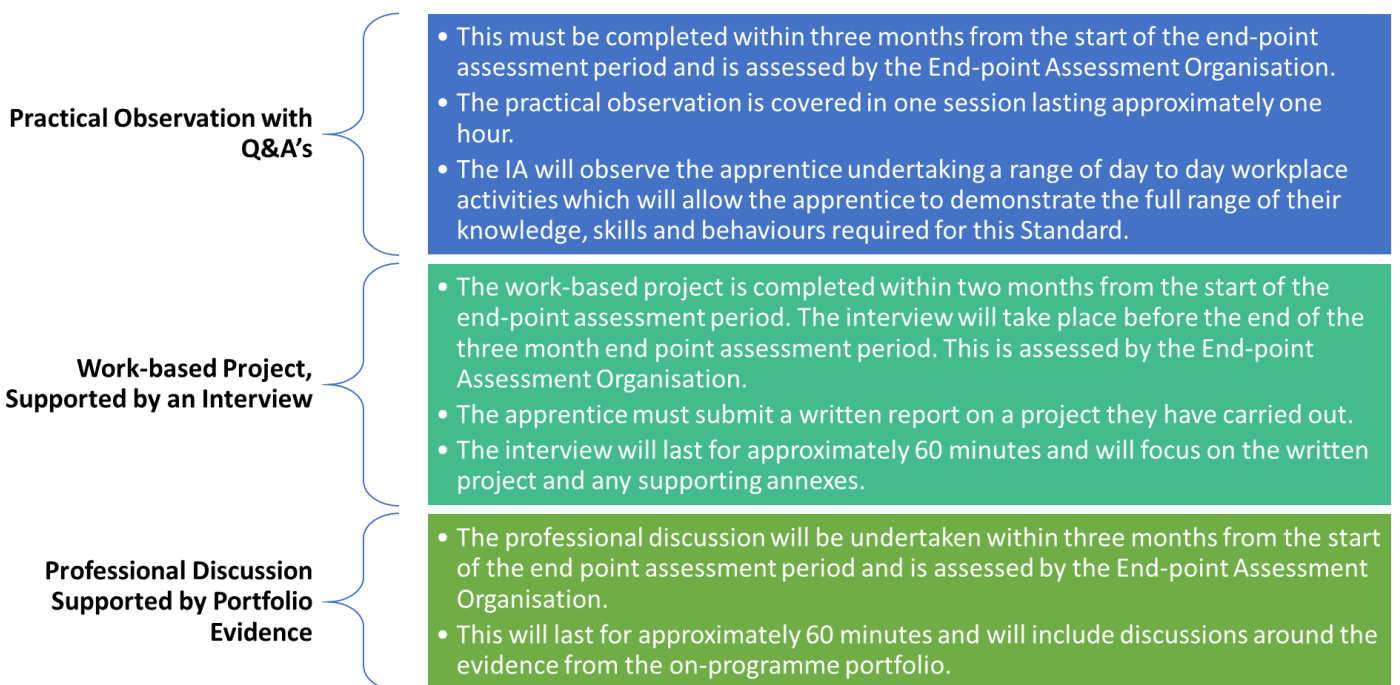


Customer Service Specialist Level 3 - End-point Assessment

Achievement of the apprenticeship will depend on apprentices successfully completing a number of assessment activities. The methods used will ensure that the apprentice is assessed across the whole of the published Customer Service Specialist Standard.

All candidates must participate in all elements of the End Point Assessment. **The Independent End Point Assessment Organisation** are responsible for quality assuring assessment outcomes at the End Point Assessment which consists of three elements.

The end-point assessment is synoptic and takes place at the end of the apprentice’s learning and development. The requirement is that the end-point assessment is completed within 3 months from the start of the end-point assessment period.



Assessment Gateway

The EPA should only commence once the employer is confident that the apprentice has developed all of the knowledge, skills and behaviours defined in the apprenticeship standard and they hold a portfolio to evidence this. Employers, in conjunction with the training provider, will decide whether the full portfolio meets these requirements.

If unsuccessful at the Assessment Gateway, feedback will be given by the employer and nominated training provider to the apprentice to identify areas for development. This development must be demonstrated by the apprentice before progressing to the end-point assessment.

Following further consultation with the training provider, the employer should sign-off that the apprentice has achieved the requirements of the Assessment Gateway and is ready to proceed to the end-point assessment process.

End Point Assessment

The overall EPA must be covered over a maximum period of 3 months after the apprentice has met the EPA Gateway requirements.

EPAOs must ensure that the interview and discussion are conducted in a suitable controlled environment. It is anticipated that EPAOs will use the apprentice's employer's premises wherever possible to minimise costs. They may be conducted face-to-face or via an online platform. E.g. video-conferencing.

Whether face-to-face or remote, the assessment must be carried out in a quiet room, free from disruption. EPAOs must ensure appropriate methods to prevent misrepresentation are in place should the online option be used.

End Point Assessment – Final Judgement

The Independent Assessor will make the final judgement as to whether the apprentice has fully met the requirements of the Standard.

The Independent Assessor will be from an organisation that is on the Register of Apprentice Assessment Organisations. It is expected that there will be a number of different organisations on the Register.

End Point Assessment – Grading

Each of the three assessment methods are graded as Fail, Pass or Distinction.

Further Information

For more information regarding this end-point assessment, please visit:

https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/media/1777/st0071_customer-service-specialist_I3_ap-for-publication_15052018.pdf



The End Point Assessment will Comprise:

Practical Observation (with Q&A's)

The practical observation is covered in one session, lasting 1 hour +/- 10% tolerance either way.

The apprentice must be observed, by an independent assessor, undertaking a range of day to day workplace activities. The observation should involve activities which allow the apprentice to demonstrate the full range of their knowledge, skills and behaviours required.

The observation must include questioning to clarify knowledge and understanding is being applied. Standardised questions must be devised by the EPAOs to explore the apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviour related to the Standard. Questions must be open questions and independent assessors may ask supplementary questions as required to seek further clarification. Supplementary questions will be devised by the independent assessor as required.

During the practical observation the apprentice should have the opportunity, if required, to move from one area/function of the business to another in order to best demonstrate how they have applied their knowledge, skills and behaviours in a realistic work environment to achieve genuine and demanding work objectives.

The independent assessor must plan the practical observation in conjunction with the apprentice and their employer, taking account of workplace considerations. This would typically include timing, the right environment and enough space for the apprentice to be able to do their job.

The practical observation must take place in the apprentice's workplace. The amount of questioning time carried out during the observation should not exceed 15% of the total time allowed for the practical observation.

The practical observation must:

- Reflect typical working conditions.
- Allow the apprentice to demonstrate all aspects of the standard being assessed.
- Take a synoptic approach to assessment the overall competence.
- Be carried out on a one-to-one basis.

The apprentice must be given two weeks' notice of the practical observation. The observation can be before or after the work-based project but it is recommended not before the professional discussion.

The independent assessor must use the assessment tools and procedures that are set by the EPAO to record the practical observation.

Independent assessors must grade the practical observation as fail, pass or distinction.

The End Point Assessment will Comprise:

Work-based Project (supported by an interview)

Apprentices must submit a written report, on a project they have carried out to their EPAO two weeks prior to an interview date. This date will be agreed when the apprentice passes through the Gateway process.

The written report must be 2500 words (+/- 10%), excluding annexes. All work on the project will be undertaken following the Gateway process over a two-month period.

The subject of the project report should be agreed with the EPAO with guidance from the employer in order to allow them to comment on appropriateness for their business but the EPAO must make a decision to ensure consistency. The subject should cover a specific high-level challenge (such as a complaint or difficult situation) that the apprentice has dealt with explaining what it was, what actions (planning and execution) they took, what solutions were offered, details of any recommendations made to change a policy or process and any feedback from the customer. Details should also include the apprentice's responsibilities and results.

The report should contain annexes that are attributable to the apprentice and the actions they took. Example evidence could be emails, letters, meeting notes, call logs, workflow documents or, feedback.

Although there is flexibility in the order in which each assessment method is carried out, it is recommended that the written work-based project takes place before the professional discussion.

The work-based project is designed to ensure the apprentice's learning meets the needs of the business and is relevant to their role. The employer will ensure the apprentice has sufficient time and the necessary resources to plan and undertake the research and produce the written report.

Interview to Support the Work Based Project

The work-based project will be supported by an interview which will:

- Take place with an independent assessor.
- Last for 60 minutes (+/- 10%)
- Focus on the written project and any supporting annexes.
- Take place either face-to-face or via online video conferencing, if appropriate. EPAOs must ensure that the interview and questioning elements are conducted in a suitable controlled environment. i.e. a quiet room, free from distraction and influence, with the necessary equipment for each assessment method. It is anticipated that EPAOs will use the apprentice's employer's premises, wherever possible, to minimise costs.
- Consist of competency-based questions. EPAOs must develop 'test banks' of sufficient size to prevent predictability and review them regularly (and at least once a year) to ensure they, and the questions they contain, are fit for purpose.
- The apprentice will be asked 10 questions.
- Independent assessors must grade the work-based project and interview holistically as fail, pass or distinction as the apprentice's responses in the interview will be assessed in addition to the content of work-based project.
- The independent assessor must use the assessor tools and procedures that are set by the EPAO to record the interview.

In line with best practice, but not mandatory, a representative from the organisation could also be present but only to observe and they should not be involved in conducting the interview or grading decision. Any recommendations may not have been considered by the organisation's leaders and decision makers and there is potential opportunity for organisations to implement real change based on the apprentice's research, findings and recommendations.

The End Point Assessment will Comprise:

Professional Discussion (supported by portfolio evidence)

- The professional discussion will last for 60 minutes (+/- 10%).
- During the professional discussion, evidence from the on-programme portfolio of evidence will be used as a base to support the professional discussion. The apprentice will extract, from their portfolio, evidence which is suitable for supporting them in their professional discussion. This evidence will consist of a minimum of 10 pieces of evidence to a maximum of 15 pieces and related to the standards which apply to the professional discussion. This could include witness statements, customer feedback such as emails or letters, manager feedback from one-to-one or alike. The portfolio of evidence is not directly assessed.
- Apprentices must submit the requested portfolio of evidence (10-15 pieces) to their EPAO 2 weeks prior to the professional discussion date. This date will be agreed when the apprentice passes through Gateway process. This evidence will be considered by the independent assessor and use for the planning to the discussion.
- The professional discussion can be either face-to-face or via online video- conference, if appropriate. EPAOs must ensure that it is conducted in a suitable controlled environment. I.e. a quiet room, free from distraction and influence. It is anticipated that EPAOs will use the apprentice's employer's premises, wherever possible, to minimise costs.
- The independent assessor must use the assessment tools and procedures that are set by the EPAO to record the professional discussion. For example, questions will be taken from a template set by the EPAO.
- Independent assessors must grade the professional discussion as fail, pass or distinction.

Further Information

For more information regarding this end-point assessment, please visit:

https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/media/1777/st0071_customer-service-specialist_l3_ap-for-publication_15052018.pdf

