

CIPD



Level 5 HR Consultant Partner End-point Assessment (EPA)

Specification

Issue 2

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Introduction

CIPD is the professional body for experts in people at work. For more than 100 years, we've been championing better work and working lives by setting professional standards for HR and people development, as well as driving positive change in the world of work.

With hubs in the UK, Ireland, Middle East and Asia, we're the career partner of choice for over 160,000 members around the world. We're the only body in the world that can award chartered status to individual HR and L&D professionals, and our independent research and insights make us trusted advisers to governments and employers.

CIPD has been closely involved in the development of the apprenticeship standards within HR and L&D and is a registered end-point assessment organisation (EPAO) for these standards.

As an EPAO, it is our job to ensure that we uphold the rigorous standards of independent assessment to ensure all apprentices demonstrate occupational competence on completing their apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship standard and assessment plan

The Level 5 HR Consultant Apprenticeship ST0238 and the associated assessment plan were developed by the L&D and HR trailblazer employer group and is maintained by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE).

Full details can be found on the [Institute's website](#).

Maximum funding:	£7,000
Options:	Core HR Organisational Development Resourcing Total Reward HR Operations
EQA provider:	Ofqual
Typical on-programme duration:	19 months
Typical EPA period:	3 months
Grades:	Fail, Pass, Distinction
Assessment methods:	Consultative Project Professional Discussion

Occupation summary

This role could be called an HR consultant or an HR business partner in different organisations. Individuals in this role will use their HR expertise to provide and lead the delivery of HR solutions to business challenges, together with tailored advice to the business in a number of HR areas, typically to mid-level and senior managers. They could be in a generalist role, where they provide support across a range of HR areas - likely to be the Core HR option; or a specialist role, where they focus on and have in depth expertise in a specific area of HR - likely to be Resourcing, Total Reward, Organisation Development, or HR Operations. Whichever of these is chosen, they will have a good grounding across the whole range of HR disciplines as this is contained in both of the qualification options included in this standard. They will often be required to make decisions and recommendations on what the business can or should do in a specific situation. They will be influencing managers to change their thinking as well as bringing best practice into the organisation. They are also likely to lead the people related elements of business or HR projects. Whatever their role, they will need to link the work they do to the context and priorities of the business. In a larger organisation they may be one of a team supporting the business and they may also have responsibility for managing people.

Gateway

The EPA period should only start once the employer is satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard - that is to say, they are deemed to have achieved occupational competence. In making this decision, the employer may take advice from the apprentice's training provider(s), but the decision must ultimately be made solely by the employer. In addition to the employer's confirmation that the apprentice is working at or above the level of the occupational standard, the apprentice must have achieved English and mathematics at Level 2 or above.

For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the apprenticeship's English and mathematics minimum requirement is Entry Level 3.

British Sign Language (BSL) qualifications are an alternative to English qualifications for those who have BSL as their primary language.

For the EPA the apprentice must complete a consultative project following Gateway ahead of the assessment day where a professional discussion will then take place.

Assessment methods

Consultative Project

For this assessment the apprentice is required to submit a consultative project to describe how they've applied their knowledge and HR skills to deliver the services required, which will draw out the best of the apprentice's competence and excellence and cover the grading descriptors and associated knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) assigned to this assessment method.

Duration: a maximum of 3 months to complete

Location: Written submission

Participants: Apprentice

Grades: Fail, Pass, Distinction

Professional Discussion

A professional discussion involves the apprentice have a conversation one week after consultative project submission with an independent assessor from the CIPD to give the apprentice an opportunity to make detailed and proactive contributions through discussion to confirm their competency across the necessary skills and behaviours

Apprentices will have a conversation based on the grading criteria and associated KSBs assigned to this method of assessment.

Duration: Questioning - 60 minutes (+10%)

Location: Remote, via video conferencing

Participants: Assessor, Apprentice

Grades: Fail, Pass, Distinction

Scoring and Grading

Scoring the Assessment Methods

The scoring used for the two assessment methods is from a scale of 0-5. A score of 3 indicates that the apprentice has presented evidence at the level expected. Scores of 4 or 5 are achieved when an apprentice provides extensive range of evidence and/or demonstrates an exceedingly high level of competence. To score a 5 an apprentice needs to present a wide range of evidence at a level that demonstrated exceptional competence.

This table shows the scoring scale 0-5:

0	The apprentice provided no evidence against this component
1-2	Apprentice provides partial evidence
3	Apprentice provides sufficient evidence and meets the requirements
4-5	Apprentice provides extensive range of evidence/demonstrates high level of competence or exceedingly high-level competence

Grading the Assessment Methods

This table shows how each assessment method is graded based on the scores for each component.

Assessment Method	To achieve a Pass	To achieve a Distinction
Consultative Project	Score 60-84% and Score a minimum of 3 across all components	Score 85% and above Score a minimum of 3 across all components Score 4 4 or 5 in all 8 distinction components
Professional Discussion	Score 60-84% and Score a minimum of 3 across all components including any components transferred from CP to PD	core 85% and above Score a minimum of 3 across all components including any components transferred from CP to PD Score 4 or 5 in all 4 distinction components

Overall Grading

The EPA outcome for the HR Apprenticeships has three potential grades.

Fail
Pass
Distinction

Fail - this means the assessor has not yet seen sufficient evidence against all of the components of the standard. Apprentices will need to *resit or **retake the EPA in order to complete their apprenticeship.

Pass - indicates apprentices are occupationally competent and they have provided evidence of the required KSB in the standards and is a huge achievement. This is regarded as a significant achievement due to the requirement to reach a minimum of 3 in all components.

Distinction - indicates that apprentices consistently exceed the standards set for the role. This grade recognises the small proportion of apprentices who have provided evidence that is outstanding and consistently exceeds the required standard for competence

The EPAs for the HR Standards have two assessment methods:

- Consultative Project
- Professional Discussion

Each assessment method is graded Fail, Pass or Distinction, just like the overall EPA. The grade for the assessment methods are then used to calculate the overall EPA grade.

The table shows how the overall EPA grade is calculated:

Consultative Project	Professional Discussion	EPA Grade
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction
Distinction	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Pass
Fail	Any Grade	Fail
Any Grade	Fail	Fail

To achieve a Distinction overall, an apprentice needs to achieve a Distinction in both assessment methods.

To achieve an Pass overall, the apprentice must achieve at least a Pass in both assessment methods.

A fail in either assessment method will mean a fail overall and the apprentice will need to resit that assessment method.

For example, if an apprentice fails the CP but passes the PD, they will only need to resit the CP and will bank the grade for the PD.

Due to the nature of the resit process, the highest mark awarded at resit is an overall pass.

Support material

More information and guidance is contained within the Level 5 HR Consultant Partner support materials, which include:

- Essential Guide to the Consultative Project: HR Consultant Partner
- Essential Guide to the Professional Discussion: HR Consultant Business Partner
- Apprentice Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- SmartEPA Support Documents

This list is not exhaustive and you may find helpful further guidance on the [website](#).

Resits/retakes

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method(s) will be offered the opportunity to take a resit or a retake at the employer's discretion. The apprentice's employer will need to agree that either a resit or retake is an appropriate course of action and will be responsible for the reassessment fees and any additional training costs. A resit does not require further learning, whereas a retake does.

Where apprentices have failed one assessment method but have the necessary evidence or can acquire the necessary evidence within the resit period, they may resit that assessment method only.

Where apprentices have failed both assessment methods, a retake is advised.

Employers should develop a supportive action plan with the apprentice, drawing on the assessment feedback, to help their apprentice prepare for either a resit or a retake.

The timescale for a resit/retake will be agreed between the employer and EPAO. A resit is typically taken within four weeks of the EPA outcome notification.

The timescale for a retake is dependent on how much additional learning is required.

Both pass and distinction grades are available for resit/retake assessments.

Resits and retakes are not available for apprentices who have achieved a pass grade.

For further information please review Resit and Retake policy accessible via the CIPD [website](#).

EPA fees

The maximum funding for this apprenticeship is £7,000 and EPA fees have been set bearing in mind ESFA funding rules. EPA fees for the first assessment of the Level 5 HR Consultant Partner Apprenticeship are:

First assessment: £1,260

Resit (either assessment method): £250

CIPD Membership

At CIPD we believe completing an apprenticeship is a huge achievement and should come with professional recognition. For that reason, any apprentice who successfully completes their End Point Assessment with CIPD will be immediately eligible to come into CIPD membership.

Find out more on our [website](#).

Assessment Plan KSBs

These are the assessment methods for Level 5 HR Consultant Partner, please refer to the grading amplification which outlines the expectation of evidence that the apprentice will need to provide for each component.

Consultative Project

The following KSBs are assessed in the consultative project. Components shaded in grey below are those that carry the distinction criteria.

Assessment Area	Component Title	Code	Description
Knowledge	HR Technical Expertise	K1.1	Good understanding across all HR disciplines, HR legislation and an excellent working knowledge of the organisation's HR policies and procedures.
Knowledge	HR Technical Expertise	K1.2	Sound understanding of HR in their sector and any unique features.
Knowledge	HR Technical Expertise	K1.3	Up to date with best practice and emerging thinking - able to use this in their dealings with the business.
Knowledge	Business Understanding	K2.1	Understands what the organisation does, the external market and sector it operates in, its challenges and issues.
Knowledge	Business Understanding	K2.2	Understands business and HR KPIs and metrics, building a clear picture of how the business is performing. Understands the impact of this on their role.
Knowledge	HR Function	K3.1	Understands the structure and responsibilities of the HR function, policies and processes, and where to source HR specialist expertise.
Knowledge	MI and Technology	K4.1	Understands HR systems and where to find HR and management data, both internally and externally, including benchmarking.

Assessment Area	Component Title	Code	Description
Knowledge	MI and Technology	K4.2	Knows how technology, including social media, is impacting the business and HR.
Skills	HR Consultancy	S1.1	Develops and delivers HR solutions to the business that are appropriate to the organisational context.
Skills	HR Consultancy	S1.2	Influences leaders and managers to adopt appropriate solutions.
Skills	HR Consultancy	S1.3	Provides tailored HR services to the business as required by their role.
Skills	HR Consultancy	S1.4	Contributes to the development of relevant HR policies & procedures and/or HR initiatives.
Skills	Providing Support and Advise	S2.1	Tailors business-centred advice on the interpretation and application of HR policies and process
Skills	Providing Support and Advise	S2.2	Makes sound judgments based on business need, ensuring the business operates within the boundaries of employment law.
Skills	Providing Support and Advise	S2.3	Deals with escalated people issues and works with the business to resolve them.
Skills	Contributing to business change	S3.1	Leads the HR contribution to business projects and change programmes to support positive behavioural, business or organisational change.
Skills	Building HR Capability	S4.1	Leads the improvement of people capability within the business or own team.
Skills	Building HR Capability	S4.2	Advises and coaches managers to deal successfully with people issues from a generalist or specialist perspective, incorporating best practice where appropriate
Skills	HR Information Analysis	S5.1	Researches, analyses and presents HR / business data (both internal and external) to provide insight, support solutions to business issues and track performance

Professional Discussion

The following KSBs are assessed in the professional discussion between the apprentice to the assessor. Components shaded in grey below are those that carry the distinction criteria.

Assessment Area	Component Title	Code	Description
Skills	Personal Development	S6.1	Keeps up to date with business changes and HR legal/policy/process changes relevant to their role
Skills	Personal Development	S6.2	Seeks feedback and acts on it to improve their performance and overall capability.
Skills	Personal Development	S6.3	Plans their own development; shows commitment to the job and the profession
Skills	Relationship Management	S7.1	Builds effective working relationships with business managers (using the language of the business), peers and other HR functions, together with relevant external organisations.
Skills	Relationship Management	S7.2	Communicates confidently with people at all levels, including senior management.
Behaviours	Flexibility	B1.1	Adapts positively to changing work priorities and patterns, ensuring key business and HR deadlines continue to be met.
Behaviours	Flexibility	B1.2	Curious about HR/business trends and developments, incorporating them into their work.
Behaviours	Resilience	B2.1	Displays tenacity and proactivity in the way they go about their role, staying positive when under pressure
Behaviours	Resilience	B2.2	Deals positively with setbacks when they occur.

