PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT

Key information

Reference: ST0311
Version: 1.1
Level: 4
Typical duration to gateway: 14 months
Typical EPA period: 5 months
Maximum funding: £11000

Route: Sales, marketing and procurement
Date updated: 01/02/2024
Approved for delivery: 27 March 2018
Lars code: 257
EQA provider: Ofqual
Review: This apprenticeship standard will be reviewed after three years.

End-point assessment plan

V1.1

Introduction and overview

This document explains the requirements for end-point assessment (EPA) for the public relations and communications assistant apprenticeship. End-point assessment organisations (EPAOs) must follow this when designing and delivering the EPA.

Public relations and communications assistant apprentices, their employers and training providers should read this document.

A full-time public relations and communications assistant apprentice typically spends 14 months on-programme (this means in training before the gateway). The apprentice must spend at least 12 months on-programme and complete the required amount of off-the-job training in line with the apprenticeship funding rules.

The apprentice must complete their training and meet the gateway requirements before starting their EPA. The EPA will assess occupational competence.

An approved EPAO must conduct the EPA for this apprenticeship. Employers must select an approved EPAO from the register of end-point assessment organisations (RoEPAO).

This EPA has 2 assessment methods.

The grades available for each assessment method are below.

Assessment method 1 - written project report with presentation and questioning.:

- fail

- pass

- distinction

Assessment method 2 - professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.:

- fail

- pass

- distinction

The result from each assessment method is combined to decide the overall apprenticeship grade. The following grades are available for the apprenticeship:

- fail

- pass

- distinction

EPA summary table

On-programme - typically 14 months	The apprentice must: • complete training to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) outlined in this apprenticeship's standard • complete training towards English and mathematics qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules • compile a portfolio of evidence
End-point assessment gateway	The apprentice's employer must be content that the apprentice has attained sufficient KSBs to complete the apprenticeship. The apprentice must: • confirm they are ready to take the EPA • have achieved English and mathematics qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules For the written project report with presentation and questioning., the apprentice must submit a project scoping document. To ensure the project allows the apprentice to meet the KSBs mapped to this assessment method to the highest available grade, the EPAO should sign-off the project's title and scope at the gateway to confirm it is suitable. A brief project summary must be submitted to the EPAO. It should be no more than 500 words. This needs to show that the project will provide the opportunity for the apprentice to cover the KSBs mapped to this assessment method. It is not assessed. For the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence., the apprentice must submit a portfolio of evidence. The apprentice must submit the gateway evidence to their EPAO, including any organisation specific policies and procedures requested by the EPAO.
End-point assessment - typically 5 months	**The grades available for each assessment method are below** Written project report with presentation and questioning.: • fail • pass • distinction Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.: • fail • pass • distinction **Overall EPA and apprenticeship can be graded:** • fail • pass • distinction
Professional recognition	This apprenticeship aligns with: • Public Relations and Communications Association (PRCA) for criteria for Individual Membership. They must agree to abide by the Professional Charter and Codes of Conduct as part of their membership.
Re-sits and re-takes	• Re-take and re-sit grade cap: pass

| | • Re-sit timeframe: typically 2 months |
| | • Re-take timeframe: typically 3 months |

Duration of end-point assessment period

The EPA is taken in the EPA period. The EPA period starts when the EPAO confirms the gateway requirements have been met and is typically 5 months.

The EPAO should confirm the gateway requirements have been met and the EPA should start as quickly as possible.

EPA gateway

The apprentice's employer must be content that the apprentice has attained sufficient KSBs to complete the apprenticeship. The employer may take advice from the apprentice's training provider, but the employer must make the decision. The apprentice will then enter the gateway.

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

They must:

- confirm they are ready to take the EPA

- have achieved English and mathematics qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules

- submit a project scoping document for the written project report with presentation and questioning.

for the written project report with presentation and questioning, the apprentice must submit a project scoping document (no more than 500 words). This should include a brief summary which includes the project plan, research requirements and time frames. The project scoping document is not assessed. The EPAO should sign-off the written project report title, at gateway, to confirm its suitability prior to the written project report commencing. The agreed project will present a typical business task, appropriate for demonstrating the skills and knowledge on the standard. The agreed project will be comparable in terms of content and complexity for all apprentices - it is the context within which the knowledge, and skills must be demonstrated that will vary. Each project will take, typically, six months to complete. The project is undertaken and completed on programme and pre-gateway to the EPA. The project itself is not part of the EPA. The project will typically be undertaken on the employer's premises or where this is not practical on the training providers premises.

- submit a portfolio of evidence for the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

Portfolio of evidence requirements:

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 12 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 documentation and records, for example:

- workplace policies and procedures

- witness statements

- annotated photographs or screenshots

- blog content and press releases

- case studies and reports

- project plans from projects they have completed during the apprenticeship (this should not include the project to be undertaken for end-point assessment)

- video clips (maximum total duration 5 minutes); the apprentice must be in view and identifiable

This is not a definitive list; other evidence sources can be included.

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.

The EPAO should not assess the portfolio of evidence directly as it underpins the discussion. The independent assessor should 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 the gateway evidence to their EPAO, including any organisation specific policies and procedures requested by the EPAO.

Order of assessment methods

The assessment methods can be delivered in any order.

The result of one assessment method does not need to be known before starting the next.

Written project report with presentation and questioning.

Overview

A written project report involves the apprentice completing a significant and defined piece of work that has a real business application and benefit. The written project report must meet the needs of the employer's business and be relevant to the apprentice's occupation and apprenticeship. The project is undertaken before the gateway and the written project report is completed after the gateway.

This assessment method has 2 components:

- written project report

- presentation with questions and answers

Together, these components give the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method. They are assessed by an independent assessor.

Rationale

This assessment method is being used because:

- the written project report is designed to demonstrate the application of knowledge, skills, and behaviours as they would occur in occupational practice. Producing a written project report reflects normal practice in the workplace for a public relations and communications assistant, so this assessment method is appropriate

- it is a significant and relevant piece of work that thoroughly tests both higher and lower order knowledge, skills, and behaviours

- it demonstrates the apprentice's understanding of their organisation and public relations and communications function.

Delivery

The apprentice must complete a written project report based on any of the following:

- a specific problem

- a recurring issue

- an idea or opportunity

Examples of the types of written project report an apprentice could submit include:

- Develop and lead on the social media associated with a client's campaign. Make recommendations for potential improvements, for solutions to challenges, and for potential risk mitigation. Explain what stakeholders you consulted with, why you selected them and how you communicated with them. Analyse what went well and what did not, identifying potential areas for improvement.

- Plan and deliver an event. Describe the reasons for the event and explain what risks had to be managed. Explain what stakeholders you invited and why. Analyse what went well and what did not, identifying potential areas for improvement.

- Implement and develop public relations tactics and strategy to reposition a client in the public domain. Explain why this was required and how you agreed what was needed, who you consulted with and how you went about implementing the strategy. Review what risks had to be managed and what you learnt from the process. Identify potential areas for improvement. Analyse what went well and what did not, identifying potential areas for improvement.

- Evaluate an internal communications project. Explain the research undertaken and which stakeholders you liaised with, why you selected them and how you communicated with them. Make recommendations and reasons for change. Identify risks of implementing the change and how to mitigate. Analyse what went well and what did not, identifying potential areas for improvement.

- Produce a reputation risk assessment and explain how you have supported stakeholders with the planning and implementation of reputation management or crisis strategies. Analyse what went well and what did not, identifying potential areas for improvement.

To ensure the written project report allows the apprentice to meet the KSBs mapped to this assessment method to the highest available grade, the EPAO must sign-off the written project report's title and scope at the gateway to confirm it is suitable. The EPAO must refer to the grading descriptors to ensure that written project reports are pitched appropriately.

The written project report must be in the form of a written project report and presentation.

The apprentice must start the written project report after the gateway. The employer should ensure the apprentice has the time and resources, within the written project report period, to plan and complete their written project report.

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

Component 1: Written project report

The written project report must include at least:

- an introduction including an outline of the written project report aims

- approach taken including research and risks as applicable

- stakeholders involved and their roles

- communication plans which have fed into the communication strategy

- outcomes and impact of the written project report recommendations and conclusions

The written project report must have a word count of 3000 words. A tolerance of 10% above or below is allowed at the apprentice's discretion. Appendices, references and diagrams are not included in this total. The apprentice must produce and include a mapping in an appendix, showing how the written project report evidences the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

The apprentice must complete and submit the written project report and any presentation materials to the EPAO by the end of week 12 of the EPA period.

Component 2: Presentation with questions

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

The apprentice must prepare and deliver a presentation to an independent assessor. After the presentation, the independent assessor must ask the apprentice questions about their written project report and presentation.

The presentation should cover:

- an overview of the project

- the project scope (including key performance indicators)

- summary of actions undertaken by the apprentice

- project outcomes and how these were achieved

The presentation with questions must last 40 minutes. This will typically include a presentation of 15 minutes and questioning lasting 25 minutes. The independent assessor must use the full time available for questioning. The independent assessor can increase the time of the presentation and questioning by up to 10%. This time is to allow the apprentice to complete their last point or respond to a question if necessary.

The independent assessor must ask at least 4 questions. They must use the questions from the EPAO's question bank or create their own questions in line with the EPAO's training. Follow up questions are allowed where clarification is required.

The purpose of the independent assessor's questions is:

- to verify that the activity was completed by the apprentice

- to seek clarification where required

- to assess those KSBs that the apprentice did not have the opportunity to demonstrate with the written project report, although these should be kept to a minimum

- to assess level of competence against the grading descriptors

The apprentice must submit any presentation materials to the EPAO at the same time as the written project report by the end of week 12 of the EPA period. The apprentice must notify the EPAO, at that point, of any technical requirements for the presentation.

During the presentation, the apprentice must have access to:

- audio-visual presentation equipment

- flip chart and writing and drawing materials

- computer

The independent assessor must have at least 2 weeks to review the written project report and any presentation materials, to allow them to prepare questions.

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

Assessment decision

The independent assessor must make the grading decision. They must assess the written project report components holistically when deciding the grade.

The independent assessor must keep accurate records of the assessment. They must record:

- the KSBs demonstrated in the written project report and presentation with questions

- the apprentice's answers to questions

- the grade achieved

Assessment location

The presentation with questions must take place in a suitable venue selected by the EPAO for example, the EPAO's or employer's premises. It should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence.

The presentation with questions can be conducted by video conferencing. The EPAO must have processes in place to verify the identity of the apprentice and ensure the apprentice is not being aided.

Question and resource development

The EPAO must develop a purpose-built assessment specification and question bank. It is recommended this is done in consultation with employers of this occupation. The EPAO must maintain the security and confidentiality of EPA materials when consulting with employers. The assessment specification and question bank must be reviewed at least once a year to ensure they remain fit-for-purpose.

The assessment specification must be relevant to the occupation and demonstrate how to assess the KSBs mapped to this assessment method. The EPAO must ensure that questions are refined and developed to a high standard. The questions must be unpredictable. A question bank of sufficient size will support this.

The EPAO must ensure that the apprentice has a different set of questions in the case of re-sits or re-takes.

EPAO must produce the following materials to support the project:

- independent assessor EPA materials which include:
  - training materials
  - administration materials
  - moderation and standardisation materials
  - guidance materials
  - grading guidance
  - question bank
- EPA guidance for the apprentice and the employer

The EPAO must ensure that the EPA materials are subject to quality assurance procedures including standardisation and moderation.

Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

Overview

In the professional discussion, an independent assessor and apprentice have a formal two-way conversation. It gives the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

The apprentice can refer to and illustrate their answers with evidence from their portfolio of evidence.

Rationale

This assessment method is being used because:

- it allows the apprentice to show case their depth of understanding relating to the KSBs
- it allows the independent assessor to consider the context and sector that the apprentice operates within, giving flexibility to ensure that all the KSBs can be assessed appropriately
- it allows scope for the apprentice to demonstrate the depth and breadth of KSBs

Delivery

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

An independent assessor must conduct and assess the professional discussion.

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

- Communication and campaigns
- Organisation, structure, and strategy
- Media and public relations
- Team, performance, and objectives
- Regulations and legislation

The EPAO must give an apprentice 2 weeks' notice of the professional discussion.

The independent assessor must have at least 2 weeks 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 must last for 60 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 must ask at least 6 questions. The independent assessor must use the questions from the EPAO's question bank or create their own questions in line with the EPAO's training. Follow-up questions are allowed where clarification is required.

The independent assessor must make the grading decision.

The independent assessor must keep accurate records of the assessment. They must record:

- the apprentice's answers to questions

- the KSBs demonstrated in answers to questions

- the grade achieved

Assessment location

The professional discussion must take place in a suitable venue selected by the EPAO for example, the EPAO's or employer's premises.

The professional discussion can be conducted by video conferencing. The EPAO must have 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.

Question and resource development

The EPAO must develop a purpose-built assessment specification and question bank. It is recommended this is done in consultation with employers of this occupation. The EPAO must maintain the security and confidentiality of EPA materials when consulting with employers. The assessment specification and question bank must be reviewed at least once a year to ensure they remain fit-for-purpose.

The assessment specification must be relevant to the occupation and demonstrate how to assess the KSBs mapped to this assessment method. The EPAO must ensure that questions are refined and developed to a high standard. The questions must be unpredictable. A question bank of sufficient size will support this.

The EPAO must ensure that the apprentice has a different set of questions in the case of re-sits or re-takes.

The EPAO must produce the following materials to support the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.:

- independent assessor assessment materials which include:

  - training materials

  - administration materials

  - moderation and standardisation materials

  - guidance materials

  - grading guidance

  - question bank

- EPA guidance for the apprentice and the employer

The EPAO must ensure that the EPA materials are subject to quality assurance procedures including standardisation and moderation.

Grading

Written project report with presentation and questioning.

Fail - does not meet pass criteria

THEME KSBS	PASS APPRENTICES MUST DEMONSTRATE ALL OF THE PASS DESCRIPTORS	DISTINCTION APPRENTICES MUST DEMONSTRATE ALL OF THE PASS DESCRIPTORS AND ALL OF THE DISTINCTION DESCRIPTORS
Communication and campaigns K4 K5 K7 K8 K9 S1 S3 S4 S5 S9 B2	Outlines the structure of communication plans and how they feed into the overall communications strategy. (K4) Describes how the materials that support programmes, campaigns and proposals are created and managed and how they use technology and software to support the delivery of programmes and campaigns. (K5, K7, S1) Explains the production lead times and deadlines they use to produce written content through a variety of different channels using terminology appropriate to the audience. (K8, S4) Summarises the communication techniques and approaches used to interact with stakeholders and how they adapt these to work collaboratively to meet the needs of the audience building strong relationships with them. (K9, S5, B2) Demonstrates how they analyse and interpret complex subjects through different communication channels in order to support campaigns and identify key areas for improvement to ensure compliance with agreed service or performance levels. (S3, S9)	Evaluates their analysis and interpretation of complex subjects and the impact of their recommendations for improvements to comply with performance levels. (S3, S9)
Media and public relations K13 K18 S2	Describes the importance of evaluation in demonstrating the value and impact of public relations. (K13) Explains how they conduct public relations and communications which are ethical and inclusive in order to build stakeholder relationships and develop contacts within the media in both informal and formal settings. (K18, S2)	Analyses and evaluates the impact of public relations on producing communications which are ethical and inclusive and recommend how these are used to improve stakeholder relationships. (K13, K18, S2)
Research and analysis K11 K15 S8	Describes the principles of qualitative and quantitative research and how they are used to analyse and interpret complex technical information when evaluating public relations and communications activities when presenting findings to stakeholders. (K11, K15, S8)	Justifies the research principles used to evaluate activities and identify recommendations to improve public relations and communications activities. (K11, K15, S8)

Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

Fail - does not meet pass criteria

THEME KSBS	PASS APPRENTICES MUST DEMONSTRATE ALL OF THE PASS DESCRIPTORS	DISTINCTION APPRENTICES MUST DEMONSTRATE ALL OF THE PASS DESCRIPTORS AND ALL OF THE DISTINCTION DESCRIPTORS
Communication and campaigns K19 K20 S6 S7 S10 S12 S13	Describes the principles of non-written content used to support the production of communication materials. (K19, S6) Explains how they proofread and edit communications materials such as news releases, graphics and video, and social media content. (S13) Explains the approaches used to distribute content through social media channels. (K20, S7) Demonstrates how they input to and review communications programmes and plans which focus on environmental, social and governance principles. (S10) Describes how they plan and deliver engagement activities for stakeholders. (S12)	Evaluates the approaches they have used to distribute content through social media and identify any future changes to improve the use of them. (K20, S7)
Organisation, structure, and strategy K2 K3 K10 K12 S11 S15	Describes how their role supports the wider organisation structure and objectives, including the organisation's work with stakeholders, and how their role contributes to activities which focus on improving sustainability. (K2, K3, S15) Explains the importance of horizon scanning to identify future changes in the sector. (K10) Describes the risk assessment methodologies and approaches they use to manage reputational impact, implement crisis plans and how they provide this information to support stakeholder planning and strategy. (K12, S11)	Evaluates the approaches they have taken to managing risk and the recommendations they have made to support future stakeholder planning and strategy. (K12, S11)
Media and public relations K1 B1	Describes how they work with current affairs, the media, and the public relations industry to build trust and how these impacts on their role. (K1, B1)	N/A
Team, performance, and objectives K6 K16 K17 K21 S14 B3 B4 B5	Describes the operational processes required to prioritise their workloads maintaining ownership and accountability, in order to meet deadlines and objectives. (K6, B3) Explains how they identify support or development requirements of their team and how they support colleague development through buddying or coaching. (K16, S14) Explains the importance of being organised and taking responsibility of communication activities when using tools to measure the impact of organisational objectives on the wider environment and sustainability. (K17, B5) Explains how they identify and seek out opportunities for professional development. (K21, B4)	Evaluates what impacts have been made on the wider environment and sustainability and how they have presented their findings and recommendations. (K17)
Regulations and legislation K14 S16	Explains the regulatory and legislative requirements which impact on their role and their practical application relevant to their work. (K14, S16).	N/A

Overall EPA grading

Performance in the EPA determines the overall grade of:

- fail

- pass

- distinction

An independent assessor must individually grade the: written project report with presentation and questioning. and professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence. in line with this EPA plan.

The EPAO must combine the individual assessment method grades to determine the overall EPA grade.

If the apprentice fails one assessment method or more, they will be awarded an overall fail.

To achieve an overall pass, the apprentice must achieve at least a pass in all the assessment methods. To achieve an overall EPA distinction, the apprentice must achieve a distinction in both assessment methods.

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

WRITTEN PROJECT REPORT WITH PRESENTATION AND QUESTIONING.	PROFESSIONAL DISCUSSION UNDERPINNED BY A PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE.	OVERALL GRADING
Fail	Any grade	Fail
Any grade	Fail	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Pass
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

Re-sits and re-takes

If the apprentice fails one assessment method or more, they can take a re-sit or a re-take at their employer's discretion. The apprentice's employer needs to agree that a re-sit or re-take is appropriate. A re-sit does not need further learning, whereas a re-take does. The apprentice should have a supportive action plan to prepare for a re-sit or a re-take.

The employer and the EPAO should agree the timescale for a re-sit or re-take. A re-sit is typically taken within 2 months of the EPA outcome notification. The timescale for a re-take is dependent on how much re-training is required and is typically taken within 3 months of the EPA outcome notification.

If the apprentice fails the project assessment method, they must amend the project output in line with the independent assessor's feedback. The apprentice will be given 4 weeks to rework and submit the amended written project report.

Failed assessment methods must be re-sat or re-taken within a 6-month period from the EPA outcome notification, otherwise the entire EPA will need to be re-sat or re-taken in full.

Re-sits and re-takes are not offered to an apprentice wishing to move from pass to a higher grade.

The apprentice will get a maximum EPA grade of pass for a re-sit or re-take, unless the EPAO determines there are exceptional circumstances.

Roles and responsibilities

ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES
Apprentice	As a minimum, the apprentice should: • complete on-programme training to meet the KSBs as outlined in the apprenticeship standard for a minimum of 12 months • complete the required amount of off-the-job training specified by the apprenticeship funding rules and as arranged by the employer and training provider • understand the purpose and importance of EPA • prepare for and undertake the EPA including meeting all gateway requirements • ensure that all supporting evidence required at the gateway is submitted in line with this EPA plan
Employer	As a minimum, the apprentice's employer must: • select the EPAO and training provider • work with the training provider (where applicable) to support the apprentice in the workplace and to provide the opportunities for the apprentice to develop the KSBs • arrange and support off-the-job training to be undertaken by the apprentice • decide when the apprentice is working at or above the apprenticeship standard and is ready for EPA • ensure the apprentice is prepared for the EPA • ensure that all supporting evidence required at the gateway is submitted in line with this EPA plan • confirm arrangements with the EPAO for the EPA (who, when, where) in a timely manner • provide the EPAO with access to any employer-specific documentation as required for example, company policies • ensure that the EPA is scheduled with the EPAO for a date and time which allows appropriate opportunity for the apprentice to meet the KSBs • ensure the apprentice is given sufficient time away from regular duties to prepare for, and complete the EPA • ensure that any required supervision during the EPA period, as stated within this EPA plan, is in place • ensure the apprentice has access to the resources used to fulfil their role and carry out the EPA for workplace based assessments • remain independent from the delivery of the EPA • pass the certificate to the apprentice upon receipt

EPAO	As a minimum, the EPAO must:
	
	• conform to the requirements of this EPA plan and deliver its requirements in a timely manner
	
	• conform to the requirements of the RoEPAO
	
	• conform to the requirements of the external quality assurance provider (EQAP)
	
	• understand the apprenticeship including the occupational standard and EPA plan
	
	• make all necessary contractual arrangements including agreeing the price of the EPA
	
	• develop and produce assessment materials including specifications and marking materials (for example mark schemes, practice materials, training material)
	
	• maintain and apply a policy for the declaration and management of conflict of interests and independence. This must ensure, as a minimum, there is no personal benefit or detriment for those delivering the EPA or from the result of an assessment. It must cover:
	
	  • apprentices
	  • employers
	  • independent assessors
	  • any other roles involved in delivery or grading of the EPA
	
	• have quality assurance systems and procedures that ensure fair, reliable and consistent assessment and maintain records of internal quality assurance (IQA) activity for external quality assurance (EQA) purposes
	
	• appoint independent, competent, and suitably qualified assessors in line with the requirements of this EPA plan
	
	• appoint administrators, invigilators and any other roles where required to facilitate the EPA
	
	• deliver induction, initial and on-going training for all their independent assessors and any other roles involved in the delivery or grading of the EPA as specified within this EPA plan. This should include how to record the rationale and evidence for grading decisions where required

	• conduct standardisation with all their independent assessors before allowing them to deliver an EPA, when the EPA is updated, and at least once a year • conduct moderation across all of their independent assessors' decisions once EPAs have started according to a sampling plan, with associated risk rating of independent assessors • monitor the performance of all their independent assessors and provide additional training where necessary • develop and provide assessment recording documentation to ensure a clear and auditable process is in place for providing assessment decisions and feedback to all relevant stakeholders • use language in the development and delivery of the EPA that is appropriate to the level of the apprenticeship • arrange for the EPA to take place in a timely manner, in consultation with the employer • provide information, advice, and guidance documentation to enable apprentices, employers and training providers to prepare for the EPA • confirm the gateway requirements have been met before they start the EPA for an apprentice • host the EPA or make suitable alternative arrangements • maintain the security of the EPA including, but not limited to, verifying the identity of the apprentice, invigilation and security of materials • where the EPA plan permits assessment away from the workplace, ensure that the apprentice has access to the required resources and liaise with the employer to agree this if necessary • confirm overall grade awarded • maintain and apply a policy for conducting appeals
Independent assessor	As a minimum, an independent assessor must: • be independent, with no conflict of interest with the apprentice, their employer or training provider, specifically, they must not receive a personal benefit or detriment from the result of the assessment • have, maintain and be able to evidence up-to-date knowledge and expertise of the occupation • have the competence to assess the EPA and meet the requirements of the IQA section of this EPA plan • understand the apprenticeship's occupational standard and EPA plan • attend induction and standardisation events before they conduct an EPA for the first time, when the EPA is updated, and at least once a year • use language in the delivery of the EPA that is appropriate to the level of the apprenticeship • work with other personnel, where used, in the preparation and delivery of assessment methods • conduct the EPA to assess the apprentice against the KSBs and in line with the EPA plan • make final grading decisions in line with this EPA plan • record and report assessment outcome decisions • comply with the IQA requirements of the EPAO • comply with external quality assurance (EQA) requirements
Training provider	As a minimum, the training provider must: • conform to the requirements of the register of apprenticeship training providers (RoATP) • ensure procedures are in place to mitigate against any conflict of interest • work with the employer and support the apprentice during the off-the-job training to provide the opportunities to develop the KSBs as outlined in the occupational standard • deliver training to the apprentice as outlined in their apprenticeship agreement • monitor the apprentice's progress during any training provider led on-programme learning • ensure the apprentice is prepared for the EPA • advise the employer, upon request, on the apprentice's readiness for EPA • ensure that all supporting evidence required at the gateway is submitted in line with this EPA plan • remain independent from the delivery of the EPA

Reasonable adjustments

The EPAO must have reasonable adjustments arrangements for the EPA.

This should include:

- how an apprentice qualifies for reasonable adjustment
- what reasonable adjustments may be made

Adjustments must maintain the validity, reliability and integrity of the EPA as outlined in this EPA plan.

Internal quality assurance

Internal quality assurance refers to the strategies, policies, and procedures that an EPAO must have in place to ensure valid, consistent, and reliable EPA decisions.

EPAOs for this EPA must adhere to the requirements within the roles and responsibilities table.

They must also appoint independent assessors who:

- have recent relevant experience of the occupation or sector to at least occupational level 5 gained in the last 3 years or significant experience of the occupation or sector

Value for money

Affordability of the EPA will be aided by using at least some of the following:

- utilising digital remote platforms to conduct applicable assessment methods
- using the employer's premises
- conducting assessment methods on the same day

Professional recognition

This apprenticeship aligns with:

- Public Relations and Communications Association (PRCA) criteria for Individual Membership

They must agree to abide by the Professional Charter and Codes of Conduct as part of their membership.

KSB mapping table

KNOWLEDGE	ASSESSMENT METHODS
K1 Current affairs, the media, the public relations industry, and how they impact their role.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
K2 How their role supports the wider organisation structure and works alongside other multi-disciplinary teams such as internal communications and marketing.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
K3 The organisation structure and objectives and how these affect the work with stakeholders or clients.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
K4 The structure of communication plans and how these feed into the overall communications strategy.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
K5 The creation and management of materials which support communication programmes, campaigns, or new business proposals.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
K6 The operational processes required to prioritise team and individual workloads to meet deadlines and objectives.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
K7 Technology and software used in the delivery of programmes and campaigns.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
K8 Production lead-times and deadlines for digital build, content creation, print, and media.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
K9 Communication techniques and approaches to interact with stakeholders to meet their requirements.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
K10 The importance of horizon scanning for future changes and developments in relation to the industry or sector.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
K11 The principles of Qualitative and Quantitative research.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
K12 Risk assessment methodologies and approaches to mitigate or manage reputational impact and implementation of crisis plans.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
K13 The importance of evaluation in demonstrating the value and impact of public relations.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
K14 Regulatory and legislative requirements relevant to their sector such as data protection and codes of practice.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
K15 How to analyse and interpret complex technical information.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
K16 The support requirements or development needs of their team.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

K17 The tools used to measure the impact of organisational objectives, and the wider environment and sustainability on public relations and communications activities.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
K18 Principles of conducting public relations and communications which are ethical and inclusive.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
K19 The principles of non-written content.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
K20 Approaches to distributing content using social media channels.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
K21 Where to source information on career professional development.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

SKILL	ASSESSMENT METHODS
S1 Use IT systems and software to support campaigns.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
S2 Build stakeholder relationships including developing contacts within the media and presenting to them in both formal and informal settings.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
S3 Support campaigns by undertaking tasks such as desk research, event co-ordination, and database management to ensure compliance with agreed service or performance levels.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
S4 Produce written content such as news releases, articles, social media content, bulletins, and blogs, that is accessible to meet the needs of different audiences and channels.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
S5 Able to adapt communication styles as appropriate to the audience.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
S6 Support the production of non-written content such as film production management, producing short user generated style content, live video streaming, social image creation, and infographic production.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
S7 Distribute content using social media channels.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
S8 Use qualitative and quantitative research to analyse and evaluate public relations and communications activities and present findings to project stakeholders.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
S9 Analyse and interpret complex subjects through different communication channels and identify areas for improvement.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
S10 Input to and review communications programmes and plans with a focus on environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
S11 Undertake risk assessment and provide information to support stakeholder planning and strategy.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
S12 Plan and deliver engagement activities for stakeholders, such as curating the content, supporting events, and collating feedback.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
S13 Proofread and edit communications materials such as news releases, graphics and video, and social media content.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
S14 Support team and colleague development through buddying or coaching.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
S15 Contribute to activities which focus on improving sustainability within the organisation.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
S16 Apply relevant legislation, regulations, codes of practice, and ethical guidance where appropriate to their work.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

BEHAVIOUR	ASSESSMENT METHODS
B1 Acts professionally and with integrity to build trust.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
B2 Works collaboratively and builds strong relationships with others across the organisation and external stakeholders.	Written project report with presentation and questioning.
B3 Has accountability and ownership of their tasks and workload.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
B4 Seeks learning opportunities and continuous professional development.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.
B5 Takes responsibility, shows initiative, and is organised.	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

Mapping of KSBs to grade themes

Written project report with presentation and questioning.

KSBS GROUPED BY THEME	KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	BEHAVIOUR
Communication and campaigns K4 K5 K7 K8 K9 S1 S3 S4 S5 S9 B2	The structure of communication plans and how these feed into the overall communications strategy. (K4) The creation and management of materials which support communication programmes, campaigns, or new business proposals. (K5) Technology and software used in the delivery of programmes and campaigns. (K7) Production lead-times and deadlines for digital build, content creation, print, and media. (K8) Communication techniques and approaches to interact with stakeholders to meet their requirements. (K9)	Use IT systems and software to support campaigns. (S1) Support campaigns by undertaking tasks such as desk research, event co-ordination, and database management to ensure compliance with agreed service or performance levels. (S3) Produce written content such as news releases, articles, social media content, bulletins, and blogs, that is accessible to meet the needs of different audiences and channels. (S4) Able to adapt communication styles as appropriate to the audience. (S5) Analyse and interpret complex subjects through different communication channels and identify areas for improvement. (S9)	Works collaboratively and builds strong relationships with others across the organisation and external stakeholders. (B2)
Media and public relations K13 K18 S2	The importance of evaluation in demonstrating the value and impact of public relations. (K13) Principles of conducting public relations and communications which are ethical and inclusive. (K18)	Build stakeholder relationships including developing contacts within the media and presenting to them in both formal and informal settings. (S2)	None
Research and analysis K11 K15 S8	The principles of Qualitative and Quantitative research. (K11) How to analyse and interpret complex technical information. (K15)	Use qualitative and quantitative research to analyse and evaluate public relations and communications activities and present findings to project stakeholders. (S8)	None

Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

KSBS GROUPED BY THEME	KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	BEHAVIOUR
Communication and campaigns K19 K20 S6 S7 S10 S12 S13	The principles of non-written content. (K19) Approaches to distributing content using social media channels. (K20)	Support the production of non-written content such as film production management, producing short user generated style content, live video streaming, social image creation, and infographic production. (S6) Distribute content using social media channels. (S7) Input to and review communications programmes and plans with a focus on environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles. (S10) Plan and deliver engagement activities for stakeholders, such as curating the content, supporting events, and collating feedback. (S12) Proofread and edit communications materials such as news releases, graphics and video, and social media content. (S13)	None
Organisation, structure, and strategy K2 K3 K10 K12 S11 S15	How their role supports the wider organisation structure and works alongside other multi-disciplinary teams such as internal communications and marketing. (K2) The organisation structure and objectives and how these affect the work with stakeholders or clients. (K3) The importance of horizon scanning for future changes and developments in relation to the industry or sector. (K10) Risk assessment methodologies and approaches to mitigate or manage reputational impact and implementation of crisis plans. (K12)	Undertake risk assessment and provide information to support stakeholder planning and strategy. (S11) Contribute to activities which focus on improving sustainability within the organisation. (S15)	None
Media and public relations K1 B1	Current affairs, the media, the public relations industry, and how they impact their role. (K1)	None	Acts professionally and with integrity to build trust. (B1)
Team, performance, and objectives K6 K16 K17 K21 S14 B3 B4 B5	The operational processes required to prioritise team and individual workloads to meet deadlines and objectives. (K6) The support requirements or development needs of their team. (K16) The tools used to measure the impact of organisational objectives, and the wider	Support team and colleague development through buddying or coaching. (S14)	Has accountability and ownership of their tasks and workload. (B3) Seeks learning opportunities and continuous professional development. (B4) Takes responsibility, shows initiative, and is organised. (B5)

	environment and sustainability on public relations and communications activities. (K17) Where to source information on career professional development. (K21)		
Regulations and legislation K14 S16	Regulatory and legislative requirements relevant to their sector such as data protection and codes of practice. (K14)	Apply relevant legislation, regulations, codes of practice, and ethical guidance where appropriate to their work. (S16)	None

Version log

Version	Change detail	Earliest start date	Latest start date	Latest end date
1.1	Occupational standard, end-point assessment plan and funding band revised	01/02/2024	Not set	Not set
1.0	Approved for delivery	27/03/2018	31/01/2024	Not set