

# Apprenticeship End Point Assessment Quality Assurance Policy

<b>Summary</b>	This Policy details the Institute of Conservation’s (Icon) responsibilities in relation to ensuring high quality, consistent and reliable End Point Assessment for Apprentices.
<b>Who this policy applies to</b>	The Policy applies to Assessors and Icon Staff involved in the delivery of Apprenticeship End Point Assessments.
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<b>Date effective:</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
<b>Last reviewed or updated:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> December 2022
<b>Frequency of review:</b>	Annually

<b>1.</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
	The Institute of Conservation (Icon) recognises the vital importance of ensuring that all assessments it undertakes in its capacity as an Apprenticeship End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) are undertaken consistently and meet the high standards of the conservation profession.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Definitions</b>
	<p><b>EPA:</b> End Point Assessment</p> <p><b>EPAO:</b> End Point Assessment Organisation</p> <p><b>EQA:</b> External Quality Assurance</p> <p><b>IQA:</b> Internal Quality Assurance</p> <p><b>Moderation:</b> The process of reviewing individual assessment decisions to ensure they meet the requirements of the principles of assessments.</p> <p><b>Standardisation:</b> The process of ensuring all assessments are interpreted accurately and applied equally across all assessments.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Roles and responsibilities</b>
	<p>Ultimate responsibility for the implementation and review of this policy rests with the Head of Skills.</p> <p>The Head of Skills will ensure this is communicated to all staff and contractors involved in the delivery of EPA services to ensure they are aware of their roles and responsibilities, including Assessors, Internal Quality Assurers, and Icon staff.</p>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Principles of Assessment</b>

	<p>Icon’s principles of assessment underpin all aspects of our approach towards End Point Assessment.</p> <p><b>Valid:</b> Assessment decisions must be clearly based on the specific Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours indicated in the EPA plan, and be being assessed at the correct level for the plan.</p> <p><b>Fair:</b> All assessment activities must be fit for purpose and offer an equal chance of a fair assessment for all Apprentices.</p> <p><b>Consistent:</b> Assessment decisions must be interpreted in the same way and applied equally across all Apprentices regardless of Assessor.</p> <p><b>Open:</b> The assessment process should be as open as possible, involving the Apprentice in discussion throughout.</p> <p><b>Justifiable:</b> The assessment findings should withstand external scrutiny and be backed by sufficient evidence to support reliable decision making.</p>
5.	<b>Policy</b>
	<p>It is essential that the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours outlined in each End Point Assessment Plan are applied fairly, equally and in an unbiased way across all assessment practice to remain valid and respected. Icon will ensure consistency of assessment decisions through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recruitment, training, and management of Assessors;</li> <li>• development of assessment materials;</li> <li>• recruitment of suitable end point Assessors who will be briefed and trained;</li> <li>• moderation of assessment decisions;</li> <li>• regular standardisation and review meetings, and</li> <li>• record keeping.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recruitment, training, and management of Assessors</b></p> <p><u>Recruitment</u></p> <p>All Assessors must be able to demonstrate full competence in the occupational area in which they are assessing as defined by the specific EPA Plans for the Apprenticeship Standards which they are assessing.</p> <p>Assessors must have a recognised qualification in assessing vocational competence (e.g. A1, Assessing Competence in the Work Environment, Award in Undertaking End-Point Assessment, etc).</p> <p><u>Training and monitoring</u></p>

All Assessors will undertake a full induction to ensure they are fully aware of the requirements of the EPA Plan which they are assessing. Additional training will feature as part of the bi-annual standardisation meetings.

#### Continuing Professional Development

All Assessors have a responsibility to maintain their own Continuing Professional Development (CPD) both in terms of their assessment practice and the specialist area in which they are assessing.

#### Management and review

All Assessors will take part in bi-annual review with the Head of the Assessment Centre to ensure that they are performing appropriately in their role. Full procedures related to performance review forms part of each Assessors' contract of services.

#### **Development and maintenance of assessment materials**

All assessment materials are to be appropriate for each End Point Assessment Plan. All materials will be reviewed and signed off by Icon's IQA prior to use.

All materials developed will consider the requirements of Icon's Fair Access Policy.

#### **Moderation**

All assessment decisions will be moderated by Icon's IQA prior to the finalisation of any assessment decision being made to ensure consistency of decision making.

Each Assessor will receive full feedback on each assessment they undertake to ensure that Assessors are able to continually develop. This is crucial to ensure that assessment decisions meet the assessment principles.

#### **Standardisation**

Icon will continually monitor the final assessment grades awarded by each Assessor to ensure that fair and consistent assessment decisions are being made.

Formal standardisation meetings on a bi-annual basis to ensure that good practice can be shared, and any concerns or updates can be raised with Assessors. Individual Assessors who have been found wanting through moderation activities and Assessor feedback will be required to undertake further training and support delivered by the Accreditation Manager prior to undertaking any further assessments. Continued issues with assessment practice will be managed through the performance review process.

#### **Record keeping**

Icon will ensure there is a clear audit trail for all aspects of assessment. Documentation will be stored securely in line with Icon's Data Protection Policy. Information retained will include:

- Registration details

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records of team meetings</li> <li>• Records of moderation and standardisation meetings</li> <li>• Assessor feedback and action points</li> <li>• EPA training records</li> <li>• Apprentices' and employers' feedback surveys</li> <li>• Final grading decisions</li> <li>• Complaints records and appeals record.</li> </ul>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Managing implementation and review</b>
	This Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is reflective of current regulations and guidance and is responsive to local, national, and international events.