

APPRENTICESHIP WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: FINAL CASE STUDY

Improving End Point Assessment Outcomes – Collaborative Project

**Kid's Planet Day Nurseries,
Professional Apprenticeships,
College. But Different,
Seren Skills Network Ltd**

CREATED BY



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Improving End Point Assessment (EPA) Outcomes

Project Overview

This project was about investigating current practices in preparing apprentices for their End Point Assessment (EPA) and researching ways that this could be improved. The project took a three-way perspective and considered the learner, tutor, and employer input in EPA preparation. Primary research was undertaken with all three groups to inform the project. No changes to the original brief were made.

Project Aims

The aim of the project was to consider how apprentices are being prepared for their EPAs and what best practice could be found within the project partners. Learners, tutors, and employers were all directly involved in the research through a mixture of observations focus groups, surveys, and interviews. The purpose was to see if we could identify strategies and approaches that would maximise a successful EPA outcome on the first attempt.

We chose this area as we felt that apprentices should be able to pass their EPA first time round and we wanted to improve the success rates of first time EPA passes within our organisations. We also wanted to explore how this might differ between standards in different curriculum areas or whether good practice would work across the sector. We ensured that our outputs would be non-curriculum related and therefore would have the widest impact and usability across the sector.

As a result of this primary research, we aimed to create some outputs that could be used across the sector, regardless of the standard being delivered. These would consist of two elements (for tutors, apprentices, and employers)

- Videos (which will have a voice over recording for accessibility) of the findings.
- A written guide giving more detailed information.

Positive Impact and Expected Outcomes

There has been a 35% increase in successful EPA's first time in *Kid's Planet Day Nurseries* because of the changes that were made with greater employer input and a change in language used. Use of other staff to conduct professional discussions so learners are more confident in speaking to 'strangers'.

Observations at *College. But Different* now show a wide range of EPA techniques being used – use of 'rehearsal' projects and EPAs as well as using other staff to carry out rehearsal professional discussions. Assessment methods are now closely aligned to EPA requirements. A lot more emphasis is now placed on EPA requirements and skills development (e.g., communication and presentation skills) at the on-boarding stage to inform learners about EPA requirements. These skills are also included in assessment practices.

Professional Apprenticeships identified two strategic areas to maintain. 1. A strong embedding of English and maths within delivery, including confident speaking skills and 2. Use feedback from EPAO with Pass outcome students to filter back into delivery and assessment methods. *Professional Apprentices* expected project to help them maintain 100% EPA pass rate first time round and further improve the 80% distinction rate they currently hold.

All using new terminology such as 'rehearsals', learning from each other and sharing best practice between providers.

Project Outputs

- Video 'Employer guidance to support successful EPAs'.
- Video 'Learner guidance to support successful EPAs'.
- Video 'Tutor guidance to support successful EPAs'.
- Written guide 'Employer, Learner and Tutor Guide'.

It was eventually decided to write one combined guide rather than three separate ones, as the guidance was interchangeable and applicable to more than one audience The guide and introductory videos will be shared on the EFT AWD website for dissemination across the sector.

Future Activity

Heightened employer engagement in *Kid's Planet Day Nurseries* leading to an improvement in first time EPA success and increase in distinctions. Raising awareness of EPA in national networking groups (e.g., APPG – All Party Parliamentary Group who had little working knowledge about EPA requirements when *Kid's Planet Day Nurseries* was an employer representative) who are not always educationally focussed.

Increased understanding in *Professional Apprenticeships* (who already have an 80% distinction rate) to better distil the factors that have been part of this, and to allow this to be shared as best practice. (e.g., building transferable skills within session, level of support given by tutors which can be built further on)

College. But Different is a relatively new provider and this gave its tutors (who are also relatively new in post) the opportunity to explore best practice and reflect on their own approaches to EPA.

More emphasis is now placed on EPA requirements and skills development (e.g., communication and presentation skills) at the on-boarding stage to inform learners about EPA requirements. These skills are also included in assessment practices.

All the above has been included into strategic documents within the institutions (SAR and QIP) and assist with self-assessment. In the case of *Professional Apprenticeships*, it supported evidence for Ofsted when they were inspected in August 2023.

Recommendations for effective collaborative partnership working to address quality improvement in apprenticeship delivery.

- “Don’t under-estimate lack of employer knowledge as to how they can support and be involved in EPA development” *Kid’s Planet Day Nurseries* because of the employer forums and increased employer engagement.
- “Develop EPA via soft skills from day 1.” *College. But Different* for the tutor discussions.
- “Ensure assessment methods during delivery are closely aligned with EPA requirements.” *College. But Different* from the tutor discussions
- “From the start of the programme encourage learners to use the word ‘I’ rather than ‘we’ to help prepare them for the EPA.” Professional Apprenticeship from OTLA results

Where can colleagues find more information?

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