

Validity Policy(EPA)

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1. Policy Statement

This policy outlines the process of validity ensuring end point assessment measures what it claims to measure, the evidence match the competences, the skills, knowledge and expertise that are being demonstrated by the apprentice at the appropriate level

2. Scope

Smart Awards has identified the following principles which underpin all end point assessments (EPA):

- Validity ensures EPA assessment measures what it claims to measure, the evidence match the competences, the skills, knowledge and expertise that are being demonstrated by the apprentice at the appropriate level
- Reliability refers to the accuracy with which an EPA assessment is measured. A reliable EPA assessment consistently gives the same results under similar conditions ensuring different assessors place a similar value on the evidence provided and make similar judgments when confronted with the same evidence
- A fair EPA assessment, in addition to being valid and reliable, provides equity of opportunity for apprentice in line with equality legislation
- Quality is a key principle in ensuring the credibility and status of Smart Awards end point assessment
- Sufficiency is the amount of EPA evidence to cover all the aspects of the required criteria
- Authenticity refers to the ownership of the EPA evidence. Assessors need to be confident that the work submitted really is the result of the apprentice own effort and expertise
- Currency refers to the date of the EPA evidence. Assessors must be sure that the EPA evidence submitted by the apprentice is recent enough to be considered a measure of the current levels of competence.

3. Responsibility

Validity is the degree to which it is possible to measure what needs to be measured by implementing an assessment procedure. Our expectation is that independent assessors who work on behalf of Smart Awards should, in particular:

- Effectively test the knowledge, skills and behaviour as prescribed within the apprenticeship standard and assessment plan,
- Enable results to be trusted as a measure of what an apprentice knows and can do,
- Have a purpose and content that meets the needs of end users, i.e. the employers who will be employing apprentice
- Be graded in line with clear and defensible prescriptions contained in the assessment plan
- Keep under regular review

4. Policy and implementation

This policy is structured around Smart Awards end point assessment principles and shows how they can be applied to ensure that end point assessments meet the apprenticeship standards and assessment plans.

The sections that follow focus mainly on validity and reliability, but you will see that the principles of equity, fairness and practicability are also addressed because they underpin all assessment issues.

Validity is a measure of the accuracy of an assessment. The end point assessment is valid when it:

- Is appropriate for its purpose
- Has been designed to allow apprentices to show that they have the required knowledge, understanding and skills to meet the standards of the apprenticeship

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- Allows all assessors to make reliable end point assessment decisions
- Allows the interpretation and inferences which can be drawn from the assessment outcomes to be meaningful and justifiable

Validity has to be ensured at each stage of the end point assessment process. There are two key aspects of validity used by Smart Awards — content and construct.

Content validity is the measure of how closely the content of an end point assessment matches the content of the apprenticeship standard and assessment plan. It is concerned with the level of knowledge, understanding, skills and behaviours that is required to meet the standard of the apprenticeship.

Construct validity concerns the extent to which an assessment actually measures what the apprenticeship standard and assessment plan states it is intended to measure. For example, an end point assessment that asked an apprentice to write about a skill rather than demonstrate it would have low construct validity.

Both types of validity are achieved by technical assessors choosing appropriate assessment methods, developing the assessment, and evaluating it against the end point assessment outcomes.

The steps in the next section ensures that each end point assessment is appropriate for its purpose and has high content and construct validity.

The key steps in ensuring validity are:

- **Get to know the content of the apprenticeship standard and assessment plan**
EPA assessors should take time to familiarise themselves with the apprenticeship standard and assessment plan and their specific requirements. This allows assessors to identify the knowledge, understanding, skills and behaviours which are to be assessed. An important element of valid assessment is to know what is required by the apprenticeship standard and assessment plan.
- **Create an end point assessment instruments**
As assessment is the process of evaluating an apprentice end point assessment. Smart Awards develops assessment instruments with the support of technical assessors that aligns to the apprenticeship standard and assessment outcomes with the learning process and the acquisition of knowledge, skills, understanding and behaviours indicating how and when the end point assessment will be assessed.
- **Think about the apprentice as well as the assessment**
 - Does the end point assessment match the apprenticeship standard and assessment plan?
 - Avoided over assessment
 - Make use of using e-assessment
 - Make available support and guidance materials
 - Ensure the time required for end point assessment is realistic
 - Ensure the end point assessment offer all apprentices an equal opportunity to demonstrate their attainment
 - Ensure the scenarios or contexts in the end point assessment is open and comprehensible to all apprentices
 - Ensure that end point assessment has no adverse impact on disabled apprentices or any other groups
 - Ensures that illustrative material reflect an inclusive view of society which promotes equality
 - Allows reasonable adjustments to be made

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- **End point assessment methods**

End point assessment methods and the development of the assessment itself requires professional expertise and judgement. Familiarity with the apprenticeship standards and assessment plans allows Smart Awards to identify what apprentices must be able to demonstrate, and the knowledge and understanding that they need to attain. Assessment methods will be developed in line with the appropriate apprenticeship standard.

- **Developing the end point assessment**

When development end point assessment Smart Awards will ensure that the choice of assessment method will:

- allow apprentices to produce sufficient evidence of the skills, knowledge and understanding specified in the apprenticeship standard to ensure coverage of the outcomes
- allow apprentices to produce evidence that can be measured against the standards
- be accessible to all apprentices who have the potential to achieve the standard, including disabled apprentices and/or those with additional support needs
- ensure end point assessments are carried out effectively and efficiently
- ensure that the end point assessment is fair for all apprentices
- ensure the end point assessment is it cost effective
- be free from bias

- **Define acceptable evidence for the end point assessment**

In developing the end point assessment, it is important to think about what is accepted as evidence and how this will be marked or measured. Smart Awards develops testing instruments and mark schemes in line with the apprenticeship assessment plan. This will ensure that:

- The knowledge, product or performance evidence expected to receive from the apprentice will actually be generated by the end point assessment Smart Awards has developed.
- Assessment decisions will be consistent and will be compare the evidence from other apprentices to ensure that grading to all apprentices is in the same way.
- The assessment decisions of all assessors will be consistent. An assessment scheme helps to ensure that all assessors apply the same standards across all apprentices
- The assessment process is as efficient as possible. A clear assessment scheme helps the process to be completed in the timeframe allowed for the end point assessment
- The type of evidence generated by the end point assessment will; give a full range of skills expect to see demonstrated; the expected performance levels; the degree of technical tolerance that is acceptable.