

[News story: Ofqual confirms its apprenticeship End Point Assessment approach](#)

Ofqual today (26 July 2018) put in place the final piece of the jigsaw in its [approach to its External Quality Assurance \(EQA\) of apprenticeship End Point Assessments](#) (EPAs), with the publication of a tailored set of rules.

[These Conditions and guidance](#), which come into force tomorrow, relate specifically to our regulation of EPAs as a component of an apprenticeship programme. Our end-to-end process is designed to ensure that EPAs are developed effectively and monitored throughout the life of the assessment.

Since taking on its role as an EQA provider, Ofqual has already agreed to provide external quality assurance for 55 standards produced by Trailblazers, with another 37 in the pipeline. We have also aligned our review of Assessment Plans with the Institute for Apprenticeships' "Faster and Better" programme. We have published [details of the status of EPAs where Ofqual has been asked to provide EQA](#). A total of 42 Ofqual-regulated Awarding Organisations are currently on the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) register of End Point Assessment Organisations (EPAOs).

Our work as an EQA also includes a technical evaluation of a proposed EPAs. We do this to ensure that EPAOs have interpreted assessment plans correctly and consistently so that employers get what they want and expect from the assessments. We have already looked at 19 EPAs and have asked EPAOs to make changes where required. We are also planning to communicate our technical evaluation findings more widely, to inform the Institute, the EQA community and employers.

The final stage of our EQA approach is the day-to-day regulation of live assessments. Today's publication follows a consultation on our proposals (between February and May 2018), to ensure that our approach to regulating EPAs is appropriately tailored to these assessments. An analysis of the consultation responses is also published today. We have been pleased to engage with EPAOs and employers on our EQA approach, and will continue to do so. With these rules in place, we are now beginning a programme of work on the delivery of EPAs. This will include a programme of audits to help understand how the EPAOs we regulate are mitigating risks around the capacity and capability of EPA assessors.

Where an apprenticeship trailblazer group has selected Ofqual as the external quality assurer (EQA) for its apprenticeship standard, all EPAOs offering EPAs for that standard must be (or become) Ofqual-regulated and all EPAs must meet these new conditions and our General Conditions of Recognition. We are not lowering the recognition bar, but have streamlined our recognition process for organisations seeking to offer EPAs, and we will be publishing further information in the coming weeks so that all organisations are able to

decide at an early stage whether Ofqual regulation is for them. We are also aligning our processes with ESFA, and have published an MoU between our two organisations.