Provider Readiness Report

PRACTICAL INSIGHTS AND GUIDANCE

FOR DELIVERING APPRENTICESHIP STANDARDS

Future Apprenticeships

Department for Education

EDUCATION & TRAINING FOUNDATION

Business Administrator

Leading Partner:

aelp association of employment and learning providers

Strategic Partners:

SDN The Strategic Development Network

A°C Association of Colleges — Promoting, Representing, Supporting,

COLLABGROUP — Together Today for the Skills of Tomorrow

Federation for Industry Sector Skills & Standards

L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

HOLEX

ASPIRE LEARNING + DEVELOPMENT

A CAMBRIDGE ASSESSMENT

City & Guilds

FAB Federation of Awarding Bodies

Pearson

UCL Institute of Education

UVAC UNIVERSITY VOCATIONAL AWARDS COUNCIL

Provider Readiness Report – Business Administrator (Level 3)

Introduction:

Provider Readiness Reports are delivery guidance documents for an apprenticeship standard. They are created by training providers (including colleges, independent training providers, higher education institutions and others). The reports provide practical insights and guidance to help with planning for delivery and in negotiations with employers. They will help providers make decisions about the commitment of time and other resources required to train apprentices to meet the requirements of the new standards.

Standard	[Link to standard](#)
Assessment Plan (end point)	**Link to assessment plan**
Organisations involved with the development of the standard for Business Administrator	Grant Thornton UK LLP; BT Npower; Federation of Small Businesses; Peter Jones Foundation; MBDA Missiles; Surrey County Council; Peugeot; Sodexo; oneSource; London Borough of Islington; London Borough of Enfield; Total Security Services; Skills CFA; PRCA; ESOS Ltd; Ceridian UK & Ireland; NorthgateArinso; JJBA Ltd; Bradley & Co Ltd; Prohire Software Systems Ltd; Business Resource & Innovation Network International Ltd; Moorhouse Accounting & Consultancy Services Ltd; Vicki King Bookkeeping Services; Fresh Financials; Iwona Accountancy Services Ltd; Boots UK; Osborne Property Services; Carillion PLC; Bpi Recycled Products; Great Guns Marketing; Berkley Group PLC; British Council; Capita Group; Accelerator Solutions Ltd; Northern PowerGrid; Manheim; Royal Bank of Scotland; Institute of Customer Service; Serco; Homebase; Scottish Water.
SASE Overlap	Yes
Mandatory Qualification(s) on standard	There are no mandatory qualifications for this standard
Additional optional qualifications recommended by the trailblazer group.	The Trailblazer group has not specifically recommended any qualifications.
Maximum Core Government Contribution (CGC) ,	£TBC maximum CGC, subject to employer £TBC contribution. The price of on-programme training and end-point assessment is subject to employer/provider negotiation and

subject to employer contribution **(15/16 & 16/17)**	may be higher or lower than combined values above; where higher the maximum CGC remains the same and the employer would need to pay the difference in full. The employer may be eligible for incentive payments, which they can use as they wish. See current funding rules for further guidance.
Anticipated Volume	No Figures at this time
Level	3
English and Maths Requirements	For Level 3 apprenticeships, apprentices must achieve Level 2 English and maths prior to taking their End-Point Assessment (EPA). See current funding rules for further guidance.
End Point Assessment Methods	Proposed assessment methods:

Supporting information and Glossary of Terms

Assessment Role	Notes
Employer	Supports the apprentice in the workplace, may provide training, coaching or mentoring.
Training Provider	Employers wishing to access funding must appoint a SFA approved lead provider via the Register of Training Organisations (ROTO) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-of-training-organisations Employers may choose to engage with one or more providers to deliver the on programme training. Providers wishing to deliver on-programme delivery must registered and be approved on the, Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP). Also providers who wish to deliver to employers without a digital account, must register and be approved on the Invitation to Tender (ITT). Please follow the link for further information. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/register-of-apprenticeship-training-providers
End Point Assessment Organisation	Employers must select an end point assessment organisation from the SFA Register of Apprentice Assessment Organisations (RoAAO), approved to assess this particular standard: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-of-apprentice-assessment-organisations

Term	General Definition within Trailblazers
On-Programme	This is the period from start until the end-point assessment gateway is met. Apprentices require a minimum period of 12 months on-programme with a recommendation of 12-18 months for this particular standard, with 20% off-the-job training prior to taking the end-point assessment **to meet funding eligibility requirements**. It will include training to develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours detailed on the standard and completion of any mandated qualifications, including English and maths where required. Preparation for the end-point assessment should be completed in this phase. This is the area of significant interest for apprenticeship training providers.
Gateway	Any requirements that must be completed/achieved as a pre-requisite to undertaking the end-point assessment are termed the gateway. For example English and maths minimum requirements. The gateway components are therefore the key outputs of the on-programme training period.

Trainer	The term trainer is commonly used in relation to roles within the on-programme period. A trainer may be appointed by the employer or training providers to deliver some or all parts of the on-programme phase of training. This includes delivering any mandated qualifications, preparation for the end-point assessment and all gateway components. The trainer has no status within the end-point assessment, unless specifically referenced and approved within the assessment plan (for example being a signatory to a portfolio or a panel interview).
Independent Assessor	Individuals involved in administering and delivering the end-point assessment are commonly termed the assessor, end-point assessor or independent assessor and must be appointed by an approved end- point assessment organisation.

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery	Resources
On programme components: *to develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours detailed on the standard and to prepare apprentices for end-point assessment*	This apprenticeship is suitable for learners in a business administrator role. There are numerous specific job titles that may be suitable. It is important that both the employer and training provider are able to confirm at the outset that the job role will allow the apprentice to develop the required knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSB) defined in the standard. If they are unable to do so, it will put the apprentice's ability to successfully pass the end point assessment at risk. Individual employers will set the selection criteria for recruitment onto this apprenticeship. The minimum age for this apprenticeship is 16 years. There are no mandated qualifications for this standard. The trailblazer group have expressed the importance of this being the starting position for any discussions between providers and employers. An employer may choose an acceptable relevant qualification that meets the KSB, if it is in the interest of both the business and the apprentice to do so, but it should not be assumed that this is required. The KSB do not differ vastly from the mandatory and optional units in the previous business admin framework. Where qualifications are not used, it will be for the training provider to determine how best the KSB should be formatively assessed throughout the on-programme period in conjunction with the employer. There is a continued need for a robust initial assessment to be in place regardless of whether the apprentice is to follow a qualification-based or non-accredited on-programme route. On-programme delivery must include training to develop the KSB detailed in the standard, including English and maths where required. Preparation for the end-point assessment should be completed in this phase. Providers need to have the flexibility to deliver non-accredited training in these standards if they are to be in a position to respond to the differing needs of employers. Choosing to continue to	The Standard The Assessment Plan SFA funding guidance: Apprenticeship standards quality statement Embedded functional skills materials Register of Training Organisations (ROTO) https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sfa-register-of-training-organisations Future Apprenticeship Toolkit

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery	Resources
	deliver a qualification based option only will limit their potential market.	
	A good Individual Learning Plan (ILP) that progresses the learner towards end-point assessment is critical. Determining whether or not staff have the capacity to develop an ILP without using qualifications may result in the requirement of staff development for some providers. Providers are encouraged to consider this now in order to prepare for the change to the standard. The ILP needs to clearly identify who will deliver the training e.g. employer or provider, formative assessment approaches and preparation for end-point assessment.	
	In developing their on-programme offer, providers must consider the grading boundaries within the end- point assessment to ensure apprentices are challenged throughout their programme. Once assessment organisations are established, this needs to be discussed with them. Initial guidance will be found in the assessment plan when published.	
	The requirements for English and maths remains broadly consistent with current requirements. Apprentices must pass both Level 2 English and maths before progressing through the EPA gateway.	
	Although ICT is no longer a requirement it is now embedded within the skills needed. It is for individual providers to determine how best the ICT skills needed should be taught and formatively assessed on programme for this standard.	
	Safeguarding/Prevent etc. should remain a constant reference point for on-programme delivery to meet the requirements of OFSTED Common Inspection Framework.	
Delivery models/ **Infrastructure:** *the drive towards effective competence-based and situational*	The new standard requires a flexible approach from providers to meet the needs of employers and apprentices. Offering only a qualifications-based programme (as per the current framework) will not result in employers being appropriately advised on what is possible under the reforms. Demonstrating the flexibilities now available will ensure employers can incorporate their own in-house training, performance management and policies/procedures where they are sufficiently robust (as determined by the training provider in conjunction with the employer) to develop the apprentice. It	The Standard The Assessment Plan The employer brief (under development) to accompany the plan will provide description of high Level learning outcomes to support employers and providers to prepare

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery	Resources
training	also ensures providers can demonstrate the value they add in the programme of delivery. Providers can for example, play a key role in supporting the employer to determine the correct standard at the outset, deliver underpinning training, monitor the apprentice's progress and put interventions in place as needed. Employers may need to be supported when carrying out structured performance management processes of the apprentice, including appropriate documentation of 1-2-1's to identify and measure progress against the KSB's. This would (as is the norm now) include discussing the apprentice's current role and also their future career plans. - Providers are encouraged to use the standard that is published to consider potential; - Approach to delivering underpinning training and how best to capture as part of the ILP; - Tasks to assess the level/quality of work produced by learners, e.g. producing written communication; - Inclusion of relevant IT based activities which will enhance/improve their skills or suitable training courses such as Microsoft-based that can be completed; - Determine how in-house quality can be ensured where externally verified qualifications are not utilised; - How electronic portfolio software can be utilised to collate the evidence in preparation for the end point assessment (training providers remain able to determine which e-portfolio is suitable for their apprentice's needs); - Determine how practical skills can be measured; - If the employer elects to deliver with an internal trainer, consider what quality checks need to be in place and who will undertake these to ensure quality of delivery from the outset; - Determine approach to formative assessment, to ensure a successful EPA; - Determine which on-programme qualifications, such as the Business Administration diploma/certificate can potentially add value and how best to position this with employers for the benefit of both them and the	apprentices for assessment

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery	Resources
	apprentice; • Ensure that any delivery undertaken by the employer is reflective of the full breadth of the KSBs and not limited to own policies and procedures. Where they are limited, ensure the role of the provider can fill any resulting gaps. It is important that the provider works with the employer to ensure any in-house delivery meets appropriate levels as outlined in the standard. The PRG consider this standard to provide an excellent opportunity for employers to support the apprentice's experience through a variety of work experience across the whole business, and further enable the learner a successful EPA. This would work well with larger employers in particular. Where any employer elects to deliver all training in-house, there is an opportunity for providers to undertake formative assessment and reviews to ensure the apprentice progresses well. It will be the responsibility of individual providers to determine with their employer base the risks inherent in this approach in the context of success rates and Ofsted.	
Resources: *materials/* *resources/* *equipment*	The PRG members intend to deliver this apprenticeship using an electronic portfolio solution where learning, delivery resources and ongoing EPA evidence can be uploaded. It is noted that assessment organisations cannot dictate content of on-programme delivery and therefore are not in a position to dictate the e-portfolio (or other) solution by which information associated with delivery is captured. There is a wide variety of business administrator roles which are appropriate to the occupational description for this standard. This means resources used will need to be adapted to ensure they fit the needs of an employer and their apprentice(s). Core resources can for example be developed, with the expectation that delivery staff review and adapt these to suit the employer. It is likely that training providers will already have access to resources for the existing framework which will be appropriate to adapt and use. Any additional investment in time to design new resources will be determined by how much repurposing can be done of those	

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery	Resources
	already available.	
	The knowledge and theory including time management, decision making, project management and communications skills could be delivered classroom-based, a combination of classroom and workplace or entirely in the work place. There is the opportunity to utilise electronic learning via virtual classroom delivery. The PRG would urge providers to consider how such virtual environments can be used effectively to allow apprentices to engage with other apprentices as well as their trainer/ assessor. Using e-learning also helps develop apprentice's skills in the use of digital technologies, as is expected in apprenticeship standards.	
	The project management skill requirement has the potential to be a theme established at the outset of the apprenticeship, running throughout the programme of learning e.g. agreeing specific project-based activity with the employer. This would then allow for the skills to be developed on-programme and feed the outputs into the proposed EPA (to be confirmed).	
	Online learning materials for English and maths development are widely available. The combination of e-learning, classroom-based delivery or 1-2-1 delivery is to be determined with employers in accordance with the learner's needs taking into account access and suitability of hardware/software.	
	Where technology is utilised to support delivery, the cost of the required hardware and access to any licenced software services needs to be factored into training provider costs.	
	Whilst these are not available, it is important providers engage with assessment organisations as they are confirmed to ensure they have access to mock tests/ assessments to support on-programme preparation for EPA. Equally, providers will need to know how any proposed EPA that requires a presentation will be facilitated by the assessment organisation so an apprentice can be adequately prepared.	

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery	Resources
Staffing: *Staff qualifications and* *skills needed*	**Delivery Staff** It is recommended that trainers for the apprenticeship should hold Business Administration qualifications (or equivalent) such as the existing Level 3 or 4 Business Admin Diploma, Advanced or Higher Apprenticeship. They should also be able to demonstrate a solid background within a business administration role. The qualifications should be at least to the level of the apprenticeship they are teaching and as a measure of good practice they should be higher. If trainers do not hold current qualifications to support training in the workplace, attainment would be recommended as good practice, regardless of whether qualifications are used on-programme. It is for each individual training provider to determine the qualifications required by their workforce for the delivery of high quality apprenticeships. Where qualifications are being used as part of the on-programme delivery, this would need to align with the requirements of the awarding body centre approval. The KSBs in the standard are broadly consistent with those in the current framework therefore provider delivery staff are unlikely to need new skills development in the subject matter. CPD will be required for trainers to become familiar with the new standard and EPA to ensure they recognise any changes in delivery approach. For example, trainers will need to understand the EPA criteria to be able to develop a curriculum offer. The PRG recommends that providers should already be considering how best to engage staff in the reforms changes if they are not doing so already. Assessment organisations may find it beneficial to market packages to support providers to structure teaching and learning towards the EPA. Trainers will need to be able to manage all aspects of the learner journey and be able to adapt delivery to the needs of all individuals. Excellent communication (both verbal and written) and organisation skills remain essential. Due to the different software systems that an administrator uses within the	

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery	Resources
	workplace, trainers should be conversant with multiple IT packages including word processing, spreadsheets, databases and financial packages. Where required trainers should be trained in the use of electronic portfolios to ensure apprentices are able to use the systems effectively. The requirement for internal quality assurance will remain consistent with current practices to ensure quality is managed throughout the on-programme delivery. Providers should continue to consider staff skills in internal quality assurance remain an important requirement for their organisation. Where qualifications are not utilised, the requirement for a formal IQA qualification may not be required however the risk of moving away from this is one providers should consider carefully. IQA staff will still need to monitor learner progress, agree and monitor delivery models and ensure trainers/ assessors provide a good quality of service. Providers may wish to consider: • Do staff have the necessary skills to design a curriculum where qualifications are not utilised? • How will trainers track progress if other parties, for example, employers are involved in programme delivery? • What is the provider's role in quality assurance if there are no mandated qualifications? • Understand the difference between formative and end point assessment – who does what? What skills are required? E.g. the capacity to deliver effective feedback in order to help people progress and achieve grading boundaries. • How will feedback to employers differ? In particular, where an employer is undertaking elements of the training or assessment delivery, feedback may be on the effectiveness of their role in doing so. • How will training staff be prepared to make the transition from frameworks to standards? **Business Development/Employer Engagement**	

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery	Resources
	The PRG recognises that there will almost certainly be a CPD requirement for staff who undertake business development/ employer engagement roles. The standards require an ability to offer flexible models and negotiate prices accordingly. Providers may wish to consider: • What training will be required to support the business development team during transition from frameworks to standards? • How will business development teams know what the product they are selling / marketing will look like and if there are any variables? • How will business development teams be able to sell the benefits of standards when frameworks will still be ongoing? • How will business development encourage employers to lead on delivery when historically, providers have been the main deliverer of qualifications and training?	
Costing: *costs associated with the resources*	Employers will require the flexibility and ease to browse and purchase a high quality training package that fits the needs of their business and their employees. The provider will have to encompass quality, flexibility in delivery practices and suitable payment packages. Quality resources and distance learning tools for robust delivery of the skills needed will be added into the overall cost. The whole apprenticeship journey will need to factor in recruitment costs, delivery from sector specialists and an ongoing payment schedule that can be written into a contract between parties. Providers should ensure they are familiar with the most recent SFA Funding Guidelines to know what can be included in the costs the Government will co-fund. Employers are likely to be presented with different prices depending how much delivery is undertaken by them, versus an external training provider. Although there are no mandated qualifications in this standard it would be advantageous for the provider to be able to offer a model that includes these where required by the employer and apprentice and factor in associated costs. A regular review of what can be included in on-programme delivery to ensure it is current should be undertaken and any changes in costing/ pricing models made	SFA funding guidance FA website example contracts, costings for on-programme activity SFA funding guidance

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery	Resources
	accordingly.	
	The funding cap is yet to be determined for this standard therefore it is difficult to give specific information at this stage. Providers should ensure they consult the GOV.UK website to receive this information as and when it is agreed between the Trailblazer Group and BIS.	
	The EPA is yet to be finalised so associated costs are not known at this time.	
	Registration and certification costs (for any on-programme qualifications agreed) and EPA need to be factored into a costing model.	
	English and maths delivery is funded separately.	
	Funding rules associated with resits and retakes are confirmed in the SFA funding guide.	
	More broadly, providers will need to consider business costs for training/ updating their staff. This may include increasing knowledge of the new standard, development of training/ coaching skills, teaching qualifications, training business development staff and other support staff whose role is affected by the changes.	
	Providers will need to give clear, up to date information on the costs for on programme learning to the employer. Further guidance is given by the SFA about what is expected for purposes of audit.	
Marketing / Communication : *promoting the offer to Employers/ Apprentices*	**The Employer** • Marketing material can be generated using standards as a basis. It will serve as a dual purpose to inform employers and staff. Extra guidance materials should be produced to aid staff dealing with queries in the workplace. • Face to face meetings, negotiations and discussions should be encouraged to clarify the differences in the standards and delivery so that all parties understand and have the ability to ask questions. The levy should be a priority for discussion.	BIS/NAS materials

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery	Resources
	- A key point when marketing should be the flexibility of the qualification and how it can be adapted to fit the individual needs of the employer and apprentice. - Initially employers need to understand that they can have a **different/key role** in this new standard – they will be need to record the training and coaching they give their apprentice – or direct their apprentice to capture the on the job learning they provide. - A selling point is that they are in the '**driving seat'** and can add to the skills described in the standard to make a bespoke apprenticeship package for their apprentice – giving specific skills needed within their organisation alongside the board skills, knowledge and behaviours demanded by the standard. - The provider which the employer selects to work with, must offer a **range of services** to their employer – depending upon how much input the employer can contribute – a gold, silver, bronze type approach (SLAs to suite the employer). For example, gold standard being the provider taking the lead in all the training of skills and knowledge (in an off the job style) – and Bronze being the provider has little input other than to **monitor on an agreed basis** to ensure the employer is delivering against the standard and that the apprentice is making progress towards the Gateway – ready for the EPA. Appropriate marketing materials need to be developed. - Employers need to **understand what assessment is** – SQA has produced a useful handout on this – as they will be assessors to a degree and will want to know they are making the right decisions. - Marketing and communications need to make clear that **functional skills** at Level 2 will need to be achieved before the apprentice enters the Gateway (if not already at this level). The provider should offer a range of ways of delivering functional skills to suit the variety of employer situations – including flexibility on bringing testing to the workplace etc. **To Learner**	

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery	Resources
	• They must take ownership and be empowered as part of this new standard – this must be communicated in their induction to the programme. • They must understand what they have to achieve during the training/development – and what is expected of them as part of the EPA. Marketing must make this very clear. • The expectation that functional skills is required before being able to go into EPA must be made very clear. • Self-study is an important part of the new standards and developing themselves. **Communications to Provider Staff** • All staff need to understand the differences between frameworks and standard. • Providers need to develop a range of delivery models to accommodate size and ability of employers to ensure the standards are covered and that apprentices are prepared for the EPA. • Providers will need to understand the methodology of EPA to be able to assist the employer and ensure apprentices are prepared effectively. • Admin – funding for all standards is completely different to frameworks – ensuring all relevant staff have information to inform employers and agree a model to extract funding from the employer to trigger the Government contributions. • As funding methodology changes, all sales and delivery staff need to understand how the employer contributions work.	

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery	Resources
End point Assessment:	The PRG will provide feedback to the employer group on draft assessment plan when it is available. At this stage, we have summarised the information the PRG has available on the draft assessment plan. This section will be updated once the assessment plan has been agreed and the associated funding cap allocated. An apprentice can progress to the EPA after they have been on programme for 12 months and should be concluded within 18 months of starting the apprenticeship. The employer, apprentice and training provider should all feel satisfied that the learning outcomes of the KSB defined in the standard have been met before progressing through the gateway. This includes the completion of English and maths qualifications. The proposed EPA will consist of three elements (weightings tbc): 1. Interview 2. Presentation 3. Multiple-choice Assessment The specifics of what each element will assess can be provided once assessment plan is agreed. It is not possible at this time to give information concerning the content or weighting of each methodology. The EPA will be conducted by an apprenticeship assessment organisation (AAO). The register for AAOs will open once the assessment plan has been published. The assessment plan will also state which body will be responsible for overseeing external quality assurance of the EPA.	The Assessment Plan
Managing relationships with Employer and Apprentices: *Employer/*	This needs to be considered carefully going forward. There are a number of key differences between the existing framework and the new qualification that employers and apprentices will need to be aware of. In summary: | **Item**	**Framework**	**Standard**
---	---	---		SFA funding guidance

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery			Resources
Provider/ Apprentice Contracts	Length of Programme	12 - 15 Months (typically 13 months)	12-18 months	
	Regular Exams and Assessment (unless qualifications are chosen)	Yes	No	
	End Point Assessment	No	Yes	

Apprentices and employers will potentially need more support or a carefully thought through structure to their apprenticeship as the removal of regular exams creates more flexibility but also removes structure.

The apprenticeship standards result in a subtle shift in 'responsibility' for completion from the training provider to the employer – more work from the employer on guiding the workplace experience of the apprentice to ensure all KSB's can be met.

Training providers will need to be flexible – some employers will have a structured scheme where they have thought through the apprenticeship and the opportunity to gain the experience, and evidence required and others may be relying on the employer to provide guidance and/or facilitate this.

Reporting on progress will be key to understanding when the learner is ready to go to EPA. With the absence of 'units' progress tracking may be more complex and the employer role is going to change as the responsibility shifts. Employers will need reporting on progress, to understand and fill possible gaps.

It will be the training provider's responsibility to explain the process to the employer and the apprentice prior to the commencement of the programme, check their understanding, and obtain their agreement (via the signing of an apprenticeship agreement) that they will undertake the roles and responsibilities expected and required of them.

Themes	Considerations / Implications for delivery	Resources
Sub-Contracting relationships: *Lead provider role and potential for collaboration on apprenticeship delivery*	Whilst sub-contracting will remain during the trial funding period, the PRG recognises that clarity is required urgently on the future of sub-contracting beyond 2016/17 If sub-contracting continues then this will need careful management due to the flexible and less structured model of apprenticeship standards. Reporting of learner progress and whether on track to complete on time will be key, as will managing the QA relationship given the lack of formal IQA. The lead – subcontractor contract will need robust QA processes and SLA's It is also recognised that providers will now contract with independent assessment organisations for end-point assessment.	SFA funding guidance
Progression: *Professional registration*	The administration role may be a gateway to further career opportunities, such as management or senior support roles. The trailblazer group expressed the importance of employers and providers looking to sector specific standards that may be appropriate for apprentices to progress to level 4 and beyond in their chosen career path. Providers need to support the employers in ensuring they understand the KSB are transferable to other sectors, and higher level qualifications.	