



ISSUED BY: Head of EPA, Caroline Walton	End-Point Assessment Policies and Procedures	ISSUE DATE: September 2022 REVIEW DATE: September 2023
	Fair Access Policy	ISSUE : V3

Purpose

This policy applies to End Point Assessments (EPA) provided by Explosive Learning Solutions; henceforth referred to as ELS.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to set out principles to clarify the expectations on all parties to support fair access procedures, to operate effectively and to ensure fair access in practice to the EPA for apprentices.

All apprentices should be able to enter and successfully participate in their EPA in pursuit of their career aspirations and development learning objectives.

ELS is committed to ensuring that we provide apprentices with all relevant information about their EPA. It sets out our intention to deliver an EPA service that is fair, accessible and does not include any unnecessary barriers to entry.

Responsibility

It is important that staff involved in the delivery of on-programme assessments are fully aware of the contents of this policy. ELS, as the End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO), must ensure that that the staff adhere to the requirements of this policy.

Policy Statement

ELS is committed to the development and support of apprentices including information provision and EPA entry and access arrangements, irrespective of any protected characteristic they may have as set out in the Equality Act 2010. ELS is committed to:



- Incorporating specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the fair access policy into the work objectives of all staff and assessors involved in the delivery of EPAs.
- Developing all EPAs to be representative of the apprentices' registered, protected characteristics or barriers to entry.
- Providing and implementing mandatory induction alongside ongoing training and standardisation to all staff covering equality and fair access training and guidance. Where complaints relating to issues of fair access cannot be satisfactorily resolved, apprentices must be made aware of their right to appeal to ELS via the arrangements outlined in our EPA complaints and appeals policies.
- Ensuring fairness in our arrangements for EPAs.
- Ensuring that apprentices with a protected characteristic are not advantaged or disadvantaged in EPAs comparatively to apprentices who do not share that characteristic, ensuring that all achievement in EPAs is comparable.
- Apprentices will be encouraged, on application to register for the EPA, to request any required access arrangements or reasonable adjustments, providing evidence as appropriate. Apprentices will also be able to request access adjustments if they become apparent post application to EPA.
- Adequate monitoring and reviewing of equality and diversity throughout the process of developing and delivering EPA products and services.
- All access requests relating to the receipt of EPAs.
- Monitoring data related to apprentice achievement, in order to detect and mitigate against any accidental bias.
- Reviewing materials regularly, to ensure there is no unnecessary bias or barriers.
- Apprentices are able to apply for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account after the EPA event if a temporary injury, illness or other has affected their performance on the day of the EPA.

Where complaints relating to issues of fair access cannot be resolved by a provider satisfactorily, apprentices must be made aware of their right to appeal to ELS via the arrangements outlined in our Complaints and Appeals Policy.

Access to the End-Point Assessments

ELS takes steps to ensure that our EPAs do not inadvertently discriminate, leading a group of apprentices who share a common attribute or circumstance to experience an unreasonable disadvantage.

ELS takes steps to ensure that assessment materials do not contain language or images that may discriminate or offend in any way. Any images, references, names or other material used in the assessment process aim to be representative of the society that we live in and inclusive to all irrespective of age, gender, race, sexuality or other distinction.



Making Reasonable Adjustments

ELS assessments permit reasonable adjustments to be made where necessary and appropriate so that barriers can be addressed for apprentices with particular requirements, as per our Reasonable Adjustments Policy.

Considerations

All elements of the qualification must be achieved, with verifiable evidence produced against each, so that the competence of apprentices is established without any doubt. Special consideration is not typically be given for vocationally related EPAs. If an apprentice misses an assessment, or there is a disturbance during an assessment, this must be re-arranged. In doing so, the apprentice is given the opportunity to evidence their competence against the relevant qualification.

Review

All requests for reasonable adjustments are monitored by ELS, as per our EPA Reasonable Adjustment Policy and Procedures.

ELS will monitor the effectiveness and review the implementation of this policy, regularly considering its suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. Any improvements identified will be made as soon as possible.

Validity and the principles of equity, fairness and practicability will be reviewed with any reported concerns. This will include checking that the EPA is still:

- valid
- fit for purpose
- effective as a test of the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours, as prescribed within the assessment strategy
- producing results that are a reliable measure of what an apprentice knows and can do
- denoting a purpose and appropriate content that both meets the needs of the apprentice and is graded, in line with clear and defensible descriptions contained in the assessment plan.

ELS review and revise this policy annually in response to feedback, changes in legislation and guidance from the regulators.

Contacts

For more information, queries or to report a breach of this policy, please contact us:

Email: epaenquiries@explosivelearningsolutions.com

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RELATED DOCUMENTS:-

EPA Reasonable Adjustment Policy
EPA Complaints & Appeals Policy

APPROVED BY:-

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