

Teaching Assistant Level 3

End-Point Assessment

ST0454/02 Version 1.1 Specification

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Introduction

Title: Teaching Assistant
Standard: ST0454 v1.1
Level: 3

Welcome to the Best Practice Network End-Point Assessment Organisation (BPN EPAO) specification document for the Teaching Assistant Level 3 Apprenticeship Standard, the purpose of which is to provide information to users about the End Point Assessment (EPA).

BPN is a leading national provider of CPD and assessment, specialising in the education sector. Our programmes include National Professional Qualifications in school leadership and subject specialisms, Initial Teacher Training, Early Years Initial Teacher Training, Higher Level Teaching Assistant status and the Diploma for School Business Managers. We provide end-point assessment for the Teaching Assistant Level 3 Apprenticeship Standard.

Our core values define what we stand for and how we do things, helping us to work together in the most fulfilling way to provide the best service to our clients.



Inspire learning

We aim to change lives for the better by inspiring and developing colleagues working in education. As a team and a network, we inspire each other to grow personally and professionally.



Work together

Across the network, personal relationships and collaboration are at the heart of what we do. We show care and support for our candidates, partners and colleagues, and we go the extra mile to get things done.



Act with integrity

We can be trusted and we do what we say we will. We are open and straightforward, tackling challenges head-on rather than avoiding them. We treat each other with respect and dignity.



Strive for excellence

We have high expectations of ourselves and others. We invest and innovate to deliver the best learning, systems and outcomes. We keep things simple, use evidence and embrace change to achieve our best.

Occupation Summary

This occupation is found in primary, secondary, special schools, alternative provision, and further education institutions such as sixth forms and colleges. Teaching Assistants work across all age ranges, supporting all learners.

The broad purpose of the occupation is to support the class teacher to enhance learners' progress and development either in groups or individually. Teaching Assistants ensure that learners understand their work, know their learning objectives, and display positive learning behaviours in order to make progress. They deliver individual and small group teaching and apply a range of strategies to support learners of different abilities under the professional direction and supervision of a qualified teacher. Teaching Assistants may support learners with special educational needs and disabilities and learners with social, emotional, and mental health vulnerabilities.

In their daily work, an employee in this occupation may interact with all learners. This includes but is not limited to high attaining, SEND, EAL, and disadvantaged learners. Teaching Assistants will also work in partnership with teachers and other professionals within the school and education system, as well as with learners' parents or carers.

An employee in this occupation will be responsible for delivering individual and small group teaching and adapting planning under the direction of a teacher; implementing safeguarding policies and safe practice; working effectively with other education professionals; promoting positive learning behaviours; and supporting the development of a safe and stimulating learning environment. They will work within a framework of national legislation regarding safeguarding, and within the policies and procedures of their individual education organisations.

Qualification objective and KSBs

The objective of the qualification is to equip teaching assistants with the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be occupationally competent in their role. As well as ensuring full competency as a Teaching Assistant, this standard provides a foundation for potential progression into a number of career paths in the educational sector including Higher Level Teaching Assistant, Specialist TA Level 5 Apprenticeship, Assistant Teacher and Teacher. The knowledge, skills and behaviours required for occupational competence, and the relevant assessment method are summarised in Appendix A below.

Gateway requirements

After the On-programme Period, typically 18 months, the apprentice's employer must confirm that they think their apprentice is working at or above the occupational standard. The apprentice will then enter the gateway. The employer may take advice from the apprentice's training provider(s), but the employer must make the decision.

The apprentice must meet the gateway requirements before starting their EPA.

These are:

- achieved English and maths qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules.
- for the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence the apprentice must submit a portfolio of evidence.

End-Point Assessment

Apprentices will be assessed according to the requirements of the **Teaching Assistant L3 Assessment Plan Version 1.1**

As an EPAO, BPN EPAO tests the apprentice against the entire standard through 2 assessment methods:

- **Observation with Questions & Answers**
- **Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence**

The knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) to be tested by each assessment method are set out within the Assessment Plan. Apprentices registered with BPN EPAO will have access to a range of resources to support preparation for, and understanding of, the EPA.

BPN EPAO independent assessors are selected for their sector expertise and their assessment experience. Our team will assess and grade each assessment activity separately and combine the results to determine the EPA and apprenticeship grade. Each assessment method will be graded fail, pass or distinction.

Observation with Questions

Overview

In the observation with questions, a BPN EPAO assessor will observe the apprentice in their workplace. The apprentice completes their day-to-day duties under normal working conditions. This allows the apprentice to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method through naturally occurring evidence. The independent assessor will ask questions as explained below. Simulation is not permitted during the observation.

The observation and responses to questions must be assessed holistically by the independent assessor when they are deciding the grade.

Delivery

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

The independent assessor will conduct and assess the observation with questions.

The independent assessor will only observe one apprentice to ensure quality and rigour and they will be as unobtrusive as possible.

BPN EPAO will give an apprentice at least 2 weeks' notice of the observation.

The observation with questioning must take 110 minutes over the same day.

The independent assessor can increase the time of the observation by up to 10%. This time is to allow the apprentice to complete a task or respond to a question if necessary.

The observation may be split into discrete sections held on the same working day.

The independent assessor will explain to the apprentice the format and timescales of the observation before it begins. This does not count towards the assessment time.

The independent assessor will observe the following during the observation:

- the apprentice working directly with a learner or a group of learners, either in the classroom or in an intervention.
- Observations may include set up of the learning environment and time post lesson/intervention to include learner and staff interaction, in addition to observation of the teaching.
- The apprentice must be observed for a total of 110 minutes including 20 minutes of questioning.

BPN EPAO will manage invigilation of the apprentice during the assessment to maintain security of the EPA, in line with our malpractice policy. This includes breaks and moving between locations during the working day.

The observation may be split into discrete sessions held on the same working day to reflect the normal practice of the apprentice in their setting. The minimum time a discrete session can be is 15 minutes.

These activities provide the apprentice with the opportunity to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

The purpose of the questions is to clarify observations made by the independent assessor during the observation section of this assessment method, and to capture further evidence against the KSBs that has not been directly observed.

Questions will be asked after the observation. The total duration of the observation assessment method is 110 minutes and the time for questioning is included in the overall assessment time. The total time for the observation element is 90 minutes. The time allocated for questioning is 20 minutes. The independent assessor will ask at least 4 questions. Follow-up questions are allowed. The independent assessor will use the questions from BPN EPAO's question bank or create their own questions in-line with BPN EPAO training.

The independent assessor will ask questions about KSBs that were not observed to gather assessment evidence. These questions are in addition to the set number of questions for the observation and should be kept to a minimum. The independent assessor can also ask questions to clarify answers given by the apprentice.

The independent assessor will record the KSBs observed, KSBs demonstrated in answers to questions and the grade achieved. The apprentice's answers to questions will also be recorded.

The independent assessor makes all grading decisions.

Assessment location

The observation with questions will take place in the apprentice's normal place of work (for example their employer's premises or a customer's premises). Equipment and resources needed for the observation must be provided by the employer and be in good and safe working condition.

Questioning that occurs after the observation should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence.

Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

Overview

In the discussion, an independent assessor and apprentice have a formal two-way conversation.

The apprentice can refer to and illustrate their answers with evidence from their portfolio of evidence. It gives the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate their competency across the KSBs mapped to this EPA method.

Delivery

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

A BPN EPAO independent assessor must conduct and assess the professional discussion.

The purpose of the independent assessor's questions will be to draw out contextualised examples, further clarify knowledge, skills and behaviours demonstrated in a portfolio of evidence, and to assess the apprentice against the following themes:

- Learning and support
- Assessment
- Curriculum
- Child development
- Legislation and policy
- Professional development

BPN EPAO will give an apprentice at least 2 weeks' notice of the professional discussion.

The independent assessor must have at least 2 week(s) to review the supporting documentation. The apprentice must have access to their portfolio of evidence during the professional discussion.

The apprentice can refer to and illustrate their answers with evidence from their portfolio of evidence however the portfolio of evidence is not directly assessed.

The professional discussion will last for 90 minutes. The independent assessor can increase the time of the professional discussion by up to 10%. This time is to allow the apprentice to respond to a question if necessary.

The independent assessor will ask at least 10 questions. Follow-up questions are allowed where clarification is required. The independent assessor will use the questions from the BPN EPAO question bank or create their own questions in-line with BPN EPAO's training.

The independent assessor will make the grading decision. The independent assessor will keep accurate records of the assessment. They will record:

- the apprentice's answers to questions
- the KSBs demonstrated in answers to questions
- the grade achieved

Assessment location

The professional discussion will take place in a suitable venue selected by the BPN EPAO (for example BPN EPAO's or employer's premises).

The professional discussion can be conducted by video conferencing. BPN EPAO has processes in place to verify the identity of the apprentice and ensure the apprentice is not being aided.

The professional discussion should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence.

The portfolio of evidence

The apprentice must compile a portfolio of evidence during the on-programme period of the apprenticeship. It should only contain evidence related to the KSBs that will be assessed by this assessment method. It will typically contain 10 discrete pieces of evidence. Evidence must be mapped against the KSBs. Evidence may be used to demonstrate more than one KSB; a qualitative as opposed to quantitative approach is suggested.

Evidence sources may include:

- workplace policies and procedures
- safeguarding and prevent certificates
- records of continuing professional development
- mentor observation records
- peer observations or peer training records
- witness statements
- annotated photographs

This is not a definitive list; other evidence sources can be included. Evidence included in the portfolio should be anonymised prior to submission.

The portfolio of evidence should not include reflective accounts or any methods of self-assessment. Any employer contributions should focus on direct observation of performance (for example, witness statements) rather than opinions. The evidence provided should be valid and attributable to the apprentice; the portfolio of evidence should contain a statement from the employer and apprentice confirming this.

BPN will not assess the portfolio of evidence directly as it underpins the discussion. The independent assessor will review the portfolio of evidence to prepare questions for the discussion. They are not required to provide feedback after this review.

The apprentice must submit any policies and procedures as requested by BPN EPAO.

How apprentices are supported for end-point assessment

We believe the key to maximising the potential for an apprentice to perform to the best of their ability on the day of assessment, is to help them to be fully prepared in terms of what to expect.

BPN EPAO will provide registered apprentices/training providers with the following resources before they approach gateway assessment:

General

- A 'word' version of all documents required at Gateway.
- Mock observation template.
- Guidance on the Observation and Questions.
- Guidance on the Professional Discussion.
- Training materials, admin materials, moderation and standardisation materials, grading guidance

Portfolio of Evidence

- A Portfolio of Evidence guidance document.
- A document cover sheet template to support the apprentice's explanation of how the document provides evidence of any KSB claimed.
- A Portfolio of evidence confirmation and tracking form document that apprentices use to confirm requirements of the portfolio and track coverage of the KSBs against the documents selected.
- Support document examples.

Overall EPA grading

The assessment methods contribute equally to the overall EPA pass grade. Performance in the EPA determines the apprenticeship grade of:

- fail
- pass
- merit
- distinction

BPN will individually grade the:

- observation with questions and
- professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

in line with this EPA plan.

BPN EPAO will combine the individual assessment method grades to determine the overall EPA grade. If the apprentice fails one or more assessment methods, they will be awarded an overall EPA fail.

- To achieve an overall pass, the apprentice should achieve at least a pass in all the assessment methods.
- To achieve an overall EPA 'merit,' the apprentice must achieve a pass in one assessment method and a distinction in the other method.
- To achieve an overall EPA 'distinction,' the apprentice must achieve a distinction in both assessment methods.

Re-sits and re-takes

- Re-take and re-sit grade cap: merit
- Re-sit timeframe: typically, 2 months
- Re-take timeframe: typically, 3 months

Completion and certification

BPN EPAO activate certification following successful completion of all EPA and IEPA activity. Outcomes are shared with the certificate issuing authority to ensure the apprentice receives their certificate.

Why choose BPN EPAO

We are an approved End-Point Assessment Organisation specialising in EPA delivery across education and early years standards and sectors. Our understanding of these sectors is underpinned by our experience as a leading national provider of school and early years leadership and professional development programmes. We provide clear and detailed guidance documentation, along with proactive service and support, to help maximise the potential for all apprentices to fulfil their potential.

Appendix A – Grading of knowledge, skills and behaviours

Assessment Method – Observation with questions

Observation with questions		
Fail - does not meet pass criteria		
THEME KSBS	PASS APPRENTICES MUST DEMONSTRATE ALL THE PASS DESCRIPTORS	DISTINCTION APPRENTICES MUST DEMONSTRATE ALL THE PASS DESCRIPTORS AND ALL OF THE DISTINCTION DESCRIPTOR
Delivery K2 K12 S1 S6 S14	Adapts and applies teaching strategies in delivery, using suitable learning resources to engage learners and support progress. (K2; K12; S6; S14) Delivers strategies to support the development of independence in learners. (S1)	Recognises when a learner requires immediate adaptation of resources to increase or decrease the level of demand during delivery. (K2; K12; S6; S14)
Assessment K8 K9 S10 S11 S16	Applies observation methods and produces clear, accurate and concise records and reports of observations. (K9; S10) Chooses and applies formative assessment method(s), appropriate to the learning activity. Provides accurate feedback to learners based on the formative assessment. (K8; S11; S16)	n/a
Communication K13 S2 S5	Chooses and applies communication strategies with consideration for the audience and context of the message to be communicated. (K13; S2) Consults with the teacher to clarify their role during classroom or intervention delivery. (S5)	Combines and adapts verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to ensure learners remain engaged and achieve progress in learning. (K13; S2) Collaborates with the teacher proactively and adapts to changing need to ensure their activity has an impact on learning in line with the teacher's guidance. (S5)
Pastoral S3 S9 S15 B2	Chooses and consistently applies behaviour management strategies in line with organisation policy, in response to learner pastoral or academic behaviour, and reflects organisational values in their own practice. (S3; S15; B2) Applies the use of strategies to support the mental health and well-being	Adapts and merges strategies to support the individual needs of the learner and tailor behaviour management strategies to proactively manage learner pastoral or academic behaviour. (S3; S15)

	requirements of learners in line with organisational policy. (S9)	
Technology K6 S12 S13	Selects and operate technology that supports learning, ensuring it is operated in line with organisational policy and safeguarding procedures. Models the safe use of technology to prepare learners to operate independently. (K6; S12; S13)	Combines and adapts the use of different technologies in line with individual learner needs to ensure learning is accessible. (K6; S12)
Relationships and role modelling S7 B1 B6	Interacts professionally and respectfully with others to build relationships and collaborate. (S7; B1; B6)	n/a

Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence		
Fail - does not meet pass criteria		
THEME KSBS	PASS APPRENTICES MUST DEMONSTRATE ALL THE PASS DESCRIPTORS	DISTINCTION APPRENTICES MUST DEMONSTRATE ALL THE PASS DESCRIPTORS AND ALL OF THE DISTINCTION DESCRIPTOR
Learning and support K1 K14 K15 K16 S4 B3	<p>Describes the range of academic behaviours and pastoral needs learners may display, and the strategies and referral services available to educators to support learner's well-being and mental health. (K15; K16)</p> <p>Explains how resources can be adapted to meet the learning needs of all learners, and how the adaptation of resources can promote equality, diversity and inclusion within the organisation. (S4; B3)</p> <p>Describes the types of individual and group intervention available to support learners. (K14)</p> <p>Explains how they provide feedback to support progress in learning. (K1)</p>	<p>Explains their organisation's process for reporting and referral to other professionals (internal or external), their role in the reporting and referral process, and how this can support the learner. (K15; K16)</p> <p>Analyses the reasons for adapting resources and the impact that adaptation can have on learners. (S4; B3)</p>
Assessment K4 K7	Describes the stages of the learning, assessment and feedback cycle and how target setting is used to support learner's academic progress. (K4; K7)	Analyses the advantages and limitations of assessment methods and the impact of target setting within the learning, assessment and feedback cycle. (K4; K7)

Curriculum K10 K17	Describes the intent of the curriculum within their organisation, how their organisation implements the curriculum and what the intended impact of that curriculum is. (K10) Explains how enrichment activities benefit learners. (K17)	Explain how the curriculum within their setting fits within the broader curriculum the learner has been/will be exposed to across different stages of education. (K10)
Child development K3 K5	Describe how a learner's background and experiences can impact upon how they learn, including the impact of transition. (K3; K5)	Explain how they apply theories of development to support learner's academic and pastoral development. (K3)
Legislation and policy K11 S8	Describes their responsibilities with regards to Prevent, safeguarding, and health & safety legislation and guidance, and how they apply their organisations' procedures to ensure compliance with this legislation. (K11; S8)	Explains how local and national policies and procedures for safeguarding including serious case reviews, can impact on organisational policies and procedures. (K11; S8)
Professional development B4 B5	Describes how they reflect on their practice, responding to constructive feedback, and engage with research on best practice to improve their delivery. (B4; B5)	n/a

Grades from individual assessment methods should be combined in the following way to determine the grade of the EPA overall.

OBSERVATION WITH QUESTIONS	PROFESSIONAL DISCUSSION UNDERPINNED BY A PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE	OVERALL GRADING
Fail	Any grade	Fail
Any grade	Fail	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Merit
Distinction	Pass	Merit
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction