



NCFE regulations for the conduct of end- point assessment

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Scope of the Policy

This policy covers the delivery of NCFE End-Point Assessments (EPA) which are subject to internal and external Quality & Compliance. NCFE EPA products include those which may be offered and/or delivered under an NCFE-owned brand name (for example 'CACHE').

The policy also forms part of a suite of policies for NCFE's EPA products and services, all of which are designed to:

- protect apprentices who are registered with us;
- minimise the risk of an Adverse Effect occurring;
- help support us and all other partners involved in risk management and risk minimisation;
- help ensure we and all partners comply with all relevant legislation and guidance;
- help improve and refine our products and services.

For our partners, this policy supports compliance with the Agreement. It does not replace any of the requirements contained within that Agreement. Non-adherence to our policies may constitute maladministration, malpractice and/or a breach of the Agreement. Please ensure all policies are read and implemented carefully.

Purpose of the policy

Our policy assists us and our partners, by outlining the framework for delivery and invigilation of NCFE end-point assessments. This is important in situations which could result in a detrimental effect to the apprentice and/or could potentially compromise the integrity of our standards, systems and/or processes.

Who needs to know about the policy?

Partners must make sure that apprentices and staff, who are involved in the design, delivery, management, assessment and/or quality assurance of our EPA, are familiar with the contents of this policy. Staff can include site, sub-site or Agreemental staff.

Obtaining copies of the policy

Partners can download copies of the policy from our platform or request copies from NCFE, using the contact details provided in the contact section.

Reviewing the policy

We will review this policy annually, as a minimum, and where otherwise necessary, and may revise it in response to the findings of any review.

Complaint

Partners have the right to express their dissatisfaction regarding our actions, products or services. Please refer to the NCFE Complaints Procedure on our website for more information.

Section 1 Independence of EPA

1.1 Independence of EPA

The purpose of the end-point assessment (EPA) is to test that an apprentice is fully capable of doing their job before they receive their apprenticeship certificate. It also helps to demonstrate that what an apprentice has learned can be applied in the real world.

The main training provider has overall responsibility for the training and assessment of the apprentice throughout the on-programme phase of the apprenticeship. End-point assessment is a holistic and independent assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours, which have been learnt throughout an apprenticeship standard, and must be **entirely independent** of on-programme activity. In order to maintain independence and compliance with regulatory conditions, although NCFE EPA team can offer support and guidance around preparation for EPA, we cannot advise partners on *how* to deliver on-programme activity. For further guidance around requirements and preparation for EPA, please refer to the [ESFA apprenticeship funding rules](#).

EPAs must be completed:

- independently from the training of the standard;
- within the requirements of the standard, associated assessment plan and within specified time allocation (no activities/questions should be set as homework); and
- independently by the apprentice.

External partners **must not**:

- lead on any EPA activities;
- invigilate or conduct EPA assessments for apprentices they have supported during their on-programme activity;
- assess the EPA evidence at any point before Gateway or during EPA activity;
- record (either digitally or in written format), photocopy, alter or format EPA materials in any way.

1.2 Observation of the End-Point Assessment process

NCFE reserves the right to observe any stage of the EPA process with or without prior notification, to confirm that these regulations are being adhered to. Access should be granted to any NCFE representative, who will provide valid identification, to:

- check security of live EPA materials and/or assessments;
- speak to appropriate staff involved in the conduct, handling of, or invigilation of EPA materials and/or assessments;
- observe the assessment and/or invigilation process.

1.3 Ownership of EPA material

All EPA material remains the property of NCFE. This includes all question papers, answer sheets/booklets and digital evidence. EPA assessment materials are not returned to external partners.

Recording or copying **any** elements of assessments, either digitally or in written format, by anyone other than NCFE representatives is strictly forbidden. This includes writing down any questions that may be asked during an assessment, either verbally or in written format.

1.4 Malpractice and/or maladministration

If an NCFE representative observes, or suspects, any malpractice or non-compliance with these regulations, they have the right to suspend the EPA or declare the EPA void. In such cases, the NCFE EPA representative will report the incident to our EPA Quality & Compliance team, who will arrange to carry out an investigation in accordance with the Malpractice and Maladministration policy.

Section 2 Preparing for EPA

2.1 Preparing the Apprentices for EPA

Prior to any EPA activity, partners must inform apprentices of:

- the date, time and location of the EPA;
- the conditions under which their EPA will be conducted;
- the resources they are required to bring to the EPA and what will be supplied by the partner.

Apprentices must also be made aware that they cannot take any materials or pre-prepared evidence (e.g. notes or course work relating to the standard) into the EPA, unless specifically stated in the standard.

2.2 Reasonable adjustments and special considerations

The provision for reasonable adjustments and special considerations are made to ensure that apprentices receive recognition of their achievement so long as the equity, validity and reliability of the assessments can be assured. Such arrangements are not concessions to make assessments easier for apprentices, nor advantages to give apprentices a head start.

There are two ways in which access to fair assessment can be maintained, which are through:

- reasonable adjustments – agreed before the assessment takes place; or
- special considerations – applied post assessment.

Apprentices must be able to work with the equipment and materials with which they are accustomed, as far as permitted by these regulations. Reasonable adjustments

should be requested prior to assessment, if required, and these will be recorded on the invigilation paperwork that is issued with the assessments.

Refer to NCFE's EPA Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations policy, for further information.

2.3 Accommodation

To ensure the EPA is administered correctly, the partner is responsible for ensuring the apprentice has access to an assessment environment that is:

- suitable in terms of specialist facilities/resources (including computers and printers if applicable), where relevant;
- stocked with appropriate stationery and any specified items required by apprentices;
- suitably quiet, undisturbed, with adequate space, heating, lighting and ventilation.

In addition, for centre invigilated assessments, the partner must also ensure that the following information is visible on a board/flipchart or white board

- o the date, start and finish time for the EPA;
- o standard title and paper number (including pathway, if appropriate);
- o partner name and number.

And that the room is set up correctly:

- o free from any display/teaching and learning material (such as diagrams, wall charts etc.) which may provide the apprentice with an advantage in the EPA;
- o a sign placed outside the room to indicate an assessment is in progress;
- o ensure that all apprentices are able to clearly see a clock which must show the actual time of which the assessment starts;
- o allow for apprentices to be free from disruption. If an assessment is disrupted for reasons other than emergencies, it may be invalidated;
- o if apprentices are working at tables or computer workstations, they must be seated on separate tables/workstations;
- o seating arrangements should be set out in such a way that they are unable to overlook another apprentice's work.

2.4 Use of computers, internet/intranet and electronic devices

2.4.1 Use of computers/electronic devices

Partners should confirm if the use of computers/any electronic device(s) are allowed or required for the EPA. This information will be in the NCFE EPA guidance for each standard. If applicable, the partner needs to:

- ensure that appropriate software is installed on computers to allow digital assessments to be conducted securely, at least 24 hours prior to assessment;
- provide suitably trained Technical Assistants who are readily available in case of equipment malfunction only, and have no other involvement with the EPA;
- ensure any device used to complete the EPA provided by the partner is:
 - o free from any material/additional facilities that would give the apprentice an unfair advantage, e.g. retrievable information etc;

- not borrowed from or loaned to another apprentice during the EPA.

2.4.2 Use of internet/intranet

Access to the internet or any other form of digital resource during live assessment is **strictly prohibited**, unless otherwise stated in individual standards. Internet access should therefore be disabled during the period of live assessment.

Where use of the internet **is** permitted, the following must be adhered to:

- the evidence must be the apprentice's own work; and
- EPA material must not be uploaded onto any social networking sites/put into the public domain.

2.4.3 Recording of assessment

No partner, other than the IEPA, is permitted to record **any** assessment, either digitally or in written format.

2.5 Direct Booking of assessment

Effective from the 1st November 2021, all EPA bookings including any Re-sits/Re-takes will be arranged via the EPA Support Team, instead of the allocated IEPA

Further guidance and process maps can be found on the NCFE EPA Resources Platform.

Following a successful Gateway audit, the EPA Support Team will arrange assessment dates.

The EPA Support Team will make **two** attempts contact the Apprentice to arrange assessment dates. The Apprentice will have two business days to respond to each request to confirm assessment dates. If no response is received, the Apprentice will be placed "on hold" until they respond.

Depending on the Agreed Standard, the Provider and/or the Employer may be required to attend assessments as panel members.

Once the assessment dates are confirmed the EPA Support Team will send:

- Confirmation of the dates and times agreed for the assessment(s)
- Information regarding how the assessment(s) will work
- Links to relevant guidance documents
- Calendar invitation(s) to the Apprentice and any panel members (if relevant).

2.6 Failing an assessment

Where an Apprentice fails an assessment, NCFE will provide feedback which:

- Is sufficiently detailed to allow the Provider to interpret the outcome of the assessment and design additional training for the Apprentice on the reasons for failure
- Notifies the Provider of the Apprentice's options for re-attempting an assessment, including details of timescales

- Gives the Provider and Employer clear understanding of the appeals procedure

The Provider is responsible for:

- Agreeing any next steps with the Employer and the Apprentice including further learning if required
- Any charges associated with re-sits or re-takes
- The Provider shall review the EPA Re-sit and Re-take Policy to understand the permitted attempts, timescales and charges. See Section 2(b) above which includes a link to the Mandatory Policies and Procedures.
- Completing the Re-sit/Re-take form which can be found on the Resources Library once the apprentice is ready to Re-sit/Re-take the assessment component which they failed. Once form is fully and accurately completed, it should be submitted to the appropriate sector mailbox, as identified on the results form:

Section 3 Administering EPA

3.1 Security and confidentiality of EPA materials

All EPA materials remain the property of NCFE. As EPA activity is a live assessment, no person, other than the IEPA, is permitted to record any part of an assessment, either digitally or in written format.

EPA materials must remain securely stored and/or packaged (physically or digitally) until arrival into the assessment room at the start of each EPA.

During assessments which involve multiple persons, such as cohort assessments or panel interviews, **all** persons must be visible to the IEPA/invigilator throughout the assessment.

3.2 Technical preparation and/or failure

All technical requirements, such as access to digital resources, testing software, communication platforms or specialist equipment should be completed **at least 24 hours before the start of the EPA**. Please refer to any additional guidance documents pertinent to appropriate software/platforms.

Failure to perform system checks on software or platforms prior to assessment may have an impact on the assessment outcome. Refer to [Appendix B](#).

3.2.1 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ), Situational Judgement Tests (SJTs) and Short Answer Questions (SAQs)

In instances of technology failure for online MCQ/SJT/SAQ assessments conducted on either Surpass or Proctoring, the following conditions apply:

- The assessment may be invalidated and must be rescheduled
- The outcome of the assessment may be affected. Refer to [Appendix B](#).

3.2.2 Presentations / Professional Discussions / Interviews conducted by an IEPA

The apprentice will be required to connect to an alternative video platform within 15 minutes of the technology failure. If the apprentice is not able to connect to a video platform within 15 minutes, dependent on the nature of the technology failure, this may be counted as a failed attempt. Refer to [Appendix B](#).

3.2.3 Fees and/or sanctions for technology failures

- Dependent on the nature of technology failure, the result of the EPA may be affected and re-scheduling of EPA may be subject to re-sit fees. Refer to [Appendix B](#).
- In instances of continued technology failure, no further assessments will be planned until NCFE are confident that all technology issues have been resolved.

3.3 Arrival and identification of apprentices

3.3.1 Arrival

- apprentices must be in the EPA assessment room (physical or digital) at least 5 minutes before the start of the EPA to allow time for the invigilator/IEPA to read out appropriate instructions;
- all personal belongings must be securely stored, out of reach of the apprentices;
- apprentices are under formal assessment conditions from the moment they enter the room in which they will be taking their assessment(s) until at which point they are permitted to leave.

3.3.2 Identification

It is essential that apprentices are identified prior to the EPA:

- photographic identification must be presented to enable the IEPA/invigilator to verify the identity of the apprentice;
- if photographic ID is not presented, members of partners' staff, who are familiar with the apprentice may be present at the start of the assessment to assist with the identification;
- if identification is not possible due to religious garments being worn, e.g. a veil, then the apprentice should be approached by a partner of the same gender and taken to a private room where they should be politely asked to remove the religious clothing for identification purposes. When identification has been confirmed, the garment can be replaced and the apprentice can proceed to complete the EPA.
- The apprentice must use the name that has been registered with NCFE. Failure to do so may cause delays to the release of results. If any amendments are required then the partner should contact the NCFE EPA team as soon as possible.

If an apprentice sits an EPA using another name (whether this is intentional or not), this will be investigated in line with NCFE EPA Maladministration and Malpractice Policy.

3.3.3 Late arrivals

Individual assessment

If an apprentice has not arrived within 15 minutes of the assessment start time, the assessment will be cancelled and recorded as No-show. Refer to [Appendix B](#).

Cohort assessment

Where an apprentice arrives later than the specified time for their assessment, and the assessment has already begun, under no circumstances should access to the assessment room be granted to the late apprentice. However, where it has been agreed that another assessment will take place on the same day, at a different time, the invigilator may agree to allow the late apprentice to attend the later sitting. In these circumstances, the following applies:

- *Paper-based assessment* - the invigilator should use the spare papers which have been included and prepared for this subsequent assessment. Under no circumstances should the late apprentice conduct their assessment using assessment papers from their original planned time.
- *Digital assessment* - the invigilator should use the same access code as was issued for the original assessment time but record the change of time on the invigilator records.

3.4 Duration of assessment

The permitted time must **not** be increased, unless a reasonable adjustment has been agreed for an apprentice. Where applicable, approved reasonable adjustments will be evidenced on the apprentice's records and must be recorded on the IEPA's assessment records and/or the invigilator's register.

The permitted time must not be decreased. Apprentices must be given the opportunity to complete the full amount of time for the EPA.

3.5 Apprentices finishing and/or leaving the assessment earlier than the assessment end time

If an apprentice requests to leave an EPA earlier than the planned end time, either because they have finished or do not wish to continue, the following applies:

- Apprentices who have finished/withdrawn from the assessment and have been allowed to leave the assessment room early must hand in all assessment materials, including: assessment paper, answer paper and any associated notes, before they leave the assessment room;
- Apprentices who have left the assessment should not be allowed back into the room.

3.6 Temporary disturbances to assessment

3.6.1 Toilet break or illness

If an apprentice needs to leave the EPA room temporarily because they're unwell or need to go to the toilet, the invigilator must ensure the apprentice is supervised and does not:

- speak to anyone else;
- consult any notes;
- have access to a mobile phone or any other electronic devices, e.g. iPods, Smart watches etc. or make any calls; or

- breach the security of the EPA.

In cases of cohort assessment, the remaining apprentices must not be left unattended at any point.

3.6.2 Emergencies during EPA

If an emergency occurs during the EPA, e.g. fire alarm, bomb warning etc., the invigilator must ensure:

- all assessment materials are left on desks and/or computers left switched on;
- the EPA room is evacuated in accordance with the partner's agreed emergency procedures;
- apprentices are not allowed to converse with each other;
- apprentices are unable to consult books, notes, mobile phones or the internet.

3.6.3 Other unplanned disturbances

If an assessment is disturbed for any reason other than those detailed above, the IEPA/invigilator should use their discretion to determine if the security or validity of the assessment has been compromised.

3.6.4 Continuing the assessment after a disturbance

If the above conditions have been adhered to and the security and/or validity of the assessment has not been compromised, the EPA can be resumed when it is safe to do so and the full remainder of allocated time applied.

If the IEPA/invigilator believes at any time that there has been a breach of the assessment security, then they must void the assessment immediately and notify NCFE.

If the assessment cannot be resumed, or the full duration cannot be honoured, then the IEPA/invigilator must record all details on the assessment/invigilation records and notify NCFE as soon as possible, to avoid disadvantaging the apprentice(s).

All instances of apprentices leaving the room temporarily must be entered on the assessment/invigilation records.

3.7 Ending an EPA due to unsafe practice

If unsafe practice is observed or identified at any stage during the EPA, the assessment will be stopped immediately. If the unsafe practice has been conducted by the apprentice, the EPA result will be recorded as a Fail grade. It may also be necessary for NCFE EPA+ to notify relevant industry regulators.

3.8 Cancelling assessment / Apprentice doesn't attend

To cancel an assessment, contact the person who has booked the assessment. If an assessment is cancelled with less than 24hrs notice, or the apprentice does not attend the assessment, this will be recorded as a No-Show. This may affect the result of the EPA and be subject to re-sit fees or charges. Refer to Appendix B. Section Section 4

Section 4 Security of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) and/or Situational Judgement Test (SJT) and/or Short Answer Questions (SAQs) EPA materials

4.1 Handling and storage of MCQ/SJT/SAQ EPA materials

Every care is taken to ensure that all EPA materials are securely delivered and safely received. Once a partner has signed to accept delivery of the EPA materials, security of the assessment materials is then the responsibility of the partner.

At the point of delivery, assessment materials **must** be securely stored. It is the responsibility of the partner to set out the appropriate terms of authorisation for members of partner staff to ensure that:

- the security and integrity of the EPA materials (e.g. used/unused test papers, partially or fully completed apprentice work, and all EPA documentation) is maintained at all times;
- partners are able to demonstrate the receipt, secure movement and secure storage of assessment materials;
- any amendments/additions/withdrawals have been addressed with NCFE;
- NCFE are informed of any errors with, or damage to, EPA materials upon receipt;
- only authorised personnel have access to the EPA materials and/or completed apprentice work.

EPA material must remain sealed, stored securely and must **not** be opened before the scheduled date and time of assessment.

NCFE are not responsible for any loss that occurs after receipt at the partner and reserves the right to investigate any irregular circumstances under the NCFE EPA Maladministration and Malpractice policy.

4.2 Digital assessments

In addition to section 5.1, partners must:

- provide appropriate security systems to prevent unauthorised access to the online platform; and
- confirm they meet the technical specification for the NCFE EPA online platform.

Also refer to [section 3.2](#)

4.3 Withdrawal from the MCQ/SJT/SAQ assessment

- If an apprentice attends the assessment, this counts as an attempt and the entry cannot be withdrawn. Refer to [Appendix B](#).
- If the assessment is cancelled with more than 24 hours' notice, this entry can be withdrawn and will not count as an attempt. Refer to [Appendix B](#).

- If the assessment has not been cancelled, or is cancelled with less than 24 hours notice, and/or the apprentice does not attend, this will count as an attempt against the assessment and will be recorded as Fail. Refer to [Appendix B](#).

Section 5 Invigilation of MCQ/SJT/SAQ EPA

5.1 Recruitment and management of partners involved in invigilating EPA MCQ/SJT/SAQ

The partner is responsible for the recruitment and training of EPA invigilators and ensuring that they are equipped to carry out their duties appropriately.

EPA invigilators must be:

- appointed by the partner and act on behalf of the partner;
- suitably trained and familiar with the content of these regulations. Details of this training must be retained on file for inspection by the NCFE EPA team as required;
- provided with all resources and documents necessary for the conduct of the EPA assessments;
- aware of any reasonable adjustments authorised for apprentices. (Note: all reasonable adjustments must be pre-approved in line with NCFE EPA Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy).

EPA invigilators must **not**:

- be a friend or relative of the apprentice;
- be an apprentice themselves;
- have been involved in the on-programme learning of the apprentice.

5.2 Appropriate invigilator

No partner may be appointed to act as sole invigilator for an EPA involving apprentices they have trained or internally quality assured during the on-programme activity of the apprenticeship. They can act as an **additional** invigilator only.

When readers/scribes are provided for apprentices with reasonable adjustment requirements, an invigilator must also be present. Readers/scribes are **not** permitted to act as invigilators.

5.3 Apprentice/invigilator ratio

The **minimum** number of invigilators required for the EPA of apprentices is as follows:

Number of apprentices	Minimum number of rooms	<u>Minimum</u> number of invigilators
Up to 30	1	1
30-60	2	1 per room

Where only one invigilator is present, they must be able to summon assistance in case of emergencies, without the need to leave apprentices unattended, e.g. if an apprentice becomes ill. The number of invigilators in the room must **never** fall below the minimum numbers specified. An invigilator is only allowed a mobile phone in the examination room for this specific purpose. The mobile phone must be kept on silent mode.

Apprentices requiring the use of a Communication Professional may need to be accommodated in another room, in which case a separate invigilator will be required.

5.4 Seating plan

Apprentices should be seated in such a way that they cannot observe another apprentice's answers. A seating plan must be prepared showing the exact position of each apprentice and the position of the invigilator(s). This information must be retained by the partner and made available on request. Apprentices with access arrangements must be identified on the seating plans.

5.5 Opening the assessments

When assessments are opened at the allocated time/date, NCFE must be informed if:

- any materials have been damaged in transit;
- there are any discrepancies in apprentice details or access codes;
- missing assessments are identified; and/or
- any breach of security has occurred.

5.6 Invigilation instructions

Also refer to [section 4](#).

- invigilators must read out the generic instructions supplied with the invigilation pack;
- all assessment material must be securely stored in between sessions;
- invigilation documentation must be completed at the end of each session and stored by the partner;

Invigilators **must**:

- remain alert and observe apprentices at all times. They must not read or carry out any other activity unless permitted within regulations;
- ensure the correct examination papers have been placed face-up on the apprentices' desks. This includes modified papers or those on coloured paper. Question papers must **never** be left unattended;
- before apprentices are allowed to start the assessment the invigilator must ask apprentices to check that they have been given the correct question paper for the correct EPA;
- announce clearly to the apprentices that they may complete the details on their answer sheets;
- announce clearly to apprentices when they may begin to write their answers. The assessment will formally start at this point;
- ensure accurate timekeeping for the length of the EPA;

- remind apprentices of time remaining at 5 minutes from the end of the allocated time;
- immediately report any incidents or issues which may occur during the EPA to NCFE and complete details on the EPA documentation.

invigilators **must not**:

- leave the EPA room without another invigilator being present;
- read any words from the EPA paper other than the instructions for apprentices;
- rephrase or explain any terms to an apprentice;
- comment or offer advice to the apprentice about their work;
- make any comment where an apprentice believes that there is an error or omission on a paper. In such cases, invigilators must refer the matter immediately to NCFE.

5.7 Invigilation records

All invigilation records should be accurately completed and stored by the partner; they should be made available to NCFE on request. In instances where irregularities have occurred during invigilation, immediate notification should be made to NCFE.

Section 6 End of the assessment

6.1 End of assessment

A five-minute warning for the end of the assessment should be given. For cohort assessment, if apprentices have different finishing times, this should be considered when giving the five-minute warning.

At the end of the allocated assessment time, apprentices should be instructed to:

- stop writing/working/speaking. If apprentices fail to do so, they must be warned that they face disqualification;
- check their personal details are correct and completed on all documents, if required;
- label their work, if required;
- remain seated and silent while the invigilator/IEPA collects/closes all of the assessment material;

6.2 Extra time

Only apprentices with pre-authorised reasonable adjustments should be granted extra time. Those apprentices with reasonable adjustments (extra time and/or supervised rest breaks) should carry on for the necessary additional time. Invigilators/IEPAs must be aware in advance which apprentices have been granted extra time to complete their assessment and/or those with supervised rest breaks.

6.3 Labelling of work

All individual pieces of evidence produced/storage mediums and additional paper used by the apprentice during EPA must be clearly labelled by the apprentice with:

- Partner name;
- Partner number;
- Apprentice name;
- Apprentice number; and
- Standard.

Labelling can be completed after the EPA under supervision to ensure the apprentice is not changing/adding to their answers.

If an IEPA is unable to identify the evidence that relates to each task, then the assessment may not be marked.

6.4 Collecting EPA materials

The Invigilator's register/record of attendance must be completed before the end of the assessment.

When collecting the EPA materials, the invigilator should check that the apprentice and partner information matches the details on the invigilator's register. If a discrepancy is identified, the invigilator may correct the discrepancy or add to the information recorded by the apprentice on the front of their answer sheet. For example, partner number, apprentice number, apprentice name. In such a situation, the correction should be counter-signed on the answer sheet. Partners must **not** alter any other details on the apprentice's answer sheet. If any amendments are made, the records must be returned immediately to NCFE EPA Quality Assurance team.

6.5 Apprentices leaving the room at the end of the assessment

The invigilator should ensure that all assessment materials are accounted for, prior to allowing any apprentices to leave the room, ensuring no disturbance is caused to other apprentices.

Invigilators must also ensure any rough paper is collected and securely destroyed.

6.6 Returning assessment materials

Also refer to [section 3.1](#)

All assessment materials, including unused assessment papers, should be returned to NCFE. Under **no** circumstances should any EPA assessment material be saved/copied by the partner.

Partners must ensure that no EPA and/or apprentice evidence is tampered with/copied at any point during or at the end of the standard.

Paper-based assessments

- **All** assessment materials should be returned to NCFE using the return envelope provided;

- Assessment materials **must** be sent by special delivery/secure courier **within one working day of the assessment taking place**;
- NCFE will investigate why the EPA material has not been returned on time and late returns will be marked at their discretion;
- The partner is responsible for the EPA material until it has been delivered to NCFE and is signed for;
- Any missing materials may be investigated under the Maladministration and Malpractice policy. If a missing exam paper needs to be withdrawn from circulation, the partner may be subject to charge of production of a replacement paper.

Online assessments

- NCFE will be notified automatically when an assessment is complete;
- Computers should be logged out of any assessment platforms;
- Invigilation documentation should be scanned and stored by the partner and made available to NCFE on request.

Section 7 Compliance

7.1 Authenticity of evidence

All work produced by the apprentice must be authentic. By submitting evidence for assessment, the partner is confirming authenticity of the apprentice's work. Any information drawn from the internet or other sources should be cited and referenced accordingly. If plagiarism is suspected or confirmed, an investigation will be conducted and the assessment result may be suspended or void. Lack of intent does not absolve responsibility for plagiarism. Refer to [NCFE's Plagiarism Guidance](#) for further guidance. In order to further validate authenticity of work, apprentices may be asked further questions on the content.

7.2 Breach of conditions or regulations

NCFE reserve the right to investigate any case of suspected, alleged or actual malpractice/maladministration committed by an apprentice, partner, invigilators or other person(s) involved in the conduct of the EPA, in order to establish all facts and circumstances surrounding the case. The investigation will be carried out in accordance with the [EPA Maladministration and Malpractice policy](#).

Section 8

Contact

If you have any queries relating to this policy, please contact NCFE EPA Quality & Compliance team in writing:

Email: epaqualityassurance@ncfe.org.uk

Post:
NCFE EPA Quality & Compliance Team
Q6, Quorum Park
Benton Lane
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE12 8BT

Appendix A Mandatory disclosure and confidentiality

Mandatory disclosure

It is imperative that the integrity of our assessments are maintained. We are aware that partner organisations often work with more than one End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO), and that therefore more than one EPAO may be at risk when things go wrong.

Our regulators have outlined some specific conditions that we must meet to protect the integrity across the sector. This includes the requirement that where certain things are identified (such as malpractice), or certain actions taken (such as when sanctions are applied) the regulators and other relevant EPAOs who may be affected must be informed.

Depending on the seriousness of the matter, we may be required to declare to our regulators that we are no longer compliant due to an act or omission by partners which has put us in breach. In this event, we may have regulatory action directed against us, such as monetary penalties. In accordance with the Agreement, where appropriate, we reserve the right to direct such financial penalties against partners, should they be as a result of the act or omission.

Confidentiality

We may need to access confidential information. We will ensure that such information is kept secure and only used for the purposes of the investigation and in line with relevant data protection legislation. We will not normally disclose the information to third parties unless required to do so, e.g. to our regulators and/or the Police or other relevant and/or Statutory Bodies.

Termination for convenience

Our actions under this Policy and any sanctions imposed will be proportionate. Where possible, we will always try to work with partners in resolving issues. However, nothing within this policy precludes us from invoking our right under the Agreement to terminate our relationship with partners.

Appendix B: No-show / Technology Failures

