

How to Guide for an Interview

What is it?

An Interview consists of an Independent End-Point Assessor (IEPA) asking the apprentice a series of questions, to assess their competence against the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs). It is a structured dialogue between the apprentice, IEPA and in some cases, a small panel. It differs from a Professional Discussion in that the IEPA's role is restricted to asking set, focused questions, and there is no scope for two-way discussion. The IEPA leads this process to obtain information from the apprentice and enable a structured assessment decision-making process. This assessment method is used to assess the knowledge and understanding of a subject, as well as the skills and behaviours within an occupation that may not naturally occur. In some apprenticeships, it is known as a 'Competency-based Interview' and focuses on a series of set competency-based questions, which have been designed to test application of knowledge and learning, against the relevant standard. The Interview will most likely be recorded via video, audio or in writing by the IEPA.



Prior to the Interview, the apprentice will normally be asked to submit evidence of their work on-programme; this could be a Portfolio, Work-based Project, CPD Log or a series of Witness Testimonies and/or Reflective Journals. The IEPA will review this evidence prior to the Interview, and the questions they ask at end-point assessment (EPA) will refer to it.

If the Interview is carried out by a panel, apprentices will know in advance who will be on the panel. The panel will be led by the IEPA and will typically be made up of representatives from the apprentice's programme of learning; for example, their employer and/or someone from their ITP. Some apprentices may be nervous or anxious completing this assessment, which may impair their performance, so carefully preparing to take part in this activity is important.

How to Prepare

Taking part in mock Interviews are a useful tool to prepare for this EPA method. Although it may be difficult to identify exactly what will be asked in advance of the EPA Interview, it is still useful to practise answering questions in a more formal setting; particularly with a panel and especially if this is something new and/or unfamiliar. Interviews are an important activity in all work areas, so the skills and competencies gained by practising them are of benefit to all. Building self-confidence in an Interview situation would be valuable for all apprentices.

As the Interview is most likely to be based on some form of evidence, the apprentice should have a strong understanding of the contents of their submission, especially if any of the evidence contained in it is weaker in demonstrating KSBs. Any areas of competence (from the relevant standard) which have 'gaps' in them are more likely to be asked about in the Interview. A review of the evidence submitted, supported by the employer or ITP, will help the apprentice to prepare for the Interview.

Apprentices should:

- ensure they can talk confidently about the work they have submitted and presented prior to the Interview
- be prepared to give other examples than those already presented, and be able to expand on the points made in their submission of evidence
- for Competency-based Interviews, prepare 2 or 3 good examples of demonstrating competence from the workplace drawing on their experiences
- check which KSBs are being assessed at Interview, and look at any assessment plans/feedback they have had whilst on-programme - review the documents submitted in advance of the Interview, and make notes related to what has been learned whilst on the apprenticeship programme
- review what language is appropriate for an Interview; this will include the use of specialised language and terminology, and checking that the terms used in their workplace will be understood by the IEPA
- ask questions of their manager, colleagues and/or ITP if there are any points related to the Interview they are unsure of
- consider any legislation/codes of conduct which have impacted on their work and practices, as well as any health and safety regulations and how they guide what workers in their industry do
- identify and explore the type of questions they may be asked during the Interview.