

GUIDANCE NOTE

Issued: 14th August 2020

Valid Until: 31st Dec 2020

MAINTAINING WORK-BASED OBSERVATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The following guidance is designed to enable end-point assessment organisations (EPAOs) to take the actions described in this guidance if they deem it necessary. The scope of this guidance is limited to those EPAOs working with NSAR as their EQAO and is only those apprenticeship standards listed below:

Supply Chain Warehouse Operative Level 2 – ST0259

Supply Chain Operator Level 2 – ST0258

NSAR is aware that the opportunity to have an independent (EPAO) assessor to carry out the workplace observations is now severely limited because of the current Covid-19 situation. In response to this there are two potential courses of action available:

1. Implement any break in learning that has been introduced by the ESFA in light of the current Covid-19 situation, as a way to postpone end-point assessment and as a result, the workplace observation. Where this is not an option then:
2. EPAOs can use the Covid-19 temporary discretion agreed by NSAR or the IFATE to replace the practical assessment (observation) with an adjusted or alternative assessment by either of the following:
 - a. NSAR promote the agreement with IFATE which records that EPAOs can make an adjustment to the practical assessment (observation) methodology, allowing EPAOs to access assessors locally, (from the employer and not from the training provider) to provide observation evidence to the EPAO Independent Assessor (who will make the EPA decision), if each of the following conditions can be satisfied:
 - i. The person from the employer who is providing the observation evidence must be occupationally competent or have responsibility for the occupational competence of people working in the apprentice's role
 - ii. The person from the employer who is providing the observation evidence has been trained in the assessment requirements of the assessment intervention (observation in the workplace) as set out in the standard/assessment plan, and *preferably* holding an assessor qualification or credential
 - iii. There is no conflict of interest risking compromising the integrity of assessment decisions about apprentice performance,
 - iv. There is an auditable record of the assessment and the assessment judgements made by the EPAO that will allow EPAO and EQAO quality assurance and scrutiny.

- b. As an alternative approach IFATE have allowed for the substitution of the practical assessment (observation) by a witness testimony obtained from a relevant person within the employer (the employer and not the training provider). This will be followed up by a professional discussion by the EPAO Independent Assessor. This additional provision has been introduced by IFATE and NSAR has been instructed to communicate this IFATE decision to EPAOs as another permissible option in assessing these standards. This provision for a change to the assessment plan methodology is dependent on EPAOs ensuring that the following conditions can be satisfied:
- i. The person completing the witness testimony must be occupationally competent or have responsibility for the occupational competence of people working in the apprentice's role.
 - ii. The person completing the witness testimony has been trained by the EPAO in the assessment requirements of the assessment intervention (witness testimony) including training in familiarisation with the assessment criteria and associated NSAR Assessment Plan Guidance Notes and NSAR Distinction Criteria Guidance Note (i.e. they must understand all of the criteria against which they are providing the testimony)
 - iii. The witness testimony is obtained prior to the professional discussion being conducted; the professional discussion will take the witness testimony into consideration. Any apprentice who is recorded as not passing the witness testimony is not put forward for professional discussion and, in these circumstances, is then delayed until Covid-19 government guidance is changed and a practical assessment (observation) can take place.
 - iv. Witness testimony records should be recorded in sufficient detail to enable the EPAO to make a robust assessment judgement against each assessment criteria and thus allowing for EPAO assessment, internal quality assurance and scrutiny.
 - v. Professional Discussion is conducted by the EPAO Independent Assessor and can be done remotely following appropriate security and quality assurance practices and fully recorded.
 - vi. There should be no conflict of interest risking compromising the integrity of assessment decisions about apprentice performance.
 - vii. There is an auditable record of the assessments and the assessment judgements made including records of assessment decisions made by the EPAO against each assessment criteria (agreed by the EPAO).
 - viii. The end point assessment must adopt the following mandatory mapping of the ST0259/AP02 and ST0258/AP02 Assessment Plan Skills Learning Outcomes, and the Distinction Criteria, to the temporary C-19 assessment methods and instruments as shown in the tables on the following pages:

Table 1: Mapping Table SCWOL2 (ST0259/AP02) Relating to IFATE Substitution of Observation by WT and PD (see page above for details)

	Learning Outcome	Assessment Methodology
1	Operate at least one vehicle safely and efficiently	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
2	Use and position vehicle fitted equipment	Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
3	Safely and efficiently move, handle, pack and unpack different items	Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
4	Manage waste effectively	Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
5	Safely and efficiently load and unload items	Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
6	Select, prepare and use most appropriate packing materials	Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
7	Use correct equipment and procedures to record receiving or stowing goods	Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
8	Use IT systems and other relevant technology and systems	Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
	Distinction Criteria	
D1	Provide more advanced, sophisticated examples and detailed and relevant responses relating to warehousing systems and processes	Employer Manager Witness Testimony PLUS Full Professional Discussion between EPAO Independent Assessor and Apprentice (using the NSAR Guidance Notes relating to Grade Boundaries and Distinction Criteria Guidance) for every Distinction Criteria to support the claim to distinction-level competence.
D2	Have a detailed understanding of key concepts in warehousing and their specific role and how they interlink	Employer Manager Witness Testimony PLUS Full Professional Discussion between EPAO Independent Assessor and Apprentice (using the NSAR Guidance Notes relating to Grade Boundaries and Distinction Criteria Guidance) for every Distinction Criteria to support the claim to distinction-level competence.
D3	Recognise the varying impact of different strengths and weaknesses to overall outcomes, and explain effective ways to improve the outcomes or processes	Employer Manager Witness Testimony PLUS Full Professional Discussion between EPAO Independent Assessor and Apprentice (using the NSAR Guidance Notes relating to Grade Boundaries and Distinction Criteria Guidance) for every Distinction Criteria to support the claim to distinction-level competence.
D4	Show detailed planning, organisation and investigatory skills in a well-structured and thorough format	Employer Manager Witness Testimony PLUS Full Professional Discussion between EPAO Independent Assessor and Apprentice (using the NSAR Guidance Notes relating to Grade Boundaries and Distinction Criteria Guidance) for every Distinction Criteria to support the claim to distinction-level competence.
D5	Demonstrate the ability to work to tight deadlines and to review plans	Employer Manager Witness Testimony PLUS Full Professional Discussion between EPAO Independent Assessor and Apprentice (using the NSAR Guidance Notes relating to Grade Boundaries and Distinction Criteria Guidance) for every Distinction Criteria to support the claim to distinction-level competence.

A witness testimony form should be developed by the EPAO which enables the witness to record their testimony in accordance with the mapping Table 1 above.

EPAO Independent Assessors will make all final EPA decisions using input from the employer-witness where this methodology has been adopted.

The EPAO may be asked to demonstrate how each of these conditions has been satisfied in the course of EQA Monitoring.

Table 1: Mapping Table SCOL2 (ST0258/AP02) Relating to IFATE Substitution of Observation by WT and PD

	Learning Outcome	Assessment Methodology
	Core Skills	
1	Be able to demonstrate safe moving and handling of different objects	Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
	Removals Operative Skills	
1	Be able to plan and re-plan for a commercial removal job	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
2	Be able to select, prepare and use materials efficiently	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
3	Be able to move and handle items safely	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
4	Be able to use of machinery and equipment safely	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
5	Be able to prepare documentation for removals jobs	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
6	Be able to load and unload items safely and efficiently	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
7	Be able to dismantle and/or reassemble furniture safely and efficiently	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
8	Be able to use basic IT systems	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
	Traffic Office Skills	
1	Be able to demonstrate compliance with current appropriate rules and regulation	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
2	Be able to prepare the delivery of products safely and efficiently	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
3	Be able to use Transport Management Systems (TMS)	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
4	Be able to plan and provide briefs to other operators on safe use of equipment and machinery	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
5	Be able to process goods when returned to base	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
6	Be able to debrief drivers on their return to base	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
7	Be able to follow instructions for maintaining equipment and machinery	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
8	Be able to schedule vehicle maintenance	'Employer Manager' Witness Testimony (WT) & Independent Assessor Professional Discussion (PD)
	Distinction Criteria	
D1	Provide more advanced, sophisticated examples and detailed and relevant responses relating to knowledge of systems and processes	Employer Manager Witness Testimony PLUS Full Professional Discussion between EPAO Independent Assessor and Apprentice (using the NSAR Guidance Notes relating to Grade Boundaries and Distinction Criteria Guidance) for every Distinction Criteria to support the claim to distinction-level competence.
D2	Have a detailed understanding of key concepts and how they interlink	Employer Manager Witness Testimony PLUS Full Professional Discussion between EPAO Independent Assessor and Apprentice (using the NSAR Guidance Notes relating to Grade Boundaries and Distinction Criteria Guidance) for every Distinction Criteria to support the claim to distinction-level competence.

D3	Recognise the varying impact of different strengths and weaknesses to overall outcomes, and explain effective ways to improve the outcomes or processes	Employer Manager Witness Testimony PLUS Full Professional Discussion between EPAO Independent Assessor and Apprentice (using the NSAR Guidance Notes relating to Grade Boundaries and Distinction Criteria Guidance) for <i>every</i> Distinction Criteria to support the claim to distinction-level competence.
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D5	Demonstrate the ability to work to tight deadlines and to review plans	Employer Manager Witness Testimony PLUS Full Professional Discussion between EPAO Independent Assessor and Apprentice (using the NSAR Guidance Notes relating to Grade Boundaries and Distinction Criteria Guidance) for <i>every</i> Distinction Criteria to support the claim to distinction-level competence.

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