



## EPA Draft Preview

# DRAFT END-POINT ASSESSMENT PLAN ST0018/V1.1 FOR THE CROP TECHNICIAN APPRENTICESHIP

APPRENTICESHIP REFERENCE NUMBER	LEVEL OF THIS END-POINT ASSESSMENT (EPA)	INTEGRATION
ST0018	3	None

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## Introduction and overview

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

Crop technician apprentices, their employers and training providers should read this document.

This is a core and options apprenticeship. An apprentice must be trained and assessed against the core and one option. The options are:

- Soil Based Systems Crop Technician
- Container Based Systems Crop Technician

A full-time crop technician apprentice typically spends 24 months on-programme. 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 EPA should be completed within an EPA period lasting typically 6 months.

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 work with the training provider to select an approved EPAO from the apprenticeship providers and assessment register (APAR).

This EPA has 2 assessment methods.

The grades available for each assessment method are below.

Assessment method 1 - observation in the workplace:

- 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
- merit
- distinction

## **EPA summary table**

<p><b>On-programme - typically 24 months</b></p>	<p>The apprentice must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complete training to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) outlined in this apprenticeship's standard</li> <li>• complete training towards English and mathematics qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules</li> <li>• compile a portfolio of evidence</li> <li>• complete training towards the qualification listed in the crop technician apprenticeship standard</li> </ul> <p>The qualifications required are:</p> <p>Safe Use of Pesticides. On completion of the pesticides foundation unit, also choose one of the following units:          Boom sprayer, mounted, trailed or self-propelled equipment          Granular applicator equipment          Handheld applicator equipment</p> <p>Ofqual regulated emergency first aid at work (1 day)</p>
<p><b>End-point assessment gateway</b></p>	<p>The apprentice's employer must be content that the apprentice is occupationally competent.</p> <p>The apprentice must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confirm they are ready to take the EPA</li> <li>• have achieved English and mathematics qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules</li> <li>• have passed Safe Use of Pesticides. On completion of the pesticides foundation unit, also choose one of the following units: Boom sprayer, mounted, trailed or self-propelled equipment Granular applicator equipment Handheld applicator equipment</li> <li>• have passed Ofqual regulated emergency first aid at work (1 day)</li> </ul> <p>For the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence, the apprentice must submit a portfolio of evidence.</p>

	<p>Gateway evidence must be submitted to the EPAO, along with any organisation specific policies and procedures requested by the EPAO.</p>
<p><b>End-point assessment - typically 6 months</b></p>	<p><b>The grades available for each assessment method are below</b></p> <p>Observation in the workplace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fail</li> <li>• pass</li> <li>• distinction</li> </ul> <p>Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fail</li> <li>• pass</li> <li>• distinction</li> </ul> <p><b>Overall EPA and apprenticeship can be graded:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fail</li> <li>• pass</li> <li>• merit</li> <li>• distinction</li> </ul>
<p><b>Re-sits and re-takes</b></p>	<p>The details for re-sits and re-takes are below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• re-take and re-sit grade cap: merit</li> <li>• re-sit timeframe: typically 2 months</li> <li>• re-take timeframe: typically 3 months</li> </ul>

## 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 6 months.

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

## EPA gateway

The apprentice's employer must be content that the apprentice is occupationally competent. That is, they are deemed to be working at or above the level set out in the apprenticeship standard and ready to undertake the EPA. 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
- have passed Safe Use of Pesticides. On completion of the pesticides foundation unit, also choose one of the following units: Boom sprayer, mounted, trailed or self-propelled equipment Granular applicator equipment Handheld applicator equipment
- have passed Ofqual regulated emergency first aid at work (1 day)
- 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 the professional discussion [delete as appropriate]. It will typically contain 15 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
- video clips with a maximum total duration 10 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.

Gateway evidence must be submitted to the EPAO, along with 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.

## Observation in the workplace

### Overview

In the observation in the workplace, an independent assessor observes the apprentice in their workplace and asks questions. The apprentice completes their day-to-day duties under normal working conditions. Simulation is only allowed where health, safety, sustainability or seasonality issues are identified. It gives the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

### Rationale

This assessment method is being used because:

- this is a practical role it can assess KSBs holistically
- it should give employers assurance about an apprentice's competence as it takes place in a real work setting the familiar environment should allow the apprentice to perform at their best
- it is cost effective, tasks completed during the observation should contribute to workplace productivity and it makes use of the employer's resources and equipment
- it allows for the assessment of KSBs that relate to interaction with colleagues, customers or members of the public

### Delivery

The observation in the workplace 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 observation in the workplace.

The independent assessor must only observe one apprentice at a time to ensure quality and rigour. They must be as unobtrusive as possible.

The EPAO must give the apprentice 14 days' notice of the observation with questions.

6 hours will be allocated for the observation.

The observation may be split into discrete sections held on the same working day.

The EPAO must manage invigilation of the apprentice during the assessment, to maintain security of the EPA, in line with their malpractice policy. This includes breaks and moving between locations.

The independent assessor must explain to the apprentice the format and timescales of the observation with questions before it starts. This does not count towards the assessment time.

The independent assessor should observe the following during the observation:

**Core:**

Task 1 - assess crops for quality, performance and requirements during a crop walk.

**Option - Soil Based Systems Crop Technician:**

Task 2 – set and monitor machinery and performance for a defined task.

Task 3 - maintain non-productive areas.

**Option - Container Based Systems Crop Technician:**

Task 2 – optimise growth conditions for a specific crop.

Task 3 - maintain productive and non-productive areas and plan and remove waste.

Combined, the tasks must cover the following themes:

- (Core) Environmental and sustainability
- (Core) Health and safety
- (Core) Machinery and equipment
- (Core) Crop care and record keeping
- (Core) Risk identification and biosecurity
- (Option Soil Based Systems Crop Technician) Set and monitor machinery and maintain areas
- (Option Container Based Systems Crop Technician) Optimise growth conditions and maintain areas

Although the assessment method used to measure competence against these tasks is a practical observation with questions, it is accepted that due to the nature of the sector it may be necessary for the EPAO and (or) independent end-point assessor to simulate elements of the practical on the day of the end-point assessment in order to allow the apprentice to



demonstrate their procedural knowledge and skills of 'how to do something'. For example, water rather than pesticides or fertilizers may be applied if it is not a suitable time of year or the crops don't require materials to be applied at the time of assessment. This can be complemented by questioning from the independent end-point assessor during or after the assessment.

EPAOs may develop ways to simulate KSBs ahead of the practical and (or) provide training to the independent end-point assessor on how KSBs may be simulated on the day of the assessment.

Independent end-point assessors should always default to using the practical observation first and apply simulation to elements of the practical only as a matter of last resort.

When elements of the practical are simulated, EPAOs must ensure that detailed records are kept explaining which KSBs from the practical have been simulated, including the reason(s) why.

Throughout the observation (whether this includes simulated parts or not), the independent assessor must ask questions that can occur both during and after the observation.

These activities provide the apprentice with the opportunity to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

The independent assessor must ask questions. Questioning can occur both during and after the observation.

The purpose of the questions is:

- to seek clarification where required
- to assess the level of competence against the grading descriptors

The time for questioning is included in the overall assessment time. The independent assessor must ask at least 5 questions. To remain as unobtrusive as possible, the independent assessor should ask questions during natural stops between tasks and after completion of work rather than disrupting the apprentice's flow. 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 ask questions about KSBs that were not observed to gather assessment evidence. These questions are in addition to the above set number of questions for the observation with questions and should be kept to a minimum.

The apprentice may choose to end the assessment method early. The apprentice must be confident they have demonstrated competence against the assessment requirements for the assessment method. The independent assessor or EPAO must ensure the apprentice is fully aware of all assessment requirements. The independent assessor or EPAO cannot suggest or choose to end the assessment methods early, unless in an emergency. The EPAO is responsible for ensuring the apprentice understands the implications of ending an assessment early if they choose to do so. The independent assessor may suggest the assessment continues. The independent assessor must document the apprentice's request to end the assessment early.

The independent assessor must make the grading decision. The independent assessor must assess the observation and responses to questions holistically when deciding the grade.

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

- the KSBs observed
- the apprentice's answers to questions
- the KSBs demonstrated in answers to questions
- the grade achieved

## Assessment location

The observation in the workplace must take place in the apprentice's normal place of work for example, their employer's premises or a customer's premises. Equipment and resources needed for the observation must be confirmed to be available by the EPAO, who can liaise with the employer to provide these. They must be in good and safe working condition.

Questioning that occurs after the observation should take place in a suitable environment, for example 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 produce the following materials to support the observation in the workplace:

- 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.

# 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.

## Rationale

This assessment method is being used because:

- it assesses KSBs holistically and objectively
- it allows for the assessment of KSBs that do not occur on a predictable or regular basis
- it allows for assessment of responses where there are a range of potential answers
- it can be conducted remotely, potentially reducing cost

## 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 of the independent assessor's questions will be to assess the apprentice's competence against the following themes:

- (Core) Crop establishment and harvesting
- (Core) Crop management
- (Core) Maintain, sample and evaluate soils or substrates

Plus either;

- (Soil Based Systems Crop Technician) Impact of machinery on soils

Or

- (Container Based Systems Crop Technician) Growing mediums

The EPAO must give an apprentice 14 days' 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 10 questions. The independent assessor must use the questions from the EPAO's question bank. Follow-up questions are allowed where clarification is required.

The apprentice may choose to end the assessment method early. The apprentice must be confident they have demonstrated competence against the assessment requirements for the assessment method. The independent assessor or EPAO must ensure the apprentice is fully aware of all assessment requirements. The independent assessor or EPAO cannot suggest or choose to end the assessment methods early, unless in an emergency. The EPAO is responsible for ensuring the apprentice understands the implications of ending an assessment early if they choose to do so. The independent assessor may suggest the assessment continues. The independent assessor must document the apprentice's request to end the assessment early.

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

### Observation in the workplace

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
(Core) Environmental and sustainability K4 K15 S4 B5	Optimises plant growth during operations to maximise economic sustainability in line with environmental issues, legislation, codes of practice and company policies, ensuring their own time is managed to achieve tasks to schedule. (K4, K15, S4, B5)	Justifies steps taken to optimise plant growth during operations, ensuring maximum economic sustainability in line with environmental issues, legislation, codes of practice and company policies. (K4, K15, S4)
(Core) Machinery and equipment K6 S3 S6	Operates and maintains machinery and equipment safely and in accordance with manufacturer operating instructions. (K6, S3)  Operates vehicles safely and in accordance with manufacturer and operating instructions. (S6)	None.
(Core) Crop care and record keeping K5 K14 S2 S11 B2 B3	Manages paper or digital records in accordance with legislation, showing pride in their work, attention to detail and integrity. (K5, S2, B3)  Assesses and monitors crops for quality, performance and specification requirements relevant to business needs, showing a professional, flexible	Assesses crops thoroughly and efficiently to ensure they are of a high quality and explains the steps taken to maintain quality standards and meet specifications. (K14, S11)

	and positive attitude to work. (K14, S11, B2)	
(Core) Health and safety, risk identification and biosecurity K1 K2 K3 K13 K16 S1 S13 S25 B1	<p>Demonstrates how to maintain biosecurity and hygiene practices, considering how risks can be managed through disinfecting, cleaning and correct disposal of waste in line with legislation, regulations, and organisational requirements. (K13, S13)</p> <p>Complies with health and safety legislation, regulations, guidelines and procedures relevant to own role, identifying and mitigating risks and promoting a safety culture to ensure the safety of self, colleagues and visitors considering emergency response and first aid protocol as required. (K1, K2, K3, K16, S1, S25, B1)</p>	None
(Soil Based Systems Crop Technician) Set and monitor machinery and maintain areas S17 S18 S19	<p>Demonstrates how to set and monitor machinery, to ensure seed or plant establishment and crop growth is successful. (S17)</p> <p>Performs the set-up of machinery and equipment considering the crop, environment, soil condition and</p>	Performs the set-up of machinery and equipment efficiently, explaining how the set-up creates optimum conditions for seed, crop or plant establishment. (S17, S18)

	<p>specification requirements. (S18)</p> <p>Demonstrates how to maintain productive and non-productive areas. (S19)</p>	
<p>(Container Based Systems Crop Technician)</p> <p>Optimise growth conditions and maintain areas</p> <p><a href="#">S21</a> <a href="#">S22</a> <a href="#">S23</a></p>	<p>Demonstrates how to optimise growth conditions for crops according to the plants needs relative to its environment. (S21)</p> <p>Performs the planning and removal of waste materials following harvest or dispatch. (S23)</p> <p>Demonstrates how to maintain productive and non-productive areas. (S22)</p>	<p>Justifies steps taken to optimise growth conditions for crops contextualised to the plant needs and their environment. (S21)</p>

### 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
(Core) Crop establishment and harvesting K7 K8 K9 S5 S10 S12 S14 B4 B7 B8	<p>Explains how they carry out harvesting and dispatch operations using suitable harvesting techniques, considering crop condition, quality requirements and suitable conditions for harvested crops, acting to build positive relationships with colleagues, customers and suppliers. (S10, S12, S14, B7)</p> <p>Describes the crop identification and establishment process to ensure efficient and sustainable plant growth, health and development. (K8, K9, S5)</p> <p>Identifies the preparation methods, timing of activities and aftercare requirements for the crops grown on-site, working effectively within their team and the limits of their own responsibility. (K7, B4, B8)</p>	Justifies the steps taken during harvesting and dispatch operations at the expense of other available options and recognising the impact of sub-optimal techniques on the crop condition and quality. (S10, S12, S14)
(Core) Crop management K10 K11 K12 S7 S8 S9	<p>Explains how input costs, costs of production and margins impact financial resilience and sustainability. (K10)</p> <p>Describes how they control pests, weeds and diseases using an integrated pest management plan including how they apply and store pest management treatments in accordance with</p>	Explains the importance of using an integrated pest management plan, its impact on crop management and the consequences of not doing so. (K11, S7)

	<p>standard operating procedures, legislation and regulations. (K11, S7, S8)</p> <p>Explains how they carry out plant nutrient application or irrigation tasks as required by the crop considering the relationship between environmental conditions, plant protection methods and crop growth. (K12, S9)</p>	
<p>(Core) Maintain, sample and evaluate soils or substrates <a href="#">K20</a> <a href="#">S15 S16 S26 B6</a> <a href="#">B9 B10</a></p>	<p>Explains how they maintain, sample and evaluate soils or substrates to determine nutritional requirements and ensure sustainable, efficient and healthy growth. (S15, S16)</p> <p>Explains how they participate in learning and CPD activities showing a willingness to learn, including approaches to different work practices, identifying improvements and new ideas and keeping up to date with technological advancements and industry best practice. (K20, S26, B6, B9, B10)</p>	<p>None.</p>

(Soil Based Systems Crop Technician) Impact of machinery on soils <a href="#">K17</a> <a href="#">S20</a>	Explains how they assess the impact of machinery on soil structure and identify potential damage in accordance with legislation. (K17, S20)	Explains the consequences of not assessing the impact of machinery and the potential damage on soil from the perspective of a soil-based technician. (K17, S20)
(Container Based Systems Crop Technician) Growing mediums <a href="#">K18</a> <a href="#">K19</a> <a href="#">S24</a>	Explains how they evaluate and select different growing mediums considering planning for crop growth, conditions and production requirements. (K18, K19, S24)	Justifies how they evaluate and select different growing mediums for optimum crop growth considering the relevant conditions and production requirements. (K18, K19, S24)

## Overall EPA grading

Performance in the EPA determines the overall grade of:

- fail
- pass
- merit
- distinction

An independent assessor must individually grade the observation in the workplace 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.

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

OBSERVATION IN THE WORKPLACE	PROFESSIONAL DISCUSSION UNDERPINNED BY A PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE	OVERALL GRADING
Fail	Any grade	Fail
Any grade	Fail	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Merit
Distinction	Pass	Merit
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.

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 merit if they need to re-sit or re-take one or more assessment methods, unless the EPAO determines there are exceptional circumstances.

## Roles and responsibilities

ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES
Apprentice	<p>As a minimum, the apprentice should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complete on-programme training to meet the KSBs as outlined in the apprenticeship standard for a minimum of 12 months</li> <li>• complete the required amount of off-the-job training specified by the apprenticeship funding rules and as arranged by the employer and training provider</li> <li>• understand the purpose and importance of EPA</li> <li>• prepare for and undertake the EPA including meeting all gateway requirements</li> </ul>
Employer	<p>As a minimum, the apprentice's employer must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• select the training provider</li> <li>• work with the training provider to select the EPAO</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• arrange and support off-the-job training to be undertaken by the apprentice</li> <li>• decide when the apprentice is working at or above the apprenticeship standard and is ready for EPA</li> <li>• ensure the apprentice is prepared for the EPA</li> <li>• ensure that all supporting evidence required at the gateway is submitted in line with this EPA plan</li> <li>• confirm arrangements with the EPAO for the EPA in a timely manner, including who, when, where</li> <li>• provide the EPAO with access to any employer-specific documentation as required for example, company policies</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• ensure the apprentice is given sufficient time away from regular duties to prepare for, and complete the EPA</li> <li>• ensure that any required supervision during the EPA period, as stated within this EPA plan, is in place</li> <li>• ensure the apprentice has access to the resources used to fulfil their role and carry out the EPA for workplace based assessments</li> </ul> <p>remain independent from the delivery of the EPA</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pass the certificate to the apprentice upon receipt</li> </ul>
EPAO	<p>As a minimum, the EPAO must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conform to the requirements of this EPA plan and deliver its requirements in a timely manner</li> <li>• conform to the requirements of the apprenticeship provider and assessment register</li> <li>• conform to the requirements of the external quality assurance provider (EQAP)</li> <li>• understand the apprenticeship including the occupational standard and EPA plan</li> <li>• make all necessary contractual arrangements including agreeing the price of the EPA</li> <li>• develop and produce assessment materials including specifications and marking materials, for example mark schemes, practice materials, training material</li> <li>• 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apprentices</li> <li>• employers</li> <li>• independent assessors</li> <li>• any other roles involved in delivery or grading of the EPA</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• appoint independent, competent, and suitably qualified assessors in line with the requirements of this EPA plan</li> <li>• appoint administrators, invigilators and any other roles where required to facilitate the EPA</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• conduct standardisation with all their independent assessors before allowing them to deliver an EPA, when</li> </ul>

	<p>the EPA is updated, and at least once a year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• monitor the performance of all their independent assessors and provide additional training where necessary</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• use language in the development and delivery of the EPA that is appropriate to the level of the apprenticeship</li> <li>• arrange for the EPA to take place in a timely manner, in consultation with the employer</li> <li>• provide information, advice, and guidance documentation to enable apprentices, employers and training providers to prepare for the EPA</li> <li>• confirm the gateway requirements have been met before they start the EPA for an apprentice</li> <li>• arrange a suitable venue for the EPA</li> <li>• maintain the security of the EPA including, but not limited to, verifying the identity of the apprentice, invigilation and security of materials</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• confirm the overall grade awarded</li> <li>• maintain and apply a policy for conducting appeals</li> </ul>
Independent assessor	<p>As a minimum, an independent assessor must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• have, maintain and be able to evidence up-to-date knowledge and expertise of the occupation</li> <li>• have the competence to assess the EPA and meet the requirements of the IQA section of this EPA plan</li> <li>• understand the apprenticeship's occupational standard and EPA plan</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• use language in the delivery of the EPA that is appropriate to the level of the apprenticeship</li> <li>• work with other personnel, where used, in the preparation and delivery of assessment methods</li> <li>• conduct the EPA to assess the apprentice against the KSBs and in line with the EPA plan</li> <li>• make final grading decisions in line with this EPA plan</li> <li>• record and report assessment outcome decisions</li> <li>• comply with the IQA requirements of the EPAO</li> <li>• comply with external quality assurance (EQA) requirements</li> </ul>
Training provider	<p>As a minimum, the training provider must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conform to the requirements of the apprenticeship provider and assessment register</li> <li>• ensure procedures are in place to mitigate against any conflict of interest</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• deliver training to the apprentice as outlined in their apprenticeship agreement</li> <li>• monitor the apprentice's progress during any training provider led on-programme learning</li> <li>• ensure the apprentice is prepared for the EPA</li> <li>• work with the employer to select the EPAO</li> <li>• advise the employer, upon request, on the apprentice's readiness for EPA</li> <li>• ensure that all supporting evidence required at the gateway is submitted in line with this EPA plan</li> <li>• remain independent from the delivery of the EPA</li> </ul>

## Reasonable adjustments

### Reasonable adjustments

The EPAO must have reasonable adjustments arrangements for the EPA.



This should include:

- how an apprentice qualifies for a 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.

### **Special considerations**

The EPAO must have special consideration arrangements for the EPA.

This should include:

- how an apprentice qualifies for a special consideration
- what special considerations will be given

Special considerations 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 3 gained in the last **5 years or significant experience of the occupation or sector**
- meet the following minimum requirements:
  - independent assessors must be able to demonstrate they possess practical and up-to-date knowledge of current working practices
  - they should hold or be working towards an assessor qualification.

## **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

## **Professional recognition**

This apprenticeship is not aligned to professional recognition.

## **Mapping of KSBs to assessment methods**

KNOWLEDGE	ASSESSMENT METHODS
<p><b>K1:</b> Core. Health and safety legislation, regulations, guidelines and procedures relevant to own role. (Core)</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>K2:</b> Core. Risk identification and mitigation techniques for risk assessments relevant to own organisational policies and procedures. (Core)</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>K3:</b> Core. Workplace specific health and safety processes and procedures to ensure everyone is safe in the workplace. (Core)</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>K4:</b> Core. Environmental issues, legislation, codes of practice and company policies. (Core)</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>K5:</b> Core. Methods to maintain paper or electronic records in accordance with legislation. (Core)</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>K6:</b> Core. Policies, procedures, guidance and legislation related to the safe setup, operation, maintenance and storage of machinery, equipment, tools. (Core)</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>K7:</b> Core. Preparation methods, timing of activities, aftercare and monitoring requirements for the crops grown on-site. (Core)</p>	<p>Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p>
<p><b>K8:</b> Core. Crop identification and establishment process including principles and methods. (Core)</p>	<p>Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p>
<p><b>K9:</b> Core. Principles of plant growth, development and plant health. (Core)</p>	<p>Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p>
<p><b>K10:</b> Core. Input costs, cost of production, margins and impact on financial resilience and sustainability. (Core)</p>	<p>Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p>

<p><b>K11: Core.</b> Principles for developing and implementing an integrated pest management plan. (Core)</p>	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<p><b>K12: Core.</b> The relationship between environmental conditions, plant protection methods and crop growth. (Core)</p>	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<p><b>K13: Core.</b> The importance of biosecurity and how risks can be managed through disinfecting, cleaning and correct disposal of waste in line with company procedures, national regulations and legislation such as COSHH. (Core)</p>	Observation in the workplace
<p><b>K14: Core.</b> Quality standards and specifications relevant to their business and their importance. (Core)</p>	Observation in the workplace
<p><b>K15: Core.</b> Principles of environmental sustainability. (Core)</p>	Observation in the workplace
<p><b>K16: Core.</b> Emergency response and first aid protocols and procedures. (Core)</p>	Observation in the workplace
<p><b>K17: Soil Based Systems Crop Technician.</b> The impact of machinery on soil structure and potential damage it can cause and the associated legislation to consider. (Soil based)</p>	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<p><b>K18: Container Based Systems Crop Technician.</b> Different growing mediums and their impact and relevance to production on site. (Container based)</p>	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<p><b>K19: Container Based Systems Crop Technician.</b> The impact of different growing mediums on planning and crop growth. (Container based)</p>	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<p><b>K20: Core.</b> Methods to identify and undertake learning and continuing professional development opportunities. (Core)</p>	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

SKILL	ASSESSMENT METHODS
<b>S1:</b> Core. Identify and mitigate risks to promote and maintain health, safety and security. (Core)	Observation in the workplace
<b>S2:</b> Core. Manage accurate paper or digital records within the workplace. (Core)	Observation in the workplace
<b>S3:</b> Core. Maintain and operate machinery and equipment in accordance with manufacturer operating instructions. (Core)	Observation in the workplace
<b>S4:</b> Core. Maximise economic sustainability by optimising plant growth when carrying out operations. (Core)	Observation in the workplace
<b>S5:</b> Core. Establish crops to ensure efficient and sustainable growth. (Core)	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<b>S6:</b> Core. Operate vehicles in accordance with manufacturer operating instructions. (Core)	Observation in the workplace
<b>S7:</b> Core. Control pests, weeds and diseases using integrated pest management. (Core)	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<b>S8:</b> Core. Apply and store pest management treatments in accordance with standard operating procedures, legislation and regulations. (Core)	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<b>S9:</b> Core. Carry out plant nutrient application or irrigation tasks required by the crop. (Core)	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<b>S10:</b> Core. Carry out harvesting and dispatch operations. (Core)	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<b>S11:</b> Core.	Observation in the workplace

Assess and monitor crops for quality, performance and specification requirements. (Core)	
<b>S12:</b> Core. Select harvesting techniques taking account of crop condition and quality requirements. (Core)	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<b>S13:</b> Core. Maintain biosecurity and hygiene practices in line with legislation, regulations and organisational requirements. (Core)	Observation in the workplace
<b>S14:</b> Core. Keep harvested crops in suitable conditions to maintain quality. (Core)	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<b>S15:</b> Core. Maintain soils or substrates to ensure sustainable, efficient and healthy growth. (Core)	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<b>S16:</b> Core. Sample and evaluate soils or substrates to determine nutrition requirements. (Core)	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence
<b>S17:</b> Soil Based Systems Crop Technician. Set and monitor machinery performance to ensure good seed or plant establishment and crop growth. (Soil based)	Observation in the workplace
<b>S18:</b> Soil Based Systems Crop Technician. Set machinery and equipment taking into account the crop, environment, soil condition and specification requirements. (Soil based)	Observation in the workplace
<b>S19:</b> Soil Based Systems Crop Technician. Maintain non-productive areas. (Soil based)	Observation in the workplace
<b>S20:</b> Soil Based Systems Crop Technician. Assess the impact of machinery on soil structure and identify potential damage in accordance with legislation. (Soil based)	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

<p><b>S21:</b> Container Based Systems Crop Technician. Optimise growth conditions for crops, based on the specific needs of the plant relative to the environment. (Container based)</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>S22:</b> Container Based Systems Crop Technician. Maintain productive and non-productive areas. (Container based)</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>S23:</b> Container Based Systems Crop Technician. Plan for and carry out the removal of waste materials following harvest or dispatch. (Container based)</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>S24:</b> Container Based Systems Crop Technician. Evaluate and select different growing mediums taking into account site conditions and production requirements. (Container based)</p>	<p>Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p>
<p><b>S25:</b> Core. Comply with health and safety legislation, regulations, guidelines and procedures relevant to own role. (Core)</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>S26:</b> Core. Participate in learning and CPD activities. (Core)</p>	<p>Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p>

BEHAVIOUR	ASSESSMENT METHODS
<p><b>B1:</b> Core. Promote and adopt a safety culture and apply proactively for self, colleagues and visitors.</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>B2:</b> Core. Act in a professional and ethical manner, with a flexible, positive attitude to work.</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>B3:</b> Core. Demonstrates a strong work ethic, takes pride in own work, pays attention to detail, and acts with integrity.</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>B4:</b> Core. Ability to use own initiative and is aware of limits of responsibility.</p>	<p>Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p>
<p><b>B5:</b> Core. Manage own time to achieve tasks to schedule.</p>	<p>Observation in the workplace</p>
<p><b>B6:</b> Core. A willingness to learn and contribute to their own continuing professional development.</p>	<p>Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p>
<p><b>B7:</b> Core. Act in a way that builds and maintains positive relationships with colleagues, customers and suppliers.</p>	<p>Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p>
<p><b>B8:</b> Core. Team focused and works effectively with colleagues and others.</p>	<p>Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p>
<p><b>B9:</b> Core. Consider different approaches to current working practices, identifying improvements, developments and innovative ideas.</p>	<p>Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p>
<p><b>B10:</b> Core. Committed to keeping up with technological advancements, industry developments and best practice.</p>	<p>Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence</p>

## Mapping of KSBs to grade themes



## Observation in the workplace

KSBS GROUPED BY THEME	KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	BEHAVIOUR
(Core) Environmental and sustainability K4 K15 S4 B5	Environmental issues, legislation, codes of practice and company policies. (Core) (K4)  Principles of environmental sustainability. (Core) (K15)	Maximise economic sustainability by optimising plant growth when carrying out operations. (Core) (S4)	Manage own time to achieve tasks to schedule. (B5)
(Core) Machinery and equipment K6 S3 S6	Policies, procedures, guidance and legislation related to the safe setup, operation, maintenance and storage of machinery, equipment, tools. (Core) (K6)	Maintain and operate machinery and equipment in accordance with manufacturer operating instructions. (Core) (S3)  Operate vehicles in accordance with manufacturer operating instructions. (Core) (S6)	None
(Core) Crop care and record keeping K5 K14 S2 S11 B2 B3	Methods to maintain paper or electronic records in accordance with legislation. (Core) (K5)  Quality standards and specifications relevant to their business and their importance. (Core) (K14)	Manage accurate paper or digital records within the workplace. (Core) (S2)  Assess and monitor crops for quality, performance and specification requirements. (Core) (S11)	Act in a professional and ethical manner, with a flexible, positive attitude to work. (B2)  Demonstrates a strong work ethic, takes pride in own work, pays attention to detail, and acts with integrity. (B3)
(Core) Health and safety, risk identification and biosecurity	Health and safety legislation, regulations, guidelines and	Identify and mitigate risks to promote and maintain health,	Promote and adopt a safety culture and apply proactively

<p>K1 K2 K3 K13 K16 S1 S13 S25 B1</p>	<p>procedures relevant to own role. (Core) (K1)</p> <p>Risk identification and mitigation techniques for risk assessments relevant to own organisational policies and procedures. (Core) (K2)</p> <p>Workplace specific health and safety processes and procedures to ensure everyone is safe in the workplace. (Core) (K3)</p> <p>The importance of biosecurity and how risks can be managed through disinfecting, cleaning and correct disposal of waste in line with company procedures, national regulations and legislation such as COSHH. (Core) (K13)</p> <p>Emergency response and first aid protocols and procedures. (Core) (K16)</p>	<p>safety and security. (Core) (S1)</p> <p>Maintain biosecurity and hygiene practices in line with legislation, regulations and organisational requirements. (Core) (S13)</p> <p>Comply with health and safety legislation, regulations, guidelines and procedures relevant to own role. (Core) (S25)</p>	<p>for self, colleagues and visitors. (B1)</p>
<p>(Soil Based Systems Crop Technician) Set and monitor machinery and maintain areas</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Set and monitor machinery performance to ensure good seed or plant establishment and</p>	<p>None</p>

S17 S18 S19		<p>crop growth. (Soil based) (S17)</p> <p>Set machinery and equipment taking into account the crop, environment, soil condition and specification requirements. (Soil based) (S18)</p> <p>Maintain non-productive areas. (Soil based) (S19)</p>	
<p>(Container Based Systems Crop Technician)</p> <p>Optimise growth conditions and maintain areas</p> <p>S21 S22 S23</p>	None	<p>Optimise growth conditions for crops, based on the specific needs of the plant relative to the environment. (Container based) (S21)</p> <p>Maintain productive and non-productive areas. (Container based) (S22)</p> <p>Plan for and carry out the removal of waste materials following harvest or dispatch. (Container based) (S23)</p>	None

**Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence**

KSBS GROUPED BY THEME	KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	BEHAVIOUR
<p>(Core) Crop establishment and harvesting K7 K8 K9 S5 S10 S12 S14 B4 B7 B8</p>	<p>Preparation methods, timing of activities, aftercare and monitoring requirements for the crops grown on-site. (Core) (K7)</p> <p>Crop identification and establishment process including principles and methods. (Core) (K8)</p> <p>Principles of plant growth, development and plant health. (Core) (K9)</p>	<p>Establish crops to ensure efficient and sustainable growth. (Core) (S5)</p> <p>Carry out harvesting and dispatch operations. (Core) (S10)</p> <p>Select harvesting techniques taking account of crop condition and quality requirements. (Core) (S12)</p> <p>Keep harvested crops in suitable conditions to maintain quality. (Core) (S14)</p>	<p>Ability to use own initiative and is aware of limits of responsibility. (B4)</p> <p>Act in a way that builds and maintains positive relationships with colleagues, customers and suppliers. (B7)</p> <p>Team focused and works effectively with colleagues and others. (B8)</p>
<p>(Core) Crop management K10 K11 K12 S7 S8 S9</p>	<p>Input costs, cost of production, margins and impact on financial resilience and sustainability. (Core) (K10)</p> <p>Principles for developing and implementing an integrated pest management plan. (Core) (K11)</p> <p>The relationship between environmental conditions, plant protection methods and crop growth. (Core) (K12)</p>	<p>Control pests, weeds and diseases using integrated pest management. (Core) (S7)</p> <p>Apply and store pest management treatments in accordance with standard operating procedures, legislation and regulations. (Core) (S8)</p> <p>Carry out plant nutrient application or irrigation tasks required by the crop. (Core) (S9)</p>	<p>None</p>

<p>(Core) Maintain, sample and evaluate soils or substrates K20 S15 S16 S26 B6 B9 B10</p>	<p>Methods to identify and undertake learning and continuing professional development opportunities. (Core) (K20)</p>	<p>Maintain soils or substrates to ensure sustainable, efficient and healthy growth. (Core) (S15)</p> <p>Sample and evaluate soils or substrates to determine nutrition requirements. (Core) (S16)</p> <p>Participate in learning and CPD activities. (Core) (S26)</p>	<p>A willingness to learn and contribute to their own continuing professional development. (B6)</p> <p>Consider different approaches to current working practices, identifying improvements, developments and innovative ideas. (B9)</p> <p>Committed to keeping up with technological advancements, industry developments and best practice. (B10)</p>
<p>(Soil Based Systems Crop Technician) Impact of machinery on soils K17 S20</p>	<p>The impact of machinery on soil structure and potential damage it can cause and the associated legislation to consider. (Soil based) (K17)</p>	<p>Assess the impact of machinery on soil structure and identify potential damage in accordance with legislation. (Soil based) (S20)</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>(Container Based Systems Crop Technician) Growing mediums K18 K19 S24</p>	<p>Different growing mediums and their impact and relevance to production on site. (Container based) (K18)</p> <p>The impact of different growing mediums on planning and crop</p>	<p>Evaluate and select different growing mediums taking into account site conditions and production requirements. (Container based) (S24)</p>	<p>None</p>

	growth. (Container based) (K19)		
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