

Apprentice Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Issue 2

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Introduction

This document addresses some of the most frequently asked questions from apprentices in relation to the End Point Assessment (EPA). It provides answers to these questions and should be used in conjunction with the guidance documents available on the CIPD website.

Completing your EPA

What is CIPD's Role in EPA?

As the End-point Assessment organisation, we are responsible for delivering robust and accurate assessments against the apprenticeship standard. We work with expert assessors to ensure that your evidence is assessed consistently in accordance with the relevant assessment plan.

What is EPA?

End Point Assessment (EPA) is the final stage of your apprenticeship. This assessment tests the knowledge, skills and behaviours that you have gained during their apprenticeship programme and is carried out by an independent end point assessor.

What do I have to do in my EPA?

All End-point assessments for the standards we assess have two assessment methods. They all involve a project or project proposal that will need to be completed in the EPA period and uploaded to SmartEPA. They all also involve face to face assessments that take place over Zoom. Please [read the guidance](#) related to the apprenticeship that you are undertaking to prepare for your EPA.

Completing the Consultative Project for the HR Support & HR Consultant Partner standards.

Do I have to use the template provided for my project?

No. However, the template has been designed to support you and provide guidance and structure when writing your project. We would therefore advise that you use the template or refer to it when writing your project.

Are graphs/charts/appendices included in the wordcount?

For the HR Support and HR Consultant Partner standards, Apprentices are permitted to use material either in the body of the document or in an appendix to support their project write up.

For the HR Support and HR Consultant Partner standards, this supporting material will not be included in the word count as outlined in the Word Count and Guidance policy which can be found on the [EPA Policies](#) page on the CIPD website.

However, it is important that this additional material follows the guidance set out to ensure it is appropriate. It is essential that tables, graphs and charts are not used to artificially inflate the permitted wordcount.

Choosing a Digital Content Solution for the Learning and Development L3 L&D Practitioner Standards

How can I ensure this meets the minimum 2-hour requirement?

If a digital module is the best solution for the work-based project, the learner will need to consider multiple bitesize digital solutions or supplementing the digital solution with a workshop/webinar to meet the minimum 2 hours required and to also demonstrate the practical application of L&D skills, techniques and processes required within EPA1 (e.g., S7, S9, S10)

How can I demonstrate the required skills noted for EPA1 (e.g., S7, S9, S10)

You will need to consider supplementing the digital solution with e.g. a workshop/webinar where they could engage learners as part of a suite of learning to demonstrate the practical application of L&D skills, techniques and processes required within EPA1.

SmartEPA (SEPA) Platform

How do I get login details for SEPA?

Your training provider should create your user account for you once they register you on SmartEPA. Please speak with your training provider in the first instance if you do not have access.

How can I access support and guidance resources?

Resources specific to each standard we assess are available on the [CIPD website](#).

Resources are also available on SmartEPA under the 'Resources', there are toolkit zip folders for each standard ready to be downloaded. They contain all our policy documents, guidance and templates specific to each standard.

How do I upload my project

- Log into your SmartEPA account.
- Go to the 'Documents' tab.
- Click the 'Add Document' button.
- Select the file from your drive and upload.

Further guidance on uploading your evidence is available in the [Guide to Uploading your Evidence to SmartEPA](#)

How do I access the smart room

You will receive 2 booking emails from sepa@smartapprentices.com and there is a link on the email usually called 'Day 1'. All you need to do is click on the link. The link takes you to your smart Zoom room.

There is also a test link on the email so please ensure Zoom works on your device in advance. If you experience any difficulties please contact MyEPA@cipd.co.uk so that we can arrange your assessment using an alternate platform.

How do I get my results

After you have completed both of your assessments, it takes approximately 2-3 weeks for your results to be published on SEPA.

You'll receive an email from sepa@smartapprentices.com once the results are ready to be viewed.

Can I use e-signatures?

Yes, you can provide an E signature on your gateway documents or if this is unavailable to you an email confirmation would be acceptable.

What if something goes wrong?

I cannot log onto SmartEPA to upload my evidence?

Please email MyEPA@cipd.co.uk to let them know that you're unable to login to SmartEPA.

If you're still unable to upload your evidence, we would be happy to do this for you, please email your evidence to MyEPA@cipd.co.uk.

I cannot log onto the SmartRoom for my assessment?

Don't worry, within 10 minutes from the start the assessor will contact you using the contact number you provided on SmartEPA to ensure that you are ok and to aid you.

If you're experiencing any technical difficulties with the Zoom platform we'll make alternative arrangements to complete your assessment.

I have logged on to the SmartRoom, but the assessor is not here?

Please give your assessor a few minutes as they might have technical issues.

Please also keep an eye on your phone and emails, your assessor will try to get in touch with you if they are unable to access the room.

If you don't hear anything after 10 minutes, call our Customer Services enquiries on 020 8612 6208.

How do I request an extension for my EPA?

Please request an extension as early as possible.

Please email MyEPA@cipd.co.uk and provide as much information as you can, and approximately how long you need (if you are unsure that's not a problem either, we can look at options once we know the details).

Please also copy in your employer/line manager and your training provider in the request. Please note that if your request is not due to any extenuating circumstances, there might be late cancellation charges applied.

I've not received my apprenticeship certificate, who do I contact?

If you've not received your certificate within 12 weeks after receiving a successful outcome in your EPA, please contact MyEPA@cipd.co.uk

Deadlines for Evidence

What are the deadlines for uploading my evidence?

HR Support and HR Consultant Partner

- the Consultative Project must be uploaded 7 calendar days before the Professional Discussion date.

L3 L&D Practitioner & L5 L&D Consultant Business Partner

- the Work-based Project must be uploaded 21 days before the assessment date
- The presentation must be uploaded 7 calendar days before the assessment date

L7 Senior People Professional

- The Project Proposal must be uploaded 21 days before the assessment date
- The presentation must be uploaded 7 calendar days before the assessment date

What happens if I don't upload my evidence by the deadline date?

If you experience any difficulties in uploading your evidence to SmartEPA by the deadline, please contact MyEPA@cipd.co.uk as soon as possible.

Failure to upload your evidence by the deadline could result in cancellation fees being applied.

What happens if I do not pass?

What is the difference in a resit or a retake?

If you have failed 1 assessment method this is a **Resit**, you can resit just the failed assessment method without any further learning.

If you have failed both assessment methods this is a **Retake** where you have to complete the whole EPA after additional learning and development.

For further information on the resit/retake process please refer to the [policy](#).

The decision to book a resit and or retake should be discussed with your employer as there is an additional cost for these assessments.

If you are doing a re-take you will need to agree a development plan and additional training plan with your employer and training provider to make sure you're ready for EPA again.

The timeline for a retake is paused whilst the additional training takes place.

To book a re-sit or a re-take, contact MyEPA@cipd.co.uk

Can I appeal my EPA grade

You can. You have 20 working days from the date your grade was posted to appeal.

Please refer to the [CIPD Appeals and Complaints policy](#) which also has the form you'll need to complete the appeal submission.

Please send the form to MyEPA@cipd.co.uk

CIPD Membership

How do I apply for CIPD membership?

As an apprentice completing your EPA with the CIPD you can join the CIPD at any stage of your Apprenticeship Journey by joining online as a [student member](#)

As a CIPD member, apprentices will have access to all of the CIPD knowledge and support materials and can stay up to date with our survey findings and guidance on people professional and workplace issues with our factsheets, reports, podcasts and more.

If you become a member of CIPD during your time on programme and are completing your EPA with the CIPD, please remember to add your CIPD membership number to SmartEPA. You'll find the field in your SmartEPA record in the 'Other' tab called 'CIPD Membership Number'.

If your employer or training provider is funding your membership, please contact MyEPA@cipd.co.uk for further details.

What if I'm not completing my EPA with the CIPD?

If you're using an alternate EPAO for your EPA you are still eligible to join CIPD, the process is slightly different. We need to verify your EPA outcome and ask you to complete a reflective exercise with a focus on your work and impact.

please contact MyEPA@cipd.co.uk for further information on applying for CIPD membership.

Upgrading my CIPD membership

How do I upgrade my membership to Chartered Member?

If you've completed either L3 or L5 HR or L&D apprenticeships standards you cannot automatically upgrade to Chartered Member.

You need to complete a Level 7 qualification or equivalent to cover all knowledge areas of the CIPD membership standards at the right level.

You could complete:

- Advanced Diploma in Strategic People Management
- Advanced Diploma in Strategic Learning and Development
- Level 7 Senior People Professional Apprenticeship
- a CIPD accredited approved qualification.

Alternatively, you could complete [Experience Assessment](#) which is a time efficient way of gaining recognition for the work you have done and the impact you have made.

For further information on upgrading your membership please click [here](#)