessment website.

This completed form containing the project proposal and signed declaration should be submitted at gateway. Highfield will then review it and either approve it or provide specific feedback on any adjustments that need to be made.

Once approved, after gateway the apprentice will expand this project proposal into a project report, which **will** be assessed.

The project proposal could be based on any of the following.

- The need to review and implement a change plan to improve efficiency within the workplace.

- The continuous improvement review of a current process, service or product to ensure it is still fit for purpose and meets the current needs of the business.
- The need to implement a direct saving (e.g. percentage decrease in direct costs, reduction in headcount) across their team, department or organisation following a reforecast activity.

The list above is not exhaustive, and Highfield will sign off the project proposal's title and scope to confirm its suitability at gateway.

Written submissions may be provided to Highfield in any format (such as e-portfolio). Access must be given to Highfield for only the learners who have been put forward for end-point assessment.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the EPA

Where AI has been used as part of the apprentice's day-to-day work and forms part of a project report, presentation, or artefact, it should be referenced as such within the work. AI must not be used to produce the report or portfolio.

Where AI has been used as part of a portfolio that underpins an interview or professional discussion or any other assessment method, it should be fully referenced within the portfolio.

Additional, relevant on-programme qualification

There are no mandatory qualifications for apprentices for this standard however employers may wish to choose the Highfield Level 5 Diploma in Operations and Departmental Management (RQF) to help structure the on-programme delivery.

Readiness for end-point assessment

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

- they must have achieved level 2 English and maths.
- it is recommended that they are supported to become digitally literate where this is important to their role.
- they must have gathered a portfolio of evidence against the required standards to be submitted at gateway.
- they must have created a project proposal containing its title and scope of no more than 500 words using the **project proposal approval form**

- the employer must sign the declaration within the project proposal approval form to confirm it provides a business benefit
- 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 on a plan and schedule for each assessment activity to ensure all components can be completed within the 5-month end-point assessment window.

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

Order of end-point assessments

The recommended order of end-point assessment is as follows:

- Project proposal, presentation and questioning.
- Professional discussion, underpinned by portfolio of evidence.

Click here to return to contents

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.

Documents used in developing this end-point assessment

Standard (2016)

https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/operations-departmental-manager/

End-point assessment plan (2017 ST 0385/AP04)

https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/media/4595/st0385_operations-and-departmental-manager_l5_epa-for-publication_16102020.pdf

Specific considerations

All of the pass and distinction criteria used within the end-point assessment have been taken from the assessment plan – AP04. There is no carry-over of assessment criteria between assessment methods.

The assessment plan refers to two different documents as a project proposal: the 500-word project proposal submitted at gateway (that is not assessed) and the 4000-word project proposal (that is assessed). To remove confusion between these two documents, Highfield has referred to the 4000-word document (that is assessed) as a project report. The project proposal relates to the 500-word summary only.

Dispensations

A dispensation has been applied to the ST0385 Operations and Departmental Manager standard. The details of the dispensation are as follows:

A temporary dispensation has been applied to the ST0385 version 1.2 end-point assessment plan for this apprenticeship. The dispensation will last from 21/12/2023 to 31/08/2024 but may be withdrawn if the assessment plan is revised sooner or the dispensation is no longer necessary.

This dispensation applies to **agreed cohorts only**. Highfield must contact IfATE for each individual case. If your organisation is considering beginning the delivery of this EPA, you should follow the requirements as they are detailed in the plan as the dispensation is intended to support specific apprentices only.

The key changes are:

- Apprentices made redundant at Gateway will be allowed to use on-programme project-based evidence to complete their project proposal.

- Skills 1.2, 2.1, 2.2 and 3.1 will be assessed via the questioning component of the assessment.

Click here to return to contents

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:

- achieved level 2 English
- achieved level 2 maths
- produced a portfolio of evidence
- produced a project proposal, accompanied by a project proposal approval form

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.

In addition, the employer must sign the project proposal approval form to confirm the project provides a business benefit.

The gateway meeting

The gateway meeting should last around 1 hour and must be completed on or after the apprenticeship on-programme end date. It should be attended by the apprentice and the relevant people who have worked with the apprentice on-programme, such as the line manager/employer or mentor, the on-programme trainer/training provider and/or a senior manager (as appropriate to the business).

During the meeting, the apprentice, employer and training provider will discuss the apprentice's progress to date and confirm if the apprentice has met the full criteria of the apprenticeship standard during their on-programme training. The **gateway readiness report** should be used to log the outcomes of the meeting and should be agreed by all 3 parties. This report is available to download from the Highfield Assessment website.

The report should then be submitted to Highfield to initiate the end-point assessment process. If you require any support completing the gateway readiness report, please contact your EPA Customer Engagement Manager at Highfield Assessment.

Please note: a copy of the standard should be available to all attendees during the gateway meeting.

Reasonable adjustments and special considerations
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 need to ensure that the person undertaking an assessment is indeed the person they are claiming to be. All employers are therefore required to ensure that each apprentice has their identification with them on the day of the assessment so the end-point assessor can check.

Highfield Assessment 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, e.g. employee ID card, travel card, etc.

Click here to return to contents

The Operations or Departmental Manager Apprenticeship Standard

The following pages contain the Operations or Departmental Manager apprenticeship standard and the assessment criteria from the assessment plan (AP04) in a format that is suitable for delivery.

Operational planning and management	
Operational Management Knowledge	**Operational Management Skills**
K1.1 Understand operational management approaches and models, including creating plans to deliver objectives and setting **KPIs**. **K1.2** Understand **business development tools** (e.g. SWOT), and **approaches to continuous improvement**. **K1.3** Understand operational business **planning techniques**, including how to manage resources, development of sales and marketing plans, setting targets and monitoring performance. **1.4** Knowledge of management systems, processes and contingency planning. **K1.5** Understand how to initiate and manage change by identifying barriers and know how to overcome them. **K1.6** Understand **data security and management**, and the effective use of technology in an organisation.	**S1.1** Able to input into strategic planning and create plans in line with **organisational objectives**. **S1.2** Support, manage and communicate **change** by identifying **barriers** and overcoming them. **S1.3** Demonstrate commercial awareness, and able to identify and shape new opportunities. **S1.4** Creation and delivery of operational plans, including setting **KPIs**, monitoring performance against plans. **S1.5** Producing reports, providing management information based on the collation, analysis and interpretation of data.
Takes Responsibility Behaviour	
B1.1 Drive to achieve in all aspects of work. **B1.2** Demonstrates resilience and accountability. **B1.3** Determination when managing difficult situations. Seeks new opportunities.	

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Professional Discussion underpinned by Portfolio of Evidence</th></tr>
<tr><th>Pass Criteria</th><th>Distinction Criteria</th></tr>
<tr><td>OP1 Describes how they used their knowledge and understanding of data security and business planning techniques, to support their organisation in creating and delivering operational plans, which include setting targets and monitoring performance against plans (K1.3, K1.6, S1.4)

OP2 Explains how they communicated their team's role in their organisation's vision and goals, and how they used their knowledge of the impact that organisational culture and diversity has on leading and managing change to drive, achieve and deliver operational plans (K4.3, S4.1, B1.1)

OP3 Describes when they have shown resilience and accountability when seeking new opportunities for their organisation (B1.2, B1.4)</td><td>OP4 Justifies the purpose of operational business planning and sales and marketing plans, and why they manage resources by setting key targets and monitoring performance against them (K1.3)</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Amplification and guidance</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">KPI: leading and lagging key performance indicators

Business development tools: for example, SWOT analysis, PESTEL/PESTER analysis, environmental scanning, Porter's Five Forces model

Approaches to continuous improvement: for example, total quality management, Six Sigma, Kaizen and Lean production methods, PDCA model

Planning techniques: for example, how to manage resources, development of sales and marketing plans, setting targets and monitoring performance, Ansoff Matrix, force field analysis

Data security and management: data protection legislation, GDPR, confidentiality

Change:
o significant alterations to the structure and/or operation of the business designed to improve overall performance. These may come about via changes in management or reacting to dynamics within the industry.
o Kotter's 8-stage change model.</td></tr>
</table>

○ methods for identifying and overcoming barriers to change. **Barriers:** natural resistance to change, self-interest, misinformation and misunderstanding **Organisational objectives:** short and medium-term goals for the business to fulfil the mission/vision statement

Managing teams	
Leading People Knowledge	**Leading People Skills**
K4.1 Understand different **leadership styles**, how to lead multiple and remote teams and manage team leaders. **K4.2** Know how to **motivate** and improve performance, supporting people using **coaching and mentoring** approaches. **K4.3** Understand **organisational cultures** and diversity and their impact on leading and managing **change**. **K4.4** Know how to delegate effectively.	**S4.1** Able to communicate organisational vision and goals and how these to apply to teams. **S4.2** Support development through **coaching and mentoring**, and enable and support high performance working. **S4.3** Able to support the **management of change** within the organisation.
Managing People Knowledge	**Managing People Skills**
K5.1 Know how to manage multiple teams, and develop high performing teams. **K5.2** Understand **performance management** techniques, **talent management** models and how to recruit and develop people.	**S5.1** Able to manage talent and performance. **S5.2** Develop, build and motivate teams by identifying their strengths and enabling development within the workplace. **S5.3** Able to delegate and enable delivery through others.
Inclusive Behaviour	
B2.1 Open, approachable, authentic, and able to build trust with others. **B2.2** Seeks the views of others and values diversity.	
Professional Discussion underpinned by Portfolio of Evidence	

Pass Criteria	Distinction Criteria
MT1 Evaluates different leadership styles, methods to lead multiple and remote teams and manage team leaders. (K4.1, B2.1) MT2 Explains how they have adapted their preferred style to ensure they are open, approachable, and able to build trust (K4.1, B2.1) MT3 Discusses how they have recruited, developed or managed team members, and explains the performance management techniques and talent management models that underpin this (K5.2, S5.1) MT4 Identifies strengths in their team and adopts coaching and mentoring techniques to develop, build, enable and motivate the team and support high performance working (K4.2, K4.4, K5.1, S4.2, S5.2, S5.3) MT5 Uses delegation to enable delivery through others and describes strategies to manage multiple teams (K4.2, K4.4, K5.1, S4.2, S5.2, S5.3)	MT6 Analyses the problems associated with managing multiple teams and can describe known strategies for dealing with them (K5.1) MT7 Analyses the effectiveness of different coaching and mentoring techniques that they used for office-based and remote team members and justifies their use of the techniques (K4.2, S4.2)

Amplification and guidance

Leadership styles:

- the ways in which a team leader or supervisor can provide guidance, direction and motivation to their staff and teams. Leadership styles could include democratic leadership, autocratic leadership, laissez-faire leadership (Lewin).
- understanding of the best use of different leadership styles in different situations.
- other leadership styles that might be mentioned are emotional leadership styles. Visionary, coaching, affiliate, pace-setting and commanding.

Motivate: Herzberg's two-factor theory; Belbin's team theory

Coaching and mentoring approaches: for example, shadowing, one-to-one training, setting and agreeing goals, personal development plans. Difference between mentoring and teaching/training

Organisational cultures:

- different ways to categorise types of culture e.g. Charles Handy: power culture, role culture, task culture, person culture; or Kim Cameron and Robert Quinn: clan culture, adhocracy culture, market culture, hierarchy culture
- influences on organisational culture and the relationship between culture and organisational values

Managing change:

- consider organisational change - culture, needs and drivers
- team changes - employees, job roles and structure
- potential external influences for change – regulatory, political, legislative, social change, consumer behaviour and competitor analysis
- resistance to change and dealing with conflict
- Kotter's 8 step change model

Performance management techniques: for example, appraisals, one-to-one meetings with line managers, setting career plans and personal development plans with SMART objectives and monitoring performance. Balanced scorecards.

Talent management models: for example, ways to improve staff retention and make the organisation attractive to work in but create succession plans of high performers. Skills matrix – uses and benefits.

Motivate teams: for example, identifying individual motivators, the strengths of team members and enabling development within the workplace, while being aware of 'hygiene factors'.

Communication Skills

Building Relationships Knowledge	Building Relationships Skills
K6.1 Understand approaches to partner, stakeholder and supplier **relationship management** including negotiation, influencing, and effective networking. **K6.2** Knowledge of collaborative working techniques to enable delivery through others and how to share best practice.	**S6.1** Able to build trust, and use effective negotiation and influencing skills and manage conflict. **S6.2** Able to identify and share good practice, and work collaboratively with others both inside and outside of the organisation. **S6.3** Use of specialist advice and support to deliver against plans.

K6.3 Know how to manage conflict at **all levels**.	
Communication Knowledge	**Communication Skills**
K7.1 Understand interpersonal skills and different forms of **communication and techniques** (verbal, written, non-verbal, digital) and how to apply them appropriately.	**S7.1** Able to communicate effectively (verbal, non-verbal, written, digital) and be flexible in communication style. **S7.2** Able to chair meetings and present using a range of **media**. **S7.3** Use of active listening, and able to challenge and give constructive feedback.
Professional Discussion underpinned by Portfolio of Evidence	
Pass Criteria	**Distinction Criteria**
CS1 Describes how they used interpersonal skills, including active listening, when challenging and giving constructive feedback and seeking the views of others ensuring they valued diversity. (K7.1, S7.2, S7.3, B2.2) CS2 Describes when they effectively used different forms of communication when chairing meetings or presenting (K7.1, S7.2, S7.3, B2.2) CS3 Describes when they have been able to build trust and effective relationships when identifying and sharing good practice while working collaboratively both within their organisation and externally. (K6.1, K6.2, K6.3, S6.1, S6.2, B1.3) CS4 Explains how they used effective negotiation and influencing skills and demonstrated determination to manage conflict (K6.1, K6.2, K6.3, S6.1, S6.2, B1.3) CS5 Justifies how they remained positive and adaptable when responding to feedback in the need for change (B3.3)	CS6 Evaluates known influencing and negotiating theories and models and the effectiveness of these within their organisation when managing the supplier relationship (K6.1) CS7 Analyses barriers to communication and how they are overcome (K7.1)

Amplification and guidance
Relationship management: for example, negotiation, influencing, effective networking **All levels:** across the hierarchy; to include higher management, peers, team members and other departments **Communication techniques:** verbal, non-verbal, written, digital **Media: f**or example, electronic presentations, paper-based hand-outs and verbal presentations

Personal and professional development	
Self-Awareness Knowledge	**Self-Awareness Skills**
K8.1 Understand own impact and **emotional intelligence**. **K8.2** Understand different and **learning and behaviour styles**.	**S8.1** Able to reflect on own performance, **working style** and its impact on others
Management of Self Knowledge	**Management of Self Skills**
K9.1 Understand **time management** techniques and tools, and how to prioritise activities and the use of different approaches to planning, including managing multiple tasks	**S9.1** Able to create a personal development plan. **S9.2** Use of **time management** and **prioritisation** techniques.
Professionalism Behaviour	
B4.1 Sets an example, and is fair, consistent and impartial. **B4.2** Open and honest. **B4.3** Operates within organisational values	
Professional Discussion underpinned by Portfolio of Evidence	
Pass Criteria	**Distinction Criteria**

PD1 Explains how they used their knowledge of their own learning and behavioural styles, to create their own personal development plan (K8.2, S9.1) PD2 Reflects on their own performance, working style and emotional intelligence and the impact they have had on others (K8.1, S8.1) PD3 Describes how they operate within their organisation's values and are a role model who sets an example to others by being open, honest, fair, consistent and impartial (B4.1, B4.2, B4.3)	PD4 Evaluates a range of known learning styles in different situations (K8.2)

Amplification and guidance
Time management: for example, utilising project management tools, such as critical path analysis and creating short and medium-term plans. Identify key tasks, set objectives, identify performance standards and any constraints and agree an action plan. Eisenhower Matrix/ Method, Stephen R Covey 4 Quadrants, flexi-working, the responsible way to say 'no' to meetings. **Prioritisation:** for example, by undertaking a situation appraisal to recognise concerns and separating concerns into manageable parts which can be prioritised. Pareto's Principle (80:20) may inform the priorities set. **Emotional intelligence:** the ability to recognise your own and others' emotions and respond appropriately. **Learning and behaviour styles:** for example, VARK (visual, aural, read/write, kinaesthetic) **Working style:** for example, visionary, operator, processor, synergist

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Planning their project proposal</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Agile Behaviour</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">B3.1 Flexible to the needs of the organisation.

B3.2 Is creative, innovative and enterprising when seeking solutions to business needs.

B3.3 Positive and adaptable, responding well to feedback and need for change.

B3.4 Open to new ways of working.</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Project Proposal, Presentation and Questioning</th></tr>
<tr><th>Pass Criteria</th><th>Distinction Criteria</th></tr>
<tr><td>PP1 Describes business development tools, management systems and contingency planning that are available when they have supported the management of change or identified and developed new opportunities within their organisation whilst ensuring commercial awareness (K1.2, K1.4, S1.3, S4.3)

PP2 Uses operational management approaches and models in strategic planning that create plans that meet organisational objectives (K1.1, S1.1)

PP3 Shows how they are flexible, creative, innovative and enterprising when seeking proposed solutions to business needs (B3.1, B3.2)

PP4 Explains their organisational values and ethics, and the impact these have on their decision making (K10.2)</td><td>PP5 Analyses a range of business development tools that assist with project planning, and the techniques and approaches for continuous improvement, and how these tools and approaches align with their organisational systems, processes and plans (K1.2)</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Delivery of their project proposal</th></tr>
<tr><th>Project Management Knowledge</th><th>Project Management Skills</th></tr>
<tr><td>K2.1 Know how to set up and manage a project using relevant tools and techniques, and understand process management.

K2.2 Understand approaches to risk management.</td><td>S2.1 Plan, organise and manage resources to deliver required outcomes.

S2.2 Monitor progress, and identify risk and their mitigation.

S2.3 Able to use relevant project management tools.</td></tr>
<tr><th>Decision-Making Knowledge</th><th>Decision-Making Skills</th></tr>
<tr><td>K10.1 Understand problem-solving and decision-making techniques, including data analysis.

K10.2 Understand organisational values and ethics and their impact on decision making.</td><td>S10.1 Able to undertake critical analysis and evaluation to support decision making

S10.2 Use of effective problem-solving techniques</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Project Proposal, Presentation and Questioning</th></tr>
<tr><th>Pass Criteria</th><th>Distinction Criteria</th></tr>
<tr><td>DP1 Uses project management tools to plan, organise and manage resources in order to deliver the required outcomes to plan their project (K2.1, K2.2, S2.1, S2.2, S2.3)

DP2 Identifies and mitigates risks and includes suitable systems to monitor progress of the project proposal (K2.1, K2.2, S2.1, S2.2, S2.3)

DP3 Applies time management tools and techniques and different approaches to planning in order to prioritise activities (K9.1, S9.2)

DP4 Undertakes a critical data analysis to understand and inform their decision making and approach to problem-solving (K10.1, S10.1, S10.2)</td><td>DP7 Analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of the project management tools and problem-solving techniques used in the planning of the project proposal (S2.3, S10.2)</td></tr>
</table>

DP5 Uses various forms and styles of communication effectively which are suitable for the audience and situation (S7.1) DP6 Evaluates how they support, manage and communicate change and how they have overcome the barriers they identified (K1.5, S1.2)	

Amplification and guidance
Process management: planning, monitoring and optimising the performance of a business process; the benefits of process management **Risk management:** for example, risk assessment processes and matrices, e.g. quantitative and qualitative, risk registers, identification and implementation of control measures to mitigate the risk, and contingency plans **Resources:** for example, human resources, machinery/equipment, facilities, time, finances **Project management tools:** for example, Gantt charts, PERT charts, process flow charts, critical path analysis, product breakdown structure, work breakdown structure, RACI matrix, Project Charter, project initiation document (PID) **Decision-making techniques:** for example, evaluating 'pros and cons', decision trees, paired comparison analysis and grid analysis **Organisational values and ethics:** the set of principles that guide the **organisation** in its programs, policies and decisions for the business, linking to corporate social responsibility **Problem-solving techniques:** for example, problem analysis, root cause analysis, cause and effect, TRIZ (ARIZ)

Project proposal output	
Finance Knowledge	**Finance Skills**
K3.1 Understand business finance: how to **manage budgets**, and financial forecasting.	**S3.1** Able to monitor budgets and provide **reports**, and consider financial implications of decisions and adjust approach/recommendations accordingly.
Project Proposal, Presentation and Questioning	
Pass Criteria	**Distinction Criteria**

PO1 Provides reports and management information that details the management of their project proposal’s budget appropriately considering the financial implications of their decisions and adjusts their approach or recommendations accordingly (K3.1, S1.5, S3.1) PO2 Uses specialist advice and shows a willingness to be open to new ways of working (S6.3, B3.4)	PO3 Justifies the use of specialist advice and evaluates the impact of the advice on the project proposal (S6.3) PO4 Justifies and evaluates the financial and budgetary recommendations identified within the project proposal (S1.5, S3.1)
Amplification and guidance	
Manage budgets: how to plan and set an accurate budget; ensuring regular reporting to it and planning corrective actions where necessary; ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ methods **Financial reports:** ROCE for new projects, stores or building; sales, margin, costs, reports, Delphi method, project baseline	

Click here to return to contents

Assessment summary

The end-point assessment for the Operations or Departmental Manager Apprenticeship Standard is made up of 2 components.

1. 4000-word project report, 20-minute presentation and 40 minutes of questioning.
2. 1- hour professional discussion, underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

As an employer/training provider, you should agree on 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 and a grade awarded.

Project proposal, presentation and questioning

- To achieve a **pass**, apprentices will need to achieve all of the pass criteria.
- To achieve a **distinction**, apprentices will need to achieve all of the pass criteria and all of the distinction criteria.

Professional discussion, underpinned by portfolio of evidence

- To achieve a **pass**, apprentices will need to achieve all of the pass criteria.
- To achieve a **distinction**, apprentices will need to achieve all of the pass criteria and all of the distinction criteria.

Grading

The apprenticeship is graded pass or distinction. Apprentices must achieve a pass in both components to achieve a pass and a distinction in both components to achieve a distinction.

Retake and re-sit information

Apprentices who fail 1 or more assessment methods will be offered the opportunity to take a resit or a retake. A resit does not require further learning, whereas a retake does. Apprentices should have a supportive action plan to prepare for the resit or a retake. The apprentice's employer will need to agree that either a resit or retake is an appropriate course of action.

A resit is typically taken within 3 months of the EPA outcome notification. The timescale for a retake is dependent on how much re-training is required and is typically taken within 6 months of the EPA outcome notification. All assessment methods must be taken within a 6 month period, otherwise the entire EPA will need to be resat/retaken.

An apprentice who fails an assessment method, and therefore the EPA in the first instance, will be required to resit or retake any failed assessment methods only.

When undertaking a resit or retake, the assessment method(s) will need to be re-attempted 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. Feedback will be provided on the areas of failure and a retake checklist will need to be submitted when the professional review has taken place.

If the apprentice fails the project proposal, presentation and questioning assessment method, they will be required to amend the project report and presentation, in line with the assessor's feedback. The apprentice will be given 3 weeks to rework and submit the amended project report and presentation. The assessor will have 2 weeks to review the project report and presentation and the apprentice will be given 5 days' notice of the presentation date.

Where any assessment method has to be resat or retaken, the apprentice will be awarded a **maximum EPA grade of pass**, unless Highfield determines there are exceptional circumstances requiring a resit or retake.

Apprentices who achieve a pass grade cannot resit or retake the EPA to achieve a higher grade.

Click here to return to contents

Assessing the project proposal, presentation and questioning

This assessment component is made up of three parts:

- 4000-word project report
- 20-minute presentation
- 40 minutes of questioning

A discretionary additional 10% time can be allocated in any proportion across the presentation and questioning.

The project report and presentation will allow the apprentice to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and behaviours relating to the areas assigned to this assessment method as outlined in the following pages. Questioning following the presentation will seek to assess areas not already evidenced through the presentation or project report, and to explore the apprentice's depth of understanding against the distinction criteria.

Project report

The project report is an expanded version of the 500-word project proposal, submitted and approved at gateway. The project report should contain **4000 words (+/-10%)** and will contain a detailed project implementation proposal that will enable the project to be fully implemented. The project does not need to be fully implemented during the EPA period, but the implementation of the project proposal must be started during the EPA period, to allow certain areas of the standard to be assessed.

Apprentices **must** include evidence of leadership support of the project, detailing what has been implemented to date, which must be included as an appendix so that this can be discussed during the subsequent presentation (this could be either an email, letter or similar written confirmation). The evidence provided must be valid and attributable to the apprentice; the project report must contain a statement from the employer confirming this.

The project report will be 4,000 words (+/- 10%) including tables, graphs, figures, though excluding references and annexes. The apprentice will have **12 weeks** to write and submit the proposal and the presentation following approval of the project proposal's scope and title at gateway.

The employer should ensure the apprentice has sufficient time and the necessary resources, within this 12-week period, to plan and undertake the work associated with the project proposal.

The project report should include:

- an executive summary
- an introduction
- the scope of the proposed project (including key performance indicators)
- objectives
- a project plan (including Gantt charts, risk/issue/mitigation, responsibility assignment matrix (RACI matrix))
- how the proposed project outcomes will be achieved
- comments on the validity of the methods of analysis, data interpretation and data presentation used
- financial budgeting and resources
- proposed implementation plan, including communications and stakeholder plans
- opinion on whether an alternative approach might be considered
- opinion on whether it could be completed in a more cost or time-efficient manner
- recommendations and conclusions

The project report must include an annexe showing how the project maps to all of the criteria that are being assessed by this method. It should be accompanied by a **project report submission sheet** when submitted to Highfield.

The apprentice should complete their project report unaided. When the project report is submitted, the apprentice and their employer must verify that the submitted project report is the apprentice's own work, by signing the relevant declarations included within the project report submission sheet.

In addition, apprentices must include evidence of leadership support of the project detailing what has been implemented to date, which must be included as an appendix so that this can be discussed during the presentation (this could be either an email, letter or similar written confirmation). The evidence provided must be valid and attributable to the apprentice and must contain a statement from the employer confirming this.

The project report, plus materials relating to the presentation (see below), must be submitted together.

Presentation

Highfield provides the apprentice with 2 weeks' notice of the date for the presentation with questioning.

The presentation will focus on the project proposal and report, and will cover the following areas.

- Operational management such as business tools, management systems, identifying and overcoming barriers, identifying opportunities and interpretation of data.
- Project management such as using tools and techniques to plan and deliver outcomes and approaches to identifying and managing risks.
- Finance such as monitoring budgets and financial implications.
- Leading people and supporting the management of change.
- Building relationships.
- Communication skills.
- Managing self, such as prioritising activities and time management.
- Decision making and using evaluation techniques to support the process.
- Progress of the implementation of the project proposal to date.

The presentation should be submitted at the same time as the project report, no later than 12 weeks after gateway.

Presentation format

The presentation and questioning elements must take place on a one-to-one basis between the independent assessor and the apprentice.

The apprentice should be free to use whatever medium they wish, such as a poster, slides, or handouts. The presentation will be given in a controlled environment, free from distractions and should present **only** to the independent assessor.

The apprentice will present to the independent assessor either via online video conferencing or face-to-face. If using an online platform, Highfield will ensure appropriate measures are in place to prevent misrepresentation and ensure that the apprentice is not aided in any way.

Questioning

The presentation will be followed by a 40-minute question and answer session to enable discussion of the topics in greater detail and to further draw out the apprentice's ability to demonstrate how they have met the pass and distinction criteria for this assessment method.

The independent assessor will ask the apprentice a minimum of 8 questions, with one question from each of the first 8 bullets listed under the presentation section.

The purpose of these questions is to assess the depth and breadth of the apprentice's understanding and to clarify points from the project report and the presentation in relation to how they have demonstrated the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours. Follow-up questions may also be asked by the assessor to seek further clarification.

During this time, the apprentice may refer to their presentation or presentation aides when answering questions.

Grading

- To achieve a **pass**, apprentices will need to achieve all of the pass criteria.
- To achieve a **distinction**, apprentices will need to achieve all of the pass criteria and all of the distinction criteria.

Before the assessment:

Employers/training providers should:

- agree the project title and scope with the apprentice and Highfield.
- ensure the apprentice has prepared a project report and presentation in line with the project proposal, to be submitted within 12 weeks of gateway.
- ensure the apprentice knows the date, time and location of the assessment.
- ensure the apprentice knows which operations or departmental 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, where possible, 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.

Project proposal, presentation and questioning mock assessment

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 and questioning session in advance of the end-point assessment with the training provider/employer giving feedback on any areas for improvement.

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

- the mock should take place in a suitable location.
- a 60-minute time slot should be available for the presentation and questioning if it is intended to be a complete mock covering all relevant standards (outlined in the following pages). However, this time may be split up to allow for progressive learning.
- consider a video or audio recording 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 presentation 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. For example:
    - What contingency did you build into your project plans?
    - Talk me through your approach to risk management.
    - In what ways would you say you have been creative and innovative in planning and undertaking the project?
    - Did you need to consult with others on specialist areas? What were they and how did you approach this?

Project proposal, presentation and questioning criteria

Apprentices should prepare for the presentation and Q&A by reflecting on the work they have undertaken during the apprenticeship and considering the best examples to meet the criteria.

Planning their project proposal	
Pass Criteria	**Distinction Criteria**
PP1 Describes business development tools, management systems and contingency planning that are available when they have supported the management of change or identified and developed new opportunities within their organisation while ensuring commercial awareness (K1.2, K1.4, S1.3, S4.3) PP2 Uses operational management approaches and models in strategic planning that create plans that meet organisational objectives (K1.1, S1.1) PP3 Shows how they are flexible, creative, innovative and enterprising when seeking proposed solutions to business needs (B3.1, B3.2) PP4 Explains their organisational values and ethics, and the impact these have on their decision making (K10.2)	PP5 Analyses a range of business development tools that assist with project planning, and the techniques and approaches for continuous improvement, and how these tools and approaches align with their organisational systems, processes and plans (K1.2)

Delivery of their project proposal	
Pass Criteria	**Distinction Criteria**
DP1 Uses project management tools to plan, organise and manage resources in order to deliver the required outcomes to plan their project (K2.1, K2.2, S2.1, S2.2, S2.3) DP2 Identifies and mitigates risks and includes suitable systems to monitor progress of the project proposal (K2.1, K2.2, S2.1, S2.2, S2.3) DP3 Applies time management tools and techniques and different approaches to planning in order to prioritise activities (K9.1, S9.2)	DP7 Analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of the project management tools and problem-solving techniques used in the planning of the project proposal (S2.3, S10.2)

Delivery of their project proposal	
Pass Criteria	**Distinction Criteria**
DP4 Undertakes a critical data analysis to understand and inform their decision making and approach to problem-solving (K10.1, S10.1, S10.2) DP5 Uses various forms and styles of communication effectively which are suitable for the audience and situation (S7.1) DP6 Evaluates how they support, manage and communicate change and how they have overcome the barriers they identified (K1.5, S1.2)	

Project proposal output	
Pass Criteria	**Distinction Criteria**
PO1 Provides reports and management information that details the management of their project proposal's budget appropriately considering the financial implications of their decisions and adjusts their approach or recommendations accordingly (K3.1, S1.5, S3.1) PO2 Uses specialist advice and shows a willingness to be open to new ways of working (S6.3, B3.4)	PO3 Justifies the use of specialist advice and evaluates the impact of the advice on the project proposal (S6.3) PO4 Justifies and evaluates the financial and budgetary recommendations identified within the project proposal (S1.5, S3.1)

Click here to return to contents

Assessing the professional discussion underpinned by portfolio of evidence

The professional discussion underpinned by portfolio of evidence will last 1 hour, plus 10%, at the assessor's discretion.

The professional discussion will be appropriately structured to draw out the best of the apprentice's competence and excellence and cover the areas assigned to this assessment method as shown in the following pages.

The apprentice may use their portfolio to support their responses, however, the portfolio itself will not be formally assessed. For more details about the portfolio of evidence, please see the 'on-programme requirements' section of this EPA kit. The independent assessor will have access to the portfolio in advance of the professional discussion to review its contents and prepare the questions to be asked.

Independent assessors will select a minimum of 6 questions to prompt discussions from a bank of questions created by Highfield. Independent assessors may ask further questions for clarification purposes and to allow the apprentice the opportunity to cover the areas mapped to this assessment method. These questions will also be open and will not lead the apprentice.

Apprentices should be encouraged to use the STAR method when answering competency-based questions.

- Situation – what was the situation?
- Task – what task needed to be completed?
- Action – what did you do, how did you do it and why?
- Result – what was the output or outcome, and what did you learn from the situation?

Grading

- To achieve a **pass**, apprentices will need to achieve all of the pass criteria.
- To achieve a **distinction**, apprentices will need to achieve all of the pass criteria and all of the distinction criteria.

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.
- encourage the apprentice to make sure they are familiar with the contents and structure of their on-programme portfolio of evidence so that they can draw on the best piece of supporting evidence during the professional discussion in an efficient way.
- be prepared to provide clarification to the apprentice and signpost them to relevant parts of their on-programme experience as preparation for this assessment.

Professional discussion mock assessment

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 professional discussion in preparation for the real thing. The most appropriate form of mock professional discussion 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 should take place in a suitable location.
- a 60-minute time slot should be available to complete the professional discussion 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 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 allows them to express their knowledge and experience in a calm and comfortable manner. For example:
    - What is your approach to communicating with your team? How do you know messages have been understood?
    - How would you describe the culture of your team?
    - Tell me about a change you had needed to introduce. What barriers did you come up against and how did you overcome them?
    - Talk me through your operational planning approach/process.

Professional discussion criteria

Apprentices should prepare for the professional discussion by reflecting on the work they have undertaken during the apprenticeship and considering the best examples to meet the criteria.

Operational planning and management	
Pass Criteria	**Distinction Criteria**
OP1 Describes how they used their knowledge and understanding of data security and business planning techniques, to support their organisation in creating and delivering operational plans, which include setting targets and monitoring performance against plans (K1.3, K1.6, S1.4) OP2 Explains how they communicated their team's role in their organisation's vision and goals, and how they used their knowledge of the impact that organisational culture and diversity has on leading and managing change to drive, achieve and deliver operational plans (K4.3, S4.1, B1.1) OP3 Describes when they have shown resilience and accountability when seeking new opportunities for their organisation (B1.2, B1.4)	OP4 Justifies the purpose of operational business planning and sales and marketing plans, and why they manage resources by setting key targets and monitoring performance against them (K1.3)

Managing teams	
Pass Criteria	**Distinction Criteria**
MT1 Evaluates different leadership styles, methods to lead multiple and remote teams and manage team leaders (K4.1, B2.1) MT2 Explains how they have adapted their preferred style to ensure they are open, approachable, and able to build trust (K4.1, B2.1) MT3 Discusses how they have recruited, developed or managed team members, and explains the performance management techniques and talent management models that underpin this (K5.2, S5.1) MT4 Identifies strengths in their team and adopts coaching and mentoring techniques to develop, build, enable and motivate the team	MT6 Analyses the problems associated with managing multiple teams and can describe known strategies for dealing with them (K5.1) MT7 Analyses the effectiveness of different coaching and mentoring techniques that they used for office-based and remote team members and justifies their use of the techniques (K4.2, S4.2)

Managing teams	
Pass Criteria	**Distinction Criteria**
and support high performance working (K4.2, K4.4, K5.1, S4.2, S5.2, S5.3) MT5 Uses delegation to enable delivery through others and describes strategies to manage multiple teams (K4.2, K4.4, K5.1, S4.2, S5.2, S5.3)	

Communication Skills	
Pass Criteria	**Distinction Criteria**
CS1 Describes how they used interpersonal skills, including active listening, when challenging and giving constructive feedback and seeking the views of others ensuring they valued diversity (K7.1, S7.2, S7.3, B2.2) CS2 Describes when they effectively used different forms of communication when chairing meetings or presenting (K7.1, S7.2, S7.3, B2.2) CS3 Describes when they have been able to build trust and effective relationships when identifying and sharing good practice while working collaboratively both within their organisation and externally (K6.1, K6.2, K6.3, S6.1, S6.2, B1.3) CS4 Explains how they used effective negotiation and influencing skills and demonstrated determination to manage conflict (K6.1, K6.2, K6.3, S6.1, S6.2, B1.3) CS5 Justifies how they remained positive and adaptable when responding to feedback in the need for change (B3.3)	CS6 Evaluates known influencing and negotiating theories and models and the effectiveness of these within their organisation when managing the supplier relationship (K6.1) CS7 Analyses barriers to communication and how they are overcome (K7.1)

Personal and professional development	
Pass Criteria	**Distinction Criteria**
PD1 Explains how they used their knowledge of their own learning and behavioural styles, to create their own personal development plan (K8.2, S9.1) PD2 Reflects on their own performance, working style and emotional intelligence and the impact they have had on others (K8.1, S8.1)	PD4 Evaluates a range of known learning styles in different situations (K8.2)

Personal and professional development	
Pass Criteria	**Distinction Criteria**
PD3 Describes how they operate within their organisation's values and are a role model who sets an example to others by being open, honest, fair, consistent and impartial (B4.1, B4.2, B4.3)	

Click here to return to contents