

EPA Apprenticeship Guidance

End-point Assessment Apprenticeship Guidance for:

Level 4 Rail Engineering Advanced Technician

Standard Reference: ST0316

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About EAL

Since 1964, EAL (Excellence, Achievement and Learning) has been awarding superior vocational qualifications and apprenticeship components for engineering, building services and related sectors.

EAL has been at the heart of new apprenticeship standards development, supporting employer trailblazer development groups for key industry occupations since 2013, when the reforms began. With our long-standing tradition of being closer to industry and designing qualifications that reflect this close partnership, EAL is perfectly positioned to guide the employer development groups' work. Our expertise, knowledge and support ensure the new standards meet the needs of all employers, from SMEs to multinationals, and provide learners with the best possible start to their careers.

EAL is an end-point assessment organisation (EPAO) and is listed on the Register of End-Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO).

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

EAL expects all employers to enable you to have equal access to training and assessment for end-point assessment (EPA) in line with the Equality Act 2010 and protected characteristics. Further details can be found in the EAL Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy: <http://www.eal.org.uk/centre-support/centre-support/policies-and-important-documents>

Customer Service and Feedback

Customer service is a fundamental part of EAL's commitment to you. EAL aims to ensure that all customers receive a high-quality efficient service. We are always interested in feedback and if you have any comments or feedback on our qualifications, products or services, please contact the Customer Services Team:

EAL Customer Services

Tel: +44 (0)1923 652 400

Email: customercare@eal.org.uk

Document Purpose

To ensure a consistent approach when carrying out rail activities, portfolio of evidence, professional discussion (Viva) and Independent Viva Verification & Professional assessment against Eng Tech requirements across all independent assessment panel members, assessment sites, apprentices and assessment decisions.

This document, and its contents, will be used to **guide** you on the outcome of the assessment decisions.

It supports the Apprentice Recording Document, which has been developed to record the outcome of your portfolio of evidence of occupational competence, occupational competence validation interview (Viva) and the Independent Viva Verification & Professional assessment against Eng Tech requirements. The Apprentice Recording Document is an auditable record of your End Point Assessment (EPA) activity.

This document should be used in conjunction with EAL's End-point Assessment Policies and Procedures Handbook.

Overview

The EPA is designed for you to demonstrate that you are fully conversant in the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) expected of you when working at this level. It is designed to provide assessors with a holistic view of your working practices, to allow them to assess what extent how you meet, or exceed, the Level 4 Rail Engineering Advanced Technician Apprenticeship Standard. Your end point assessment (EPA) must be completed within 16 weeks after you have met the EPA gateway requirements.

The Apprenticeship Standard and End-point Assessment Plan defines when, what, who and how the EPA is assessed. All those participating and delivering this EPA, which includes you, assessors and employers, **must** refer to the following principle documents for the full details of the EPA requirements:

Level 4 Rail Engineering Advanced Technician

- Apprenticeship Standard – STO316, (approved for delivery 19th April 2016)
- End-point Assessment Plan

Both of which are currently available here: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/rail-engineering-advanced-technician/>

Whilst elements of the Apprenticeship Standard and End-point Assessment Plan have been reproduced within this document under the following licence: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>, it is the responsibility of the assessors to ensure that you are being assessed against the correct version of the Apprenticeship Standard and End-point Assessment Plan.

End-point Assessment Gateway

Your employer must satisfy themselves that you are ready for your end-point assessment, which is evidenced by you consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard.

In addition to the employer's confirmation that you are working at or above the level in the occupational standard, the following gateway requirements must be met prior to you starting the EPA:

- You must successfully complete the mandatory knowledge and competence qualifications including demonstration of the behaviours expected
- You must have achieved Level 2 English and Maths prior to taking your end point assessment
- You must have a portfolio of evidence of occupational competence prepared by you during your training Period, checked by Independent Assessor and signed off
- You must Submit **three** different examples of competent performance evidence

Independent assessment panel members must ensure that the **Gateway Checklist** document (**Appendix 1**) has been completed to confirm the above requirements have been met.

Assessment Methods

The end-point assessment is made up of four elements, which are (Pass/Fail):

1. Apprentices portfolio of evidence of occupational competence
2. Independent occupational competence validation interview (Viva)
3. Professional competence assessment undertaken by the Professional Engineering Institute (PEI)
4. Final employer endorsement of occupational and professional competence

Assessment Method 1: Portfolio of Evidence

What is a portfolio of evidence?

The portfolio of evidence is where you can showcase your knowledge, skills and behaviours by demonstrating the specific work related tasks to your employer on how you understand the company in terms of their products, processes, procedures, tools, equipment, materials, documentation and information systems. The portfolio will provide evidence on what you have learnt and how this knowledge and skill has been applied to real work tasks whilst developing an understanding by resolving engineering related problems.

In your portfolio of evidence, you must include a minimum of **three** different examples of component performance evidence that will include the following:

Products of your work, such as items that have been produced or worked on, drawings, plans, production and /or quality records, reports, documents produced as part of a work activity, records or photographs of the completed activity, together with evidence of the way you have carried out the activities to meet the requirements of the standard such as assessor observations, supervisor/mentor references/witness testimonies or authenticated apprentice reports of the activities undertaken.

How will the portfolio of evidence be assessed?

Your portfolio of evidence will go through an internal review process which will be undertaken by the employer assessors/mentor certifying that the required standard for professional competence has been achieved.

During the review and assessment of your portfolio of evidence, on some occasions this may contain in-sufficient evidence that will not meet the requirements of the standard. The decision will be made that the evidence will not be deemed ready for the Viva submission. You will be advised on the shortfalls of evidence; additional advice will be provided on how you can overcome the areas of concern. Once the evidence has been resubmitted and there is sufficient evidence then your portfolio will be submitted to the independent assessor undertaking the Viva.

The full details of the portfolio of evidence requirements can be found in the end-point assessment plan for this standard here: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/rail-engineering-advanced-technician/>

Portfolio of Evidence Requirements:

On commencement of your apprenticeship, you must begin to retain a portfolio of evidence, which must be finalised before passing through the gateway. A completed portfolio of evidence is a compulsory EPA gateway requirement that supports the EPA Professional Discussion component.

Employers/training providers are free to devise their own version of the portfolio of evidence, but the portfolio of evidence must contain the following information:

- The name of the apprentice
- Details of the apprentice's workplace.
- Evidence to support the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the apprenticeship standard that are mapped to the Professional Discussion assessment method.
- Each of these **knowledge, skills and behaviour** (KSB) statements must be evidenced **three times** (evidence can be provided through a range of sources, for example work reviews, department feedback) and mapped to the relevant KSBs. Each piece of evidence will cover multiple KSBs.
- Confirmation from the employer that the tasks evidenced in the portfolio were completed to the required standard of the organisation.
- Document the off-the-job training that has taken place during the on-programme phase, with at least **20%** of their employed time **off-the-job**.
- Copy of English and mathematics certificates.

Your **employer** must sign-off the **portfolio** of evidence, confirming your demonstration of competence against the KSBs assigned to this assessment component and authenticating its contents.

You must submit your portfolio of evidence to EAL as your EPAO when applying for the EPA. An Independent Assessor will check qualification outcomes and review the portfolio to glean personalised information that will assist the Professional Discussion component of the EPA.

The full details of the portfolio of evidence requirements can be found in the end-point assessment plan for this standard here:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/rail-engineering-advanced-technician/>

Assessment Method 2: Occupational Competence Validation Interview (Viva)

The Occupational Competence Validation (Viva) Interview is an interactive interview focussed on all the components of the apprenticeship Standard, which will enable the employer to validate your occupational competence. It is a structured and formal discussion between you and your Employers appointed independent Assessor. The portfolio will be used as a source of evidence by which you can exemplify your responses to questions asked by the assessor.

The purpose of the professional discussion is to determine the extent to how much you understand the requirements of your role as defined by the standard and to explore them through the discussion.

Behaviours and knowledge shall be assessed using this professional discussion (supported by a mandatory portfolio of evidence completed on programme) and the outcome shall be graded as Pass or Fail these are mapped in the end-point assessment plan for the standard.

The portfolio itself will not be assessed, but it will be used by the assessor to prepare the questions for the professional discussion and by you to exemplify your response to the prepared questions.

1-2-1 Discussion with End-point Assessor

The professional discussion will assess the knowledge, skills and behaviours as specified in the end-point assessment plan for the standard.

- The professional discussion shall be supported by a portfolio of evidence.
- The portfolio of evidence shall be made available to the assessment organisation no less than **10 days** prior to the professional discussion to allow for preparation
- The Viva/professional discussion timeframe shall last for 60 minutes (with +/- 10 minutes permitted)
- The professional discussion shall be carried out by an independent end-point assessor appointed by EAL as the EPAO.
- The discussion shall take place in an environment which is free from interruptions.
- Prior to the assessment you shall be given suitable notice, not less than **5 working days**, to provide preparation time (for example to make travel arrangements if necessary)
- Independent assessors may ask you questions covering core knowledge, core skills, specific knowledge, skills and behaviours as specified the end-point assessment plan for the standard. Supplementary questions are allowed to seek clarification but will need to be recorded on the provided documentation

Viva/Professional Discussion Criteria:

The Viva assessment is achieved whereby you will answer questions from the key areas of the standards, questions will only be directed during your professional discussion which form part of the Level 4 Rail Engineering Advanced Standard requirements. The level of questioning will cover your workplace competences whereby you should be able to discuss using examples from your portfolio. There will be six key discussion areas, each able to be developed or checked to confirm level of understanding or performance. The six discussion areas must result in satisfactory responses in order to achieve a pass for the Viva.

During the professional discussion the independent assessor must look to establish the level of achievement in the following areas:

- Methods and techniques used to safely maintain assets relevant to their chosen pathway
- Company quality processes, procedures and documentation

- Understanding the practical theoretical requirements of rail engineering components/systems
- Being proactive in finding solutions to problems and identifying areas for improving the business
- Demonstrate effective interpersonal skills (behaviours)
- Complying with statutory, organisational and health and safety regulations while carrying out manufacturing techniques

The End-point Assessor Must:

- Plan the professional discussion (supported by the portfolio of evidence) prior to it taking place and ensure that it is relevant to the standard.
- Ensure that the apprentice understands the process, the possible outcomes and how it is graded.
- Ensure they take steps to put the apprentice at ease.
- Ensure that he/she has the grading criteria and relevant documentation to hand before commencing the professional discussion (supported by portfolio of evidence).
- Complete the relevant documentation prepared by EAL as the EPAO, taking notes of what is said.
- Ensure that the outcome of assessment is notified to EAL as the EPAO within the timescale set by them.
- Ensure any special needs highlighted by the employer and training provider are taken into consideration in line with EAL's Reasonable Adjustments policy.
- Declare any information to the AOO in relation to any conflict of interests between themselves and the apprentice (this may extend to the organisation you work for or have worked for).
- Make robust assessment decisions based on your review of the evidence taking into account all of the relevant evidence submitted or presented by the apprentices following the marking criteria
- Record assessment decisions, complete reports and maintain assessment records accurately and in accordance with Apprentice Assessment Organisation requirements
- Participate in standardisation activities to ensure the consistency of assessment decisions and processes
- Bring to the Apprentice Assessment Organisation's immediate attention suspected cases of malpractice or maladministration and assist the Apprentice Assessment Organisation, if required in malpractice investigations
- Assist the Apprentice Assessment Organisation, if required with appeals from apprentices about assessment decisions
- Provide access to information and records when requesting by internal quality assurance staff who are acting on behalf of the Apprentice Assessment Organisation
- Attend initial and ongoing training events (at least annually) and keep own End Point Assessment knowledge and skills up to date through continued professional development

The full details of the professional discussion requirements can be found in the end-point assessment plan for this standard here:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/rail-engineering-advanced-technician/>

Assessment Method 3: Independent Viva Verification & Professional Assessment against EngTech requirements

Once the Viva has been successfully completed i.e. you have achieved the required Pass grade the following will undergo an independent review to assess the apprentice's readiness for professional recognition at EngTech level.

- Apprentices portfolio and qualification certificates
- The completed Engineering Technicians Performance Indicators form
- Occupational Competence Validation Interview (Viva) Professional Discussion Record

How will Independent Viva Verification & Professional Assessment against EngTech requirements be assessed?

A desk review of your documents listed above will be undertaken against EngTech requirements set out by UKSPEC. Rail Engineering Signalling and Rail Engineering Telecoms, you will also be assessed against the appropriate Signalling and Telecoms licences.

The review will be undertaken by the employer designated Professional Engineering Institution (PEI) selected by from the SFA Assessment Register by either:

- A PEI Assessor who is a PEI trained assessor and professionally registered engineer or
- In the case of organisations with PEI approved apprenticeship schemes by the employer Independent assessor (on Behalf of the PEI)

On completion of the independent Viva Verification & Professional Assessment the PEI will notify the employer and/or their nominated training provider by letter if you have been successful or not.

The full details of the professional discussion requirements can be found in the end-point assessment plan for this standard here:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/rail-engineering-advanced-technician/>

What is End Point Final sign Off – Employer Endorsement?

This will follow the independent Viva Verification & Professional Assessment; if successful your employer will undertake the Final Sign Off/ Employer Endorsement stage of your apprenticeship by signing the Occupational Competence Validation Interview (Viva) document along with you and the employer.

The Assessing Organisation (EPAO) EAL will then make an application to the designated body for your Apprenticeship Completion Certificate

The full details of the professional discussion requirements can be found in the end-point assessment plan for this standard here:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/rail-engineering-advanced-technician/>

Behaviours Assessment

You are expected to demonstrate the behaviours, as detailed within the assessment plan for the standard, throughout the end-point assessment. Furthermore, your portfolio will evidence the required behaviours required for your apprenticeship. The behaviour statements **must** be evidenced **three** times. The expectation is that the independent assessor will utilise the professional discussion to assess the behaviours detailed within of the assessment plan here:

The full details of the behaviour's requirements can be found in the end-point assessment plan for this standard here:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/rail-engineering-advanced-technician/>

Grading

Independent assessors must individually grade each assessment method according to the requirements set out in the end-point assessment plan for this standard. Restrictions on grading apply where apprentices re-sit/re-take an assessment method – see re-sit/re-take section below.

To achieve an EPA **pass**, you must achieve a **pass** in all the three assessment methods.

For the occupational Competence Validation Interview (Viva) this will be a binary pass/fail grade

For the Professional Competence this will be a binary pass/fail grade i.e. a pass will mean you have met the requirements for EngTech. Therefore, should they wish to apply for professional registration you will be deemed as ready to apply for EngTech?

Overall Apprenticeship will be a binary pass/fail grade

A **fail** in any assessment method will result in an EPA **fail**.

Independent assessors' decisions must be subject to **moderation** by EAL as the EPAO and PEI Independent Assessor. Decisions **must not** be confirmed until after moderation.

End Point Assessment Stage	Grade	Action as a result of grade	Grade	Action as a result of grade
1.End Point Assessment Portfolio		Is the portfolio sufficient to support a Viva, if so, the apprentice progresses to Viva		If the insufficient, the Apprentice to improve the portfolio to expected standard and resubmit to Gateway
2.Viva assessing Occupational Competence	Pass	Apprentices qualification certificates, EPA portfolio and record of Viva passed to Independent Assessor	Fail	Apprentice re-sits the Viva
3.Independent Assessment of Evidence against UKSPEC Eng Tech requirements	Pass	Assessing Organisation notifies employer that the evidence demonstrates that the Apprentice has met the requirements of Professional Competence. Employer Provides final sign off of occupational competence	Fail	Independent Assessor provides feedback to employer as to why the apprentice has failed. Apprentice addresses feedback through either resitting their viva and if required upgrading their portfolio. Employer reviews processes to understand why the apprentice was allowed through to the independent assessment stage
4.Overall Apprenticeship Grade	Pass	Independent assessor applies for Apprenticeship certificate	Fail	The Apprentice is required to pass all EPA stages of the end point assessment in order to achieve an overall pass grade

Note – it is important to note the standard has mandatory qualifications as part of the “On programme assessment”. The knowledge qualifications will be assessed on a multiple-choice grade basis (e.g. pass, merit and distinction grading). The occupational competence will be a binary pass or fail i.e. “competent” “not yet competent”

Re-sits and Re-takes

If you fail one or more assessment method, you will be offered the opportunity to take a re-sit or a re-take. A re-sit does not require further learning, whereas a re-take does.

You should have a supportive action plan to prepare for the re-sit or a re-take. Your employer will need to agree that a re-sit or re-take is an appropriate course of action.

If you fail any of the assessment methods, and therefore the EPA, in the first instance, you will be required to re-sit/re-take those failed assessment methods.

Any assessment method re-sits or re-take must be taken within 16 weeks of the fail notification, otherwise the entire EPA must be taken again, unless, in the opinion of EAL as the EPAO, exceptional circumstances apply outside the control of you or your employer.

Where any assessment method has to be re-sat or re-taken, you will be awarded a **maximum** EPA grade of **pass**, unless EAL as the EPAO determines there are exceptional circumstances requiring a re-sit or re-take.

If the re-take/re-sit relates to the professional discussion, you must be questioned on the same subject area.

Roles and Responsibilities

There are four main roles involved in the end-point assessment process: **You**, **Employer - Technical Expert**, EAL as the **EPAO - Independent Assessor** and **PEI Assessor**. A table listing their main responsibilities can be found in the end-point assessment plan for this standard here:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/rail-engineering-advanced-technician/>

Mapping of Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours

A table, which provides full mapping of the KSBs, can be found in the end-point assessment plan for this standard here:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/rail-engineering-advanced-technician/>

Appendix 1: Gateway Checklist

The EPA must only start once the employer is satisfied that you are consistently working at, or above, the level set out in the occupational standard; that means you have achieved occupational competence. In making this decision, the employer may take advice from your training provider(s) but the decision must ultimately be made solely by the employer.

In addition to the employer's confirmation that you are working at or above the level in the occupational standard, the following gateway requirements must be met prior to you starting the EPA:

The apprentice has:	Evidence reference	Employer/provider confirmation (v)	EPAO confirmation (v)
Completed the mandatory knowledge and competence qualifications including demonstration of the behaviours expected.			
Achieved Level 2 English and Maths prior to taking their end point assessment.			
Portfolio of evidence of occupational competence prepared by Apprentice during training period, checked by Independent Assessor, signed off.			
Submitted three different examples of competent performance evidence			

* For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the apprenticeships English and mathematics minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. British Sign Language qualifications are an alternative to English qualifications for whom this is their primary language.