

Digital Support Technician

Level 3 Apprenticeship

End-point Assessment Plan

Digital Support Technician

End-point Assessment Plan

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1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This plan sets out the requirements for end-point assessment (EPA) for the Digital Support Technician Standard. It is written for end-point assessment organisations, training providers and employers who need to know how end-point assessment for this apprenticeship must operate.

Full-time apprentices will typically spend 15 months on-programme working towards the apprenticeship Standard, with a minimum of 20% off-the-job training.

End-point assessment should only start once the employer is satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the Standard; that the pre-requisite gateway requirements for end-point assessment have been met; and that they can be evidenced to an end-point assessment organisation.

The EPA must be completed within an EPA period lasting a maximum of 12 weeks, beginning when the apprentice has met the EPA gateway requirements.

End-point assessment must be conducted by an organisation approved to offer end-point assessment services against this Standard, as selected by the employer, from the Education & Skills Funding Agency's Register of End-Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO).

End-point assessment tests all the knowledge, skills and behaviours on the Standard.

The Digital Support Technician is a core and options standard. All apprentices must take the assessment of the core content and then either the Digital Applications option content or the Digital Support option content. Throughout this plan this is illustrated as follows

Core
Digital Applications Option
Digital Support Option

The end-point assessment is based on two distinct assessment methods

- Knowledge Test – comprised of two Units – one on the core knowledge and one on the specialist knowledge. Each Test is based on multiple-choice questions – assessing underpinning knowledge and understanding as defined in Table 1
- a Case Study Presentation and Interview– comprised of two parts: a Case Study giving the apprentice the opportunity to present a real-life Case Study that they have undertaken in the workplace followed by a structured interview with an independent assessor - assessing the knowledge, skills and behaviours (as

defined in Table 1) demonstrated in the Case Study Presentation as well as drawing on those demonstrated in their portfolio.

The Knowledge Test and the Case Study Presentation and Interview can be done in any order.

Both of these methods must be passed for the apprenticeship to be passed.

The Knowledge Test is pass/fail (where each of the two units has to be passed to achieve a pass).

The Case Study Presentation and Interview is pass/fail/merit and distinction.

The overall apprenticeship is pass/fail/merit and distinction.

The end-point assessor will determine the overall apprenticeship grade of pass/fail/ merit or distinction see Section 6 for details of grading.

2. THE END-POINT ASSESSMENT GATEWAY

The employer will determine when the apprentice is ready for end-point assessment. It is recommended that this is done in consultation with the training provider. This will include

- confirmation that Level 2 maths and English have been achieved, before or during the apprenticeship;
- confirmation that the apprentice is working at or above the level set out in the standard and can demonstrate all the knowledge, skills and behaviours; confirmation that the employer believes that the apprentice is ready for end-point assessment as they have demonstrated the application of all the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the Standard; and
- confirmation that the apprentice has produced a portfolio.

The Portfolio

The portfolio must be submitted to the EPAO once the apprentice meets the gateway requirements and before preparing their Case Study Presentation and Interview

The portfolio presents evidence from real-work projects and is used to inform the interview. It is produced towards the end of the apprenticeship and before the Gateway. It contains evidence from projects that have been completed, usually towards the end of the apprenticeship. It will showcase their very best work, enabling them to demonstrate in the interview how they have applied the knowledge, skills and behaviours (as covered by the Interview and as set out in see Table 1) - in a real-work environment to achieve real-work objectives. The portfolio is not evidence that learning has taken place, but is evidence that the apprentice has applied the knowledge, skills and behaviours that will be tested at the Interview.

The evidence contained in the portfolio will comprise evidence from the work place which, taken together, cover all the knowledge, skills and behaviours being assessed in the Interview (see Table 1). This should be the minimum amount of evidence required to demonstrate all the KSBs. The portfolio will typically include a minimum of two pieces of evidence and a maximum of 15 pieces of evidence. It is expected that evidence will be mapped to more than 1 KSB

Employers, with support from the training provider, will assist the apprentice to assemble their portfolio to ensure that the portfolio is complete.

The portfolio can be in any format, as long as it can be uploaded electronically to the chosen EPAO. It must include:

- a list of contents and a map of contents against the required knowledge, skills and behaviours;
- a brief introduction/commentary by the apprentice, produced towards the end of their apprenticeship and highlighting, where appropriate, anything they would do differently;
- evidence from real work projects/pieces of work which between them illustrate the KSBs that will be discussed in the interview as defined in Table 1;
- a one to two- page testimonial from the employer, relating particularly to behaviours shown in the workplace that are being tested by the Case Study Presentation and Interview defined in Table 1;
- a signed statement from the employer confirming this as being the apprentice's own work
- a signed statement from the apprentice confirming this as their own work.

Evidence can be submitted in a variety of appropriate and authentic formats, for example:

- Text, graphics, presentations, spreadsheets, project plans;
- The product itself;
- Job sheets, case studies, screen dumps, links;
- Photographs;
- Audio; or
- Video.

Note: where the evidence of the real work cannot be submitted for security or confidentiality reasons then other evidence to demonstrate this real work may be submitted.

The evidence can be supplemented with the following

- Performance reports;
- Expert witness testimony; and
- Customer feedback.

Note that reflective accounts or self-evaluation by the apprentice cannot be included as evidence

3. END POINT ASSESSMENT METHODS

Overview of End-Point Assessment Methods

The following table sets out what is assessed through each of the two distinct assessment methods, and the grade that can be achieved in each method.

Assessment Method	Areas Assessed	Assessed by	Possible Grades
Knowledge Test	The apprentice undertakes two on-line tests against the defined knowledge statements (as set out in Table 1).	Electronic marking and assessment by an EPAO on the Register of End-Point Assessment Organisation.	Fail Pass
Case Study Presentation and Interview	<p>The apprentice prepares a Case Study against pre-defined requirements to assess against the defined set of knowledge, skills and behaviours (as set out in Table 1). The apprentice presents their Case Study to the Independent Assessor. The Assessor then asks questions specifically on the Presentation in order to allow the apprentice to further demonstrate their understanding and for additional evidence to be gathered by the assessor.</p> <p>The Assessor then interviews the apprentice to assess how they have applied the knowledge, skills and behaviours (as set out in Table 1) in the Case Study Presentation and to explore how these have been demonstrated in the workplace based on a discussion of the evidence presented in the portfolio.</p>	Independent assessor from the End-Point Assessment Organisation.	Fail Pass Merit Distinction

End-Point Assessment Organisations must make reasonable adjustments to the assessment methods as required.

What is assessed in each assessment method

The following table shows each statement in the Standard; shows which assessment method(s) test it; and which of the grading criteria (see section 6 and Annex 1) it contributes to.

Table 1: KSBs to be assessed in each assessment method

Reference	Requirements from the Standard	Assessed in the Knowledge Test	Assessed in the Case Study, presentation and Interview
CORE Technical Skills			
S1	Digital technologies: uses a range of digital office technologies, including collaborative tools, appropriately for internal and external communications, including, for example, office suites, conferencing facilities and mass email tools; survey tools; social media tools for business; SMS; live chat and video chat; web conferencing to support the delivery of services and to share information with customers and colleagues	The Knowledge Test is made up of two Knowledge Units (KU). 1 core and 1 optional (see table 2, page 13)	Case Study Presentation and Interview
S2	Data management: uses data systems effectively, appropriately and securely to meet business requirements and in line with organisational procedures and legislation		Interview
S3	Digital security: applies information security principles to information transfer, deletion, storage, usage and communications – using mobile devices where appropriate		Case Study Presentation and Interview
S4	Digital services support: responds appropriately and effectively to internal or external enquiries; providing support and information using utilising digital channels where appropriate and responding according to organisation protocols		Case Study Presentation and Interview
S5	Digital Information Management Systems: operates a range of digital information systems and tools to maintain information and to support service delivery, whether Client Management Systems (CMS), Customer Relationship Management systems (CRM), finance or human systems or		Interview

	other bespoke digital systems or databases. This includes searching, storing, integrating and organising data; data entry and maintenance; data modeling; relationship modeling and data analysis to identify trends and insights		
S6	Communication: communicates effectively in writing, verbally and face to face appropriately through different digital channels, including e mail, telephone and collaborative technologies, including digital specialists and others, using technical terminology and non-technical terminology as appropriate, whether for internal or external communication.		Interview
S7	Digital learning: studies using digital resources to extend knowledge and skills in the use of new digital systems or features and other skills		Interview
S8	Organisational policies and standards: operates in line with organisational polices, standards, legislation, professional ethics, privacy and confidentiality and knows where to source these and when and how to escalate any issues		Interview
S9	Thinking skills: thinks logically and creatively to resolve digital problems		Case Study Presentation and Interview
S10	Business and decision-making skills: demonstrates an understanding of the organisational impact of decisions that they take		Case Study Presentation and Interview
S11	Continuous improvement: effectively uses complex management information systems to drive productivity and performance of self and department, whilst proactively looking for ways to develop digital systems and processes to drive efficiency		Interview
S12	Teamwork: competently uses digital technologies to operate effectively as part of a team, and with other stakeholders, enabling sharing of information and best practice		Interview
S13	Work environment maintains a productive, professional and secure working environment		Interview

OPTION ONE Digital Application Technician Technical Skills			
S14	Digital Technologies: applies sophisticated digital technologies effectively to achieve objectives		Interview
S15	Information Systems: monitors and operates complex information systems		Interview
S16	Digital Implementation: supports digital operations and/or digital change and transformation by championing and demonstrating best practices		Interview
S17	Digital problem solving: identifies and resolves digital problems independently for self and colleagues to maintain productivity and improve quality of service		Interview
S18	Digital Skills Support: coaches and guides less experienced colleagues to develop their digital skills and to use digital systems effectively		Interview
S19	Productivity software: uses a range of digital applications appropriate to the role to create, update, edit, manage, analyse and present data and information		Interview
S20	Working with colleagues: works with internal colleagues across the organisation – whether digital specialists or otherwise		Interview
OPTION TWO Digital Service Technician Technical Skills			
S21	Customer service: helps customers and clients register for and access information, products and services through online digital channels and represents the organisations brand through digital channels		Interview
S22	Digital problem solving: diagnoses and resolves customers and client's problems with accessing and using digital technologies and applies the organisation's diagnostic processes for fault finding escalating and		

	reporting problems with the digital technologies, using content management systems as appropriate		Interview
S23	Maintain end-user systems physically or remotely. For example: software, hardware or operating system		Interview
S24	Multi-tasking: applies excellent multi-tasking capability to be able to capture information at a conversational pace whilst navigating numerous systems.		Interview
S25	Customer service: takes responsibility for customer service and uses diagnostic tools and digital systems to manage external end-user dissatisfaction through to resolution		Interview
S26	Business skills: demonstrates first point resolution whilst balancing customer and business needs to secure the appropriate solution		Interview
S27	Working with customers: works with a very wide range of customers and external users – from a wide variety of backgrounds, with a wide variety of needs and with a wide variety of digital competence, including dealing with difficult and challenging situations		Interview
CORE Technical Knowledge and Understanding			
K1	Understands the most common digital office technologies, including collaborative tools, that are used by organisations for internal and external communications and best working practices	KU1	
K2	Understands modern digital infrastructure including computer systems fundamentals including physical, virtual and cloud; physical systems including hardware peripherals; operating software and software devices; servers; the internet of things; networking fundamentals; virtualizing technologies and cloud	KU1	
K3	Understands the importance of and the technologies for backing up data securely.	KU1	
K4	Understands how to apply the processes and procedures for the secure handling of data	KU1	Case Study Presentation and Interview

K5	Understands the concepts and fundamentals of data, including searching, storing, integrating and organizing data; how organisations use various types of data; the key features and functions of information systems; data formats and their importance for analysis; data entry and maintenance, visualization and presentation of data; data modeling; relationship modeling and data analysis to identify trends and insights	KU1	Case Study Presentation and interview
K6	Understands the organisational importance of information security and its management including following policies and procedures and key legislative requirements	KU1	
K7	Understands the major types of threats and risk that apply to any organisation with a working understanding of those that apply to their role and the associated best practice for their own secure working	KU1	
K8	Understands operational aspects of risk including maintaining steady state/business as usual security principals for individuals and systems including personal data, access, identity management, encryption and passwords	KU1	
K9	Understands the individual and company risks, responsibilities and requirements in relation to legislation, professional ethics, privacy and confidentiality and the implications for their role	KU1	
K10	Understands the principles behind an organisation's digital presence and delivery and the techniques required to maintain this and how to represent and safeguard the brand and reputation in relation to the digital offer	KU1	
K11	Understands how best to communicate using the different digital communication channels and how to adapt appropriately to different audiences		Case Study Presentation and Interview
K12	Understands the limitations and extent of the internet to be able to connect to, research, locate and access information securely	KU1	
K13	Understands how to plan and organise own learning activities to maintain and develop digital skills		Interview
K14	Understands the importance of effective time management and the need to prioritise effectively		Case Study Presentation and Interview
K15	Understands the need for continuous improvement with the application and use of digital technologies and how this benefits the organisation	KU1	
K16	Awareness of current, emerging and fringe digital technologies and the implications for work	KU1	

OPTION ONE Digital Applications Technician Technical Knowledge and Understanding			
K17	Understands the most common productivity software applications used to create, update, edit, manage, analyse and present data and information and best working practices	KU2	
K18	Understands the main features and benefits of digital information systems and how these are used to maintain information and to support service delivery and best working practices	KU2	
K19	Understands the basic working practices for productive use and maintenance of business hardware, software and networks;	KU2	
K20	Understands agile methodologies and work practices, Continuous Innovation with Continuous Development (CICD)	KU2	
K21	Understands how organisations incorporate digital technologies into key business functions, such as finance, sales and marketing, operations and HR and the implications for their role	KU2	
K22	Understands how to assist with digital operations and digital change projects	KU2	
K23	Understands how to train and support internal colleagues to make the best use of the organisation's technology-based productivity tools.	KU2	
K24	Understands the features and key differences between different data storage systems including the Cloud and databases	KU2	
OPTION TWO Digital Service Technician Technical Knowledge and Understanding			
K25	Understands how to use databases, CRM packages, content management systems, office systems, web technologies; e mail and mass e mail tools, SMS, live chat, video chat and messaging platforms; survey tools; social media tools for business; and other collaborative tools, including web conferencing.	KU3	
K26	Understands the importance of and the key principles and features of processes for diagnosing users' digital problems	KU3	
K27	Understands end-user systems; operating systems, applications types and deployment methods; support processes such as password management, access control and connection to remote resources; version management, including patching; mobile device management including segregation of private and business use; and software licenses and approved software	KU3	
K28	Understands the processes and principles of content management systems to identify and resolve users' digital problems	KU3	
K29	Understands how best to communicate to different users through digital channels and how to adapt appropriate to different audiences	KU3	

K30	Understands what is meant by a CRM system, how to use it for accessing and maintaining the customers' digital information and the contribution of CRM to an organisations performance and customer service	KU3	
K31	Understands sales and customer service support processes, and their role within it, including in relation to digital impact and damage to brand reputation	KU3	
K32	Understands how the organisation's legal and ethical position fits with organisational needs and customer expectations	KU3	
K33	Understands the key features and importance of escalation and reporting procedures when dealing with users' digital problems	KU3	
K34	Understands how to coach and support a wide variety of external users to help them make the best	KU3	
CORE BEHAVIOURS			
B1	Works independently and takes responsibility, maintains productive and professional working environment with secure working practices		Interview
B2	Uses own initiative when implementing digital technologies and when finding solutions		Case Study Presentation and Interview
B3	Resilient and positive mental attitude when dealing with difficult situations		Interview
B4	Maintains through and organised approach to work when working with digital technologies and prioritising as appropriate		Case Study Presentation and Interview

End-Point Assessment Organisations should use Table 1 as the basis for a checklist for assessors to use in preparing for the Case Study Presentation and interview, to ensure that the right knowledge, skills and behaviours are covered in this method and to record where sufficient evidence has been demonstrated for each statement.

4. THE KNOWLEDGE TEST

The Test enables a consistent assessment of an apprentice's underpinning knowledge and understanding.

Apprentices will undertake two Knowledge Units: one core unit and one unit relevant to their option.

Each Unit will be a standalone, on-line, multiple-choice test, in the areas identified in Table 2 to cover the core and options of the standard. End-Point Assessment Organisations will develop these test units based on the specification set out in Table 2.

Table 2: Specification for the Knowledge Units

Name of Knowledge Unit	No of Questions	Time (mins)	Pass mark
Knowledge Unit 1 (KU1) Core Knowledge : Security and Legislation	40	60	65% or above
Knowledge Unit 2 (KU2) Digital Applications Knowledge (option 1)	20	30	65% or above
Knowledge Unit 3 (KU3) Digital Service Knowledge (option 2)	20	30	65% or above

The Knowledge Statements from the Standard for each of the Knowledge Units are given in Table 1. EPAOs must use this to draft the bank of questions, from which the selection of questions is generated for apprentices, as shown above.

Each Unit will have a set number of knowledge-based multiple-choice questions (see Table 2 above), with four options to choose from, where only one is correct. Each correct question will score 1 mark, any missing or incorrect answers will score 0 marks.

End-Point Assessment Organisations must ensure that Apprentices complete each of the two Units in a quiet, controlled, “closed-book” environment, away from their day to day work and other distractions. There must be an impartial invigilator present – with the maximum ration of apprentices to invigilators being 20:1.

The apprentices will have a set number of minutes, as shown in the Table 2 above, to complete each Unit, and each Unit will close down after that period. Apprentices can take the Units in any order over a five working-day period. All the tests are electronic unless reasonable adjustments are required.

All tests are marked electronically by the EPAO. Results are provided at the end of each test.

EPAOs must develop question banks of sufficient size for each Knowledge Unit to prevent predictability and review them regularly (and at least once a year) to ensure they, and the specifications they contain, are fit for purpose. Questions should be developed through the quality assurance and validation processes of the End-point assessment organisation. Questions must be set so that a pass will reflect competency in all knowledge on the standard assessed by this method as defined in Annex 1.

Both knowledge units of the knowledge test must be passed for the Knowledge Test method to be passed.

5. THE CASE STUDY PRESENTATION AND INTERVIEW

This is in two parts – the Case Study Presentation and the Interview.

The Case Study Presentation

The Case Study Presentation is key to consistency and comparability of the end-point assessment. The Case Study Presentation is designed to assess apprentices in a consistent way, irrespective of their particular workplace and their particular role within their company.

End-point assessment organisations will develop a bank of business-related Case Studies to adequately reflect different business situations. Each of these Case Studies will present a typical business problem to solve, appropriate for an SME, an IT business, a large corporate or a non-IT business. All of the Case Studies will be comparable in terms of content and complexity; it is the context within which the knowledge, skills and behaviours must be demonstrated that will vary. Each Case Study will have a short summary from which the employers and apprentice can select the most appropriate Case Study for the apprentice, based on their job role.

Each Case Study will have a detailed brief and instructions for the apprentice.

Apprentices will have 20 hours to prepare their Case Study Presentation. Apprentices will prepare their Case Study Presentation once they have passed the Gateway and before their Presentation. Apprentices will be made aware that there will be questions and answers from the assessor following their Presentation.

Case Studies will balance the need to 1) be specific to ensure consistency and comparability and 2) be sufficiently flexible to enable apprentices to demonstrate the approaches they use in their role.

Apprentices will do either a Digital Applications Case Study or a Digital Service Case Study depending on which Option they are on.

The Digital Applications Case Study Presentation will require the apprentice to describe a solution they have developed to address a defined organisation requirement including

- identifying a problem with a digital information management system and resolving that problem on the system;
- developing an implementation plan for those changes to achieve the organisations objective; and
- presenting data and information in a range of digital applications to support the rationale for the changes made and the implementation plan – including guidance for different users.

The Digital Service Case Study Presentation will require the apprentice to describe a solution they have developed to address a complex external user requirement, including

- diagnosing the user problems in accessing and using a digital technology;
- developing the content for the chosen communication tool (but not sending it); and
- recording their actions, including any follow up, on an information system.

Each Case Study Presentation will require the apprentice to describe how they have

- selected the appropriate digital office technology;
- applied security principles;
- responded and communicated effectively to the user
- applied logical and creative thinking skills; and
- identified opportunities for ongoing continuous improvement.

Each Case Study will enable the KSBs, as set out in Table 1 to be assessed in line with the grading criteria required for a pass and allowing scope for the requirements for a merit and distinction to be demonstrated.

There is one output from the Case Study Presentation

- A 20 minute Presentation of the Case Study Solution, followed by 20 minutes questions and answers. The presentation will include the rationale behind their approach - such as why and how they have approached the Case Study in the way that they have, the options they have considered, the decisions they have made and the reasons behind them, the assumptions they have made and the consequences of those assumptions, and anything they would do differently with hindsight. Apprentices can present in whatever way they like and can provide up to five relevant supporting pieces of evidence of their work – including photos, videos, images, screenshots or diagrams – as relevant to their case study.

The Case Study Presentation also requires

- a signed statement from the employer to confirm it is the apprentices own work, and
- a signed statement from the apprentice to confirm it is the apprentice's own work.

End-Point Assessment Organisations will test and trial the Case Study briefs that they develop with small groups of apprentices, employers and training providers. This will ensure they are valid, reliable and comparable, before being implemented. EPAOs must develop a bank of Case Studies of sufficient size to prevent predictability and review them regularly (and at least once a year) to ensure they, and the specification they contain, are fit for purpose.

End-Point Assessment Organisations will monitor case studies over time to ensure comparability and continuing relevance.

End-Point Assessment Organisations will develop a bank of typical questions that the independent assessor might use to draw out sufficient evidence of the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours that have to be demonstrated in the Case Study Presentation.

The Case Study Presentation including questions and answers will take place immediately before the interview. A 10 minute break can be taken between the Case Study Presentation and the Interview. The apprentice will have at least seven days notice.

The Case Study Presentation, including questions and answers, will last 30 minutes. Whether the Case Study Presentation is conducted face to face or on-line, the apprentice and the independent assessor must be in a quiet room, away from disruptions or distractions.

The Case Study Presentation will be recorded, usually by video unless the logistics do not allow this in which case this should be audio

The Case Study Presentation is not graded separately, but is graded as part of the grading of the Case Study Presentation and Interview method.

The Interview

The Interview is the second component of this assessment method. The Interview is undertaken by the independent assessor who will also make the grading decision. The Interview can be conducted either face to face or online. The Interview is one to one – although a second independent assessor may be present for moderation or training purposes and/or when reasonable adjustments are required.

The Interview will take place following the completion of the Case Study Presentation and after the independent assessor has reviewed the portfolio. The apprentice will have at least seven working days' notice.

The session will be structured as follows

- Introductory remarks to settle the apprentice
- The Case Study Presentation – 20 minutes
- Questions and answers on the Presentation – 20minutes
- Break – 20 minutes
- Structured interview – 60 minutes

The Interview should give the apprentice the best possible opportunity to get the best possible result. The purpose of the Interview is to gather sufficient evidence, primarily by discussing the work presented in the Case Study Presentation and in the portfolio, against the knowledge, skills and behaviours set out in Table 1. The independent assessor can then determine whether the minimum standards have been achieved or not and whether they have been exceeded to inform

the decision about the grade to be awarded for this method (see grading criteria in Annex 1).

The independent assessor must make some opening remarks to remind the apprentice of the purpose of the interview and to settle the apprentice and must give the apprentice the opportunity to do their very best. The assessor should ask open, competence-based questions to encourage the apprentice to illustrate the application of the knowledge, skills and behaviours defined in Table 1 as they talk about the work they undertaken in the Case Study Presentation and submitted in the portfolio. The Interview is a structured, technical discussion between the apprentice and their independent assessor. The Presentation is NOT a test of their presentation skills and the Interview is NOT a test of their interview skills.

The Interview questions will be informed by the Case Study Presentation and the portfolio, but the apprentice may also refer to other work the apprentice has undertaken. Both the independent assessor and the apprentice will have access to the portfolio before and during the interview.

The Interview will last 60 minutes (+ 10 % at the discretion of the independent assessor to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer). Whether the interview is conducted face to face or on-line, the apprentice and the independent assessor must be in a quiet room, away from disruptions or distractions.

The interview will be recorded.

Neither the Case Study Presentation nor the Interview is graded separately, but both contribute to the overall grading of this method.

Preparation for the Interview

The portfolio is reviewed by the independent assessor who can then determine the relevant interview questions.

Whilst all of the knowledge, skills and behaviours set out in Table 1 must be explored at the interview, the assessor will determine those particular knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to probe in more depth in order to elicit sufficient evidence against the grading criteria set out in Annex 1.

End-Point Assessment Organisations will produce a structured brief for the independent assessor to support the Interview and a bank of typical questions from which the assessor can select the most appropriate. The bank of typical questions will reflect what questions might be required in potential grade boundary situations: pass/fail; pass/merit; and merit/distinction. This will ensure a consistent and comprehensive approach. The independent assessor will select the relevant questions, typically 15, based on their review of the Portfolio. In addition, the independent assessor may ask follow-up questions or prompts to elicit further information or more in-depth replies to each question.

The independent assessor should note key points during the Case Study Presentation and Interview, but not to the distraction of the process.

After the Interview

The main points from the Case Study Presentation and Interview, and the conclusions made will be documented by the assessor. The grading decision will be made within five days of this at which point it will be communicated to the apprentice and employer. The Case Study Presentation and Interview will be recorded for internal and external moderation purposes. All documentation and evidence should be retained securely in line with individual EPAO policies and procedures.

6. GRADING

The **Knowledge Test** is fail or pass. Each of the two units has to be passed for this method to be passed overall. Each test will be graded as detailed below:

Fail	Pass
<65%	65% or above

The **Case Study Presentation and Interview** is fail, pass, merit or distinction. Each of the pass criteria in Annex 1 has to be passed for the Case Study Presentation and Interview to be passed. An apprentice will fail the Case Study Presentation and Interview if he/she has not met all of the pass criteria in Annex 1.

If an apprentice has passed the Case Study and Interview, the assessor can then assess whether or not they have demonstrated sufficient evidence for a merit or a distinction.

The requirements for a Merit include a consideration of KSBs under three themes, as shown below

Theme	Description of theme
The What	Those KSBs that define what the apprentice must be able to do.
The How	Those KSBs that define the way in which the work has to be done.
The With Whom	Those KSBs that define the personal and interpersonal qualities that must be brought to internal and external relationships.

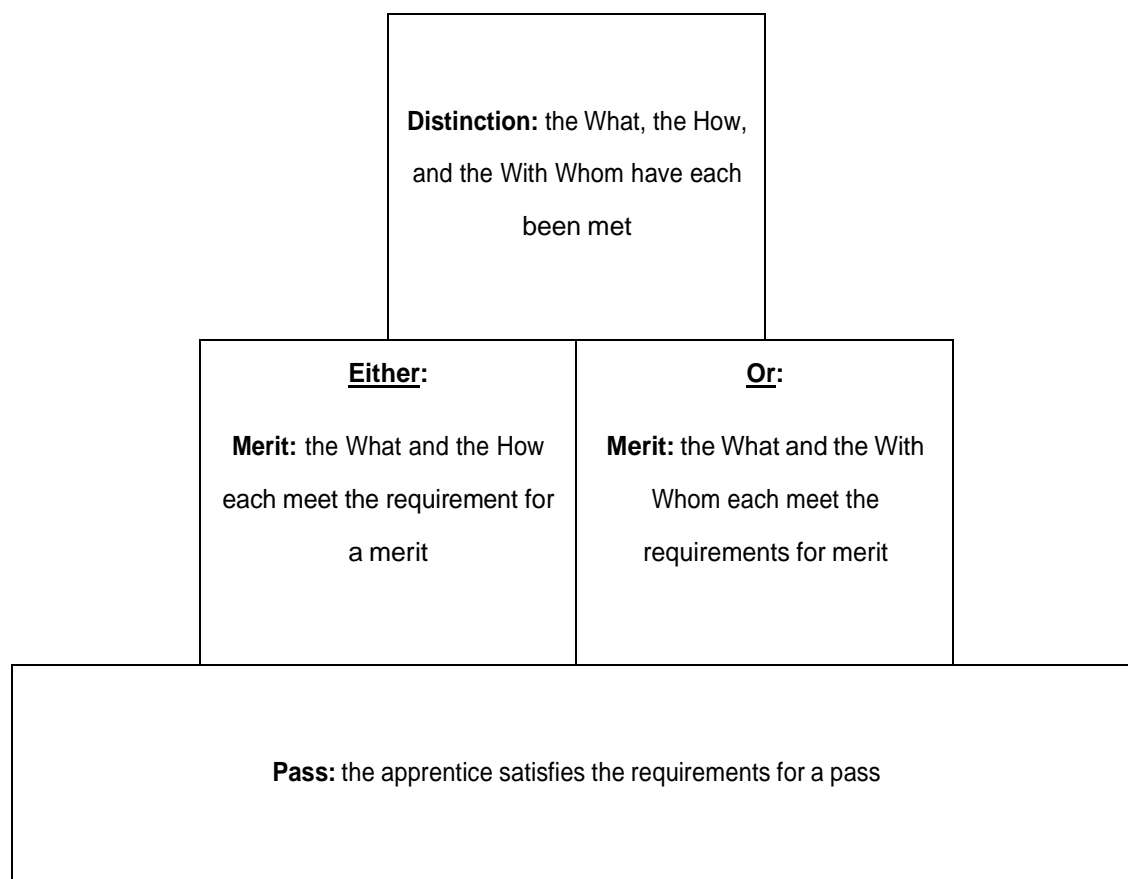
A **Merit** is achieved if the apprentice satisfies the merit requirements for What they have done – *and* satisfies the merit requirements for *either of the other* two themes. A Merit is **not** achieved if the apprentices satisfies the merit requirement for the How and the With Whom only.

A **Distinction** can only be achieved if the merit requirements are achieved for *all of the three* themes

The requirements for a merit and distinction are set out in Annex 1.

This is illustrated in Table 3, below

Table 3 Awarding of a Merit or Distinction for the Case Study Presentation and Interview



The overall grade is then determined as follows:

Knowledge Test	Case Study Presentation and Interview	Overall Grade
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Merit	Merit
Pass	Distinction	Distinction
Fail	Any result	Fail
Pass	Fail	Fail

Where the assessor is unsure of the grade to be awarded, the assessor may seek advice from the EPAO.

Appeals on grading decisions should be investigated and resolved through the End-Point Assessment Organisation's formal and documented processes, and records of such appeals should be retained.

7. Resits/Retakes

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method can be offered the opportunity to take a re-sit/re-take. A re-sit does not require further learning, whereas a re-take does. The apprentice's employer will decide whether or not a re-sit/re-take is an appropriate course of action. Apprentices should have a supportive action plan to prepare for the re-sit/re-take.

Re-sits/re-takes must not be offered to apprentices wishing to achieve a higher grade than pass.

Both assessment methods must be successfully passed within twelve weeks otherwise the entire EPA must be re-sat/re-taken.

There are no restrictions on the grade awarded in the case of a re-sit/re-take.

EPAOs must ensure that apprentices complete a different knowledge test/Case Study Presentation when taking a re-sit/re-take.

8. PROFESSIONAL BODY RECOGNITION

Those completing the Digital Support Technician apprenticeship will be recognised for entry onto the BCS, the Chartered

Institute for IT or Register of IT Technicians confirming SFIA Level 3 professional competence.

9. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

Any organisation interested in delivering the assessment service must be on the ESFA Register of End-Point Assessment Organisations and will, therefore, be able to demonstrate a range of capabilities including

- access to technical expertise and experience in designing and delivering on-line tests to give consistent, reliable and valid results;
- assessors with in depth and up to date occupational knowledge and understanding, and credibility within the sector;
- the ability to develop relevant, valid and robust tools and materials to deliver these assessments;
- a track record in delivering assessments;
- employer responsiveness and effective customer service processes;
- effective induction and training for everyone involved in assessment;
- effective leadership and management arrangements;
- robust quality assurance and quality control procedures, consistently applied; and
- impartial internal moderation of assessment decisions.

EPAO's internal quality assurance procedures should include:

- a minimum of 50% of new assessors grading decisions being moderated, reducing to a minimum of 10% as that assessor's proficiency increases and risks decline
- a minimum of six-monthly internal standardisation meetings with assessors – with each assessor participating in a standardisation meeting every six-months
- carrying out moderation and reviews on a risk basis, with sampling evidence to support this, that demonstrates full coverage across assessors and locations and over time. These should focus on comparability, fairness and grading results. The sampling should also take in to account the different Training Provider and Employers. All evidence should form the basis of training and standardisation required.

End-point assessment organisations are responsible for developing the assessment tools, materials and supporting materials, including documented criteria for the use of each assessment tool. These tools should be trialled and tested before implementation. Independent assessors should be provided with supporting information to help ensure that all end-point assessments are made consistently and against the specification.

End-Point Assessment Organisations will have systems to recruit, induct and train independent assessors with the skills and experience required to assess against this Standard (whether as employees or sub-contractors). It is the responsibility of each end-point assessment organisation to ensure that those delivering end-point

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assessments have the necessary skills and industry knowledge to make reliable judgements and to confirm that they are entirely independent from the training provider and the employer for every apprentice that they assess.

All registered independent assessors must be competent in this occupation, in terms of

- at least three years relevant experience of working in this occupation;
- recent and relevant industry expertise higher than the level of the Digital Support Technician standard (either the Digital Applications Technician or the Digital Services Technician – as appropriate for the Option they are assessing), within the last two years;
- the possession of practical and up to date knowledge, gained within the last two years, of the application of current working practices, infrastructure, tools and technologies appropriate to this occupation and of relevance to the sector/size of business in which they will be carrying out assessments.

End point assessment organisations must also ensure that all assessors are

- able to interview apprentices and communicate appropriately with apprentices
- have an understanding of apprenticeships
- have an understanding of what an apprentice should be able to do in their role and at the level of the apprenticeship

Assessors do not need to have an assessor qualification.

In addition, end-point assessment organisations must run induction programmes for all independent assessors to ensure they can demonstrate working knowledge of the apprenticeship Standard, the end-point assessment process and the grading criteria. They must be fully trained and approved for use of the assessment tools and be trained in the consistent application of the grading criteria. Independent assessors will be trained in the art of interviewing and reaching consistent judgement. They must attend standardisation meetings to ensure and maintain consistency of assessment decisions.

EPAOs must be satisfied that each individual undertaking end-point assessment on their behalf meets the criteria as detailed within this plan.

End-point assessment organisations should have robust internal quality assurance and verification processes to ensure that the quality, consistency and validity of assessments is maintained. This should include mechanisms to ensure that employers and training providers understand their responsibilities in relation to invigilation and controlled environments. They should have a Lead Assessor, or someone responsible for the quality of assessment decisions.

10. EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

The external quality assurance will be an employer-led model carried out by NSAR (the National Skills Academy for Rail), on behalf of the Digital Apprenticeship Quality Board.

11. AFFORDABILITY

The following factors should ensure the EPA is affordable:

- the use of on-line and virtual assessment,
- the potential use of a variety of premises, rather than the need for dedicated assessment centres.

12. VOLUMES

It is expected that there will be approx. 2,000 starts per annum once it is fully established

ANNEX ONE

GRADING DESCRIPTORS FOR CASE STUDY PRESENTATION AND INTERVIEW

Apprentices will fail if any one of the minimum requirements for a pass is not achieved.

<p>Minimum Requirements to pass the Case Study and Interview</p> <p style="text-align: center;">□</p>	<p>Criteria to Significantly Exceed the Minimum Requirement for the Case Study and Interview</p> <p style="text-align: center;">□</p>		
	<p>The What</p> <p>Apply to S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, K4, K5, B1, B4</p> <p>Option 1 S14, S15, S19</p>	<p>The How</p> <p>Apply to S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S13, K13, K14, B1, B2, B3, B4</p> <p>Option 1 S16, S17,</p>	<p>The With Whom</p> <p>Apply to S6, S12, K11, B3</p> <p>Option 1 S18, S20</p> <p>Option 2 S25, S27</p>

	Option 2 S21, S23, S24	Option 2 S22, S26	
<p>Digital Technologies - Demonstrates consistent and appropriate use of a range of digital office communications technologies for effective communications with customers to meet a variety of different customer needs/situations, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> selecting and using appropriate techniques to link and combine information within the application and across different software applications,; identifying when and how to combine and merge information from other software or other documents; selecting digital systems and software applications as appropriate to purposes and use them to produce effective outcomes; configuring the user interface to meet needs <p>Critically compares alternative methods and solutions to produce the required outcome and shows a logical approach to their use of digital tools to achieve different tasks and purposes, including contingencies.</p> <p>(S1, S9, B1, B2)</p>	<p>Breadth – the range of tools and methods understood and applied.</p> <p>Accurately applies and implements a wide range of tools and methods in a variety of different situations</p> <p>Depth – the level to which these tools and methods are understood and applied</p> <p>A sophisticated user - fully exploiting the functionality/capability of the tools and methods relevant to the work they are undertaking demonstrating an in-depth understanding of how and when different tools and methods can be applied appropriately</p> <p>Complexity – analyses and responds appropriately to inter-</p>	<p>Responsibility – the scope of responsibility and level of accountability demonstrated in the apprentice’s work</p> <p>Autonomously undertakes work and uses discretion in identifying and resolving complex problems and assignments and determines when issues should be escalated.</p> <p>Initiative</p> <p>Solves the problem and explores creative or innovative options to better meets client needs</p> <p>Delivery Focus – the extent to which the apprentice has shown they can grasp the problem, identify solutions and make them happen to meet client needs</p>	<p>Scope and appropriateness – the range of internal and external people and situations that the apprentice has engaged appropriately and effectively with</p> <p>Internally – works alone, 1:1, in a team and across the company with colleagues at all levels</p> <p>Externally – works with customers, suppliers and partners in a variety of situations</p> <p>Reads situations, adapts behaviours, and communicates appropriately for the situation and the audience</p> <p>Reliability – the extent to which they perform and behave professionally</p> <p>Consistently delivers, performs and behaves professionally. Manages and</p>
<p>Data Management and Information Systems - Selects digital systems and software applications appropriately and applies them to produce the required outcomes. Operates as an advanced user of at least one digital information management system – able to exploit the functionality to maximise effectiveness and efficiency.</p> <p>Inputs, maintains, organizes, searches, stores, integrates and transfers data within an information management system. Uses data formatting and analyses data to identify trends and insights – including the use of data modelling and relationship modeling.</p> <p>Demonstrates appropriate use of the key functions of information systems.</p> <p>Demonstrates that they present data effectively for different purposes and audiences</p> <p>(S2, S5, K4, K5, B1, B2)</p>			

<p>Security - Takes effective precautions when dealing with personal data, and the legislation that impacts on it, including when dealing with files, e mails, attachments etc. and demonstrates how they have entered, maintained, searched, stored, integrated and organised data. Demonstrates consistent and secure approaches to the transfer, deletion, storage, use and communication of information in accordance with basic security protocols and principles for personal data, access, identity management, encryption, passwords, deletion and storage and deletion-including in accordance with data protection legislation – and as required for different audiences and situations. Manages data files in line with organisational and legal guidelines and conventions for the storage and use of data. Stores and retrieve files in line with organisational guidelines and conventions. Operates within relevant legal and security regulations when operating digital systems. Ensures computer hardware is kept securely located when and where required. Complies with organisation security processes and knows how they would recognise and escalate issues. Works according to laid down policies and practices including actions such as keeping usernames/passwords in a secure manner, ensuring their data is appropriately protected (for example the encryption of personal data) and obeying organisational, regulatory and best practice in how they work.</p> <p>Uses IT hardware in a way that conforms with good health and safety practice and closes down the IT system without damage and maintaining security of data (S3, K4, B1)</p>	<p>related and inter- dependent factors in the work</p> <p>Deals confidently and capably with a high level of interrelated and interdependent factors in their work</p>	<p>Demonstrates project management skills, in defining problems, identifying solutions and making them happen and giving consideration to interdependencies between their work and others.</p> <p>Demonstrates a disciplined approach to execution, harnessing resources effectively</p> <p>Drives solutions – with a clear goal focus and appropriate level of urgency.</p>	<p>delivers against expectations.</p> <p>Proactively updates colleagues.</p> <p>Behaves in line with the highest values and business ethics</p> <p>A role model and exemplar to others</p> <p>Actively inspires and leads others, takes others with them, leads by example.</p>
<p>Service Support - utilises and exploits digital channels to respond to a variety of enquires and in a variety of situations, to satisfy the enquirer. Provides information and support through digital channels in a timely manner – for the user and in line with organisation protocols. Responds appropriately to different customers, clients and users, showing and understanding of their requirements, including any constraints and limiting factors, setting reasonable expectations and</p>			

<p>communicating effectively with them in terms of actions, decisions and next steps.(S4, B1, B2,B3)</p>			
<p>Communications - explains, discusses and compares a minimum of three occasions on which they have used verbal communication and three when using written communications. These should be non-trivial and varied in nature, for example face-to-face vs remote, formal vs informal, using of different media. In the case of communication planned in advance, they should actively consider if anything might disrupt the effectiveness of the communication (culture, past history etc.) and how to cope with this. An example could be in handling a support call where the caller is already known to be unhappy. Selects the most appropriate method for the situation. Expresses themselves clearly and succinctly, not over-simplifying or over-complicating the material being communicated. Actively checks that the other person/people understands what they have expressed. Demonstrates the sharing of information to relevant colleagues and stakeholders in a timely and effective manner and thorough appropriate digital channels (S6, S12, K11, B1, B3)</p>			
<p>Business Skills - understands and applies the relevant policies and legislation appropriately to their role. Knows where and how to seek further information and when and how to escalate. Can explain how their work contributes to team and organisation performance and the potential impacts, positive and negative, of their actions. Demonstrates an understanding of the broader impact and potential consequences of decisions they take (S10, S13)</p>			
<p>Project Management - demonstrates the ability to prioritise their own workflow and to manage work they have been allocated, taking in to account organisational priorities and rules, to deliver the best service to clients in a secure manner. Shows awareness of critical timelines and milestones and prioritises work appropriately. Demonstrates an ability to work independently and to take</p>			

<p>responsibility for their work without requiring undue reference to others or close supervision. Demonstrates effective time management. Behaves productively, professionally and securely such that it does not adversely affect their work output and/or that of their colleagues, stakeholders or clients. Demonstrates a resilient and positive mental attitude when dealing with a difficult situation, not giving up at the first obstacle and remaining calm when things are not going well. (S8, S9,S10, K14, B1, B2, B3, B4)</p>			
<p>Learning and continuous improvement - seeks new learning opportunities and opportunities to develop skills. Uses digital resources and channels to support personal performance and their own learning and development and shares information about skills and opportunities with colleagues. Identifies opportunities and generates ideas to make a demonstrable improvement to the use of digital tools and systems (S7, S11, K13, B1)</p>			
<p>Implementation of Digital Technologies - Demonstrates advanced user skills in their use of sophisticated digital technologies and applies these skills in different situations – maximizing functionality to ensure effectiveness and efficiency and selecting the most appropriate technology to meet the objective. Identifies areas for improvement through digital technologies. Operates complex information systems, maximising functionality for effectiveness and efficiency. Monitors performance and takes appropriate action when problems are identified. Demonstrates they are an early adopter of new technologies and new ways of working - and can articulate the benefits to others. Able to train, coach and guide new users (S14, S15, S16, B1, B2)</p>			
<p>Digital Problem Solving - Identifies and analyses digital problems and identifies and tests potential solutions to resolve the problem. Identifies and responds to quality and productivity problems to ensure that outcomes are fit for purpose and meet needs. Applies structured problem- solving methods, using at least one problem solving tool or technique to identify and resolve issues. Shows</p>			

<p>they know when and how to seek assistance if required and as appropriate, including appropriate escalation (S17, B1, B2)</p>			
<p>Productivity Software - Demonstrates consistent, appropriate use of least three productivity applications to create new material and edit existing material, across a variety of different situations. Analyses, formats and presents data and information in a variety of different situations and appropriate to the audience needs.</p> <p>Inputs relevant information accurately so that it is ready for processing. Evaluates the use of software functions to structure, layout and style information. Creates, changes and uses appropriate structures and/or layouts to organise information efficiently. Checks that information meets needs, using digital tools and making corrections as necessary. Enters and formats text and other information using layouts appropriate to the type of information. Organises and combines information of different forms or from different sources for presentation. Selects and uses appropriate techniques to edit data and presentations to meet needs (S19)</p>			
<p>Digital Coaching and Communications - coaches and guides others in a variety of situations. Selects and uses presentation methods and communication tools to aid clarity and meaning. Provides feedback to others on their use of digital tools and techniques in a constructive and considerate manner. Assists others to use new digital tools and systems. Shows an understanding of the different groups and key individuals that supply their immediate team with information or services and those they supply information or service to. Develops effective relationships with the groups / key individuals that they interface with in their role, using the following skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows they understands the value and importance of good relationships shows they acknowledges other people's experience and strengths shows they understands how to deal with conflict shows they promotes teamwork by active participation <p>Team/customer/client relationships</p>			

<p>Sets reasonable expectations and keeps others up to date with their own progress on work tasks.</p> <p>Interacts positively with others.</p> <p>Provides complete and helpful answers in response to any queries</p> <p>Stakeholder Relationship</p> <p>Understands who the key stakeholders for their work are and what their 'stake' is.</p> <p>Communicates with stakeholders in a manner appropriate to their positions and needs (S18, S20, B2, B3)</p>			
<p>Customer Service - Diagnoses the customer's needs, and elicits information to determine relevant information.</p> <p>Identifies the best solution(s) to meet those needs – including where these needs cannot be met. Advises the customer appropriately on the potential solution (s), managing expectations appropriately. Provides information, advice and guidance as required to support customers access that solution through the appropriate digital channels. Arranges for appropriate follow up. Maintains appropriate records and updates the relevant systems. Consistently demonstrates the required behaviours and applies the required processes and procedures to represent the organisation's brand, even in difficult situations Demonstrates the ability to deal effectively with customers at the same time as searching and updating digital systems as required. Consistently demonstrates a commitment to delivering high standards of customer service. Adapts behaviors, approaches and communication to meet the needs of the customer.</p> <p>Uses initiative to identify potential customer service issues and takes necessary action to prevent or resolve potential or real dissatisfaction through to resolution, and escalating as and when appropriate. Consistently presents as open, approachable and personable. Takes ownership for identifying and resolving any potential customers concerns. Understands the organisational impact of decisions they take –and balances this with the needs of the customer appropriately. Uses escalation processes if and when appropriate. (S21, S24, S25, S26), B1, B2, B3)</p>			

<p>Digital Problem Solving - Applies appropriate diagnostic techniques to understand the situation, the problem and the potential causes. Applies a methodical approach to determining the actual cause</p> <p>Uses content management systems to identify and resolve digital problems.</p> <p>Communicates effectively with the customer, including coaching and supporting the user to resolve the problem, where it lies with them. Follows correct procedures to escalate the problems if and when appropriate. Arranges appropriate follow up and maintains appropriate records (S22,B1, B2)</p>			
<p>Software applications and operating systems - • Maintains end-user systems physically or remotely. For example: software, hardware or operating system</p> <p>(S23)</p>			
<p>Customer communications - demonstrates flexibility in their style and approach as appropriate for a wide range of different customers, with different needs, different levels of understanding and from different backgrounds – including those with special or additional needs. Uses language that is appropriate for that customer. Checks understanding.</p> <p>Demonstrates respect, patience and empathy as appropriate. Able to calm irate customers. Able to provide customised support. Achieves high levels of customer satisfaction across a range of different customer groups. Can use the technical terminology as required and can explain technical issues in non-technical language as required (S27, B2)</p>			