End-Point Assessment

Early Years Lead Practitioner Level 5 (V1.1)
Support Pack

nqual.

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INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the requirements, advice, and guidance for the End-Point Assessment (EPA) of the Early Years Lead Practitioner Level 5 apprenticeship standard. It is designed for apprentices, employers and training providers involved with the End-Point Assessment of an apprentice studying Early Years Lead Practitioner Level 5.

An apprentice for Early Years Lead Practitioner Level 5 should have a minimum of 12 months learning prior to End-Point Assessment (EPA).

This document is divided into sections covering all of the relevant aspects of EPA for Level 5 Early Years Lead Practitioner.

Should you require any further information other than the guidance in this document, please do not hesitate to contact *admin@nqual.co.uk*

Within this guide you will find references to End-Point Assessments. This information has been outlined in the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education's, Early Years Lead Practitioner Assessment Plan. For reference, you can find this document.

Early Years Lead Practitioner L5 EPA Plan (skillsengland.education.gov.uk)

EPA TIMESCALE

Register with NQual

Training Providers should register apprentices for EPA with NQual a minimum of 90 days before assessment. Providers will pay a registration fee of £30.

Gateway

This is when the employer, apprentice and training provider confirm that the apprentice is ready for End-Point Assessment. All evidence should be uploaded to NQual a minimum of 4 weeks prior to EPA.

EPA Booking

The training provider should complete the booking section on the Gateway form or training providers can arrange the booking via ACE360. NQual will confirm booking within 48 hours.

EPA Approved

NQual will send an invoice for the remaining fee once EPA is approved.

Assessment

The apprentice will complete an Observation with Questioning and a Professional Discussion Underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence.

Results

Results will be communicated within 10 working days of final assessment. If the apprentice passes, NQual will send details to the apprentice containing an EPA results document.
If the apprentice fails, NQual will send details to the learner and training provider outlining feedback and next stages.

GATEWAY

This section outlines the requirements an apprentice must have met in order to be put forward for End-Point Assessment.

Once the employer is fully satisfied that the apprentice has the knowledge, skills and behaviours set out within this standard, the employer can formally confirm that they are ready for EPA via Gateway.

Gateway requirements for the Early Years Lead Practitioner Level 5 apprenticeship outline that an apprentice must have:

- Evidence of achieving relevant maths and English qualifications if required by funding regulations or the employer
- A completed Portfolio of Evidence

The Gateway form must be sent to NQual a minimum of 4 weeks before End-Point Assessment is carried out, along with the evidence listed above.

All EPA activity should typically take place within 3 months from Gateway approval.

You can request the NQual Gateway form by emailing: *admin@nqual.co.uk*

PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE

Apprentices will have prepared a portfolio during the programme to support the Professional Discussion component. The portfolio will be uploaded electronically via ACE360.

Case Study Report

As part of the portfolio, the apprentice is required to submit a case study report. The case study report will be

based on a case study that the apprentice has completed with an individual child or group of children. The case study report should include an analysis of observations the apprentice has made. The case study must be based on a real-life workplace situation, based on assessment, observation and planning documentation, which involves the apprentice completing a relevant and defined piece of work. The work must have a real benefit to the child or children or the setting that the apprentice is working in. The case study should allow for the apprentice to observe the child or children for typically 6 weeks and allow for situations where children may leave a setting for any reason. Parental consent for children participating in the case study must be gained prior to starting the case study.

The portfolio can also include workplace documentation and records, for example:

- workplace policies and procedures
- witness statements
- anonymised annotated photographs
- anonymised learning journals
- anonymised risk assessments
- anonymised case notes
- anonymised referral forms.

This is not a definitive list and other evidence sources can be included.

The evidence provided must cover all knowledge, skills, and behaviours, highlighted within the discussion section of our methods table. It will typically contain 20 discrete pieces of evidence. Evidence must be mapped against the KSBs, using the NQual Portfolio Submission Document. Evidence may be used to demonstrate more than one KSB as a qualitative rather than quantitative approach is suggested. Although the portfolio will not

be directly assessed, it will be used by the Independent End-Point Assessor to prepare questions for the discussion component.

It should not include reflective accounts or any methods of self-assessment except for evidence for S24 and B6. Any employer contributions should focus on direct observation of performance (for example, witness statements) rather than opinions.

COMPONENTS OF END-POINT ASSESSMENT

The End-Point Assessment for the Early Years Lead Practitioner Level 5 apprenticeship standard consists of two assessment methods. These are an Observation with Questioning and a Professional Discussion Underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence.

Observation with Questioning

The Observation with Questioning involves an independent assessor observing and questioning an apprentice undertaking work, as part of their normal duties, in the workplace. This allows for a demonstration of the KSBs through naturally occurring evidence. Simulation is not allowed.

The location, number of children and age range varies from employer to employer. Depending on the nature of the setting, some examples of an observation could be as follows:

- session in a woodland area
- session working within messy play
- session working with pre-school children

This is not an exhaustive list.

The total time for this assessment on the day will be 90 minutes (+10%). 60 minutes will be allocated for the Observation and 30 minutes for Questioning.

A minimum of 7 questions will be asked by the independent assessor that they will use to confirm their understanding of the observation and how it demonstrates the relevant KSBs. Follow up questions may be asked where clarification is required.

The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the Observation by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last task or respond to a question. The discretionary additional 10% time can be allocated in any proportion across the observation and questioning.

The apprentice should be observed;

- interacting with a group of children through an opportunity or experience for learning, based on the session plan, which will be shared with the independent assessor on the day of the assessment, before the observation begins.
- leading or supervising colleagues during this session
- communicating with parents, carers, or guardians of the children under their supervision (this can be in person or via a system or paper-based communication book for the child)

Professional Discussion Underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence

The Professional Discussion is a two-way discussion that involves both the independent assessor and the apprentice actively listening and participating in a formal conversation. It gives the apprentice the opportunity to make detailed and proactive contributions to confirm their competency across the KSBs mapped to this method.

Apprentices must be given at least two weeks' notice ahead of the Professional Discussion. The Underpinning Portfolio will have been submitted in line with NQual's requirements at the Gateway and must evidence all of the KSBs mapped to this assessment method and will be based on the following themes;

- Legislation and guidance
- Health and wellbeing
- Continual professional development
- Child development
- Observation and assessment planning

The Professional Discussion must last for 90 minutes. The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the Professional Discussion by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer.

The independent assessors will ask a minimum of 8 questions and may ask follow-up questions for clarification purposes and to allow the apprentice the opportunity to cover the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

END-POINT ASSESSMENT METHODS TABLE

The below highlights criteria that will be covered in each assessment component. Please review these details as it will provide guidance on what will be covered in each assessment component.

Learning Outcomes	What is Required	Observation with Questioning	Professional Discussion Underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence
Knowledge			
K1	Ethical and rights-based approaches to support the child, listening to the child's authentic voice within their social and cultural context enabling advocacy for the child and their individual journey, developing high quality childcare environments that are continuously evaluated.	✓	
K2	How individual children learn and develop from conception to 8 years in relation to typical and atypical neurological, cognitive, social, emotional, behavioural, communication and physical development within the social, cultural context and the impact of this on their future.		✓
K3	Factors that have an impact upon health, well-being and early learning that can affect children from conception to 8 years and how children and families can make healthy and effective life choices.		✓
K4	Theories of self-regulation, resilience and well-being and the impact of adverse early childhood experiences.		✓
K5	Current and contemporary theories and approaches to enable respectful and nurturing personal care.	✓	
K6	Local and national child protection and safeguarding statutory and non-statutory frameworks, policies, and procedures in practice, how to identify when a child is at risk, and how to challenge in order to protect them. This includes understanding the role of the designated lead for safeguarding and assimilating findings of reviews of serious cases.		✓
K7	Current and emerging theories of attachment and how these relate to promoting relationships effectively such as the key person approach.		✓

K8	The importance of the social cultural context on the learning and development of the child and the influence parents, families and carers have within the home learning environment and the complexities of the family situation.		✓
K9	Potential effects of transitions and theories and approaches on how to successfully support children and their families.	✓	
K10	Strategies to effect collaborative approaches to working with parents, carers, colleagues, professional bodies and multi agencies.		✓
K11	The importance of play and the theoretical perspectives of play and its impact on a child's learning and development.		✓
K12	How to stimulate children's creativity and curiosity and why and how this enables enquiry based active learning.		✓
K13	A wide range of underpinning theories from physiological, neurological, developmental and education and how these can be incorporated to develop own pedagogy.		✓
K14	The intent, implementation, and impact of all provided experiences and opportunities for children informed by the setting's curriculum and pedagogy.		✓
K15	The importance and impact of design, resources, and engagement within indoor and outdoor environments to enable learning and development.		✓
K16	How planning cycles inform and improve practice and the principles of individual needs-based assessment for effective early intervention for all children responsive to typical and atypical needs and development.		✓
K17	How to promote inclusion, equality, and diversity in the sector and why it is essential.		✓
K18	Current and contemporary theoretical perspectives and approaches to leadership and how to support others through leaderful practice, supporting teams and guiding change.	✓	
K19	Principles of reflection in influencing early years practice with a commitment to life-long learning including continual professional development and action research.		✓

K20	Ways to use, record and store data and information securely and in line with data protection legislation, confidentiality requirements and local and national policies, including the safe use of digital technology to communicate effectively in both oral and written English.		✓
K21	The current and relevant policy, statutory and non-statutory guidance, and legal requirements as appropriate to the sector within; local, national, historical, and global contexts including SEND. The impact of these contexts on effective provision.		✓
K22	Principles of sustainability and efficient use of resources, in line with recycling, reuse, and safe disposal of waste.		✓
Skills			
S1	Advocate for children through their child centred approach, listening to the voice of the child; ensuring children's rights, views and wishes are heard, respected, and acted upon at all times. Offer appropriate support and influence decisions in the best interests of the child.	✓	
S2	Develop, model, and implement strategies to support the emotional, social, psychological, physical, and cultural needs of all children within the educational setting.		✓
S3	Support and promote children's diverse speech, language and communication development and determining and adapting appropriate responses and interventions to support verbal, nonverbal interactions and engagement with written communication.	✓	
S4	Support children to engage in a range of learning contexts such as individual, small groups and larger groups as appropriate for their play and support confidence within social experiences.		✓
S5	Engage in effective strategies to develop and extend children's learning and thinking, including sustained shared thinking.	✓	
S6	Promote, model and support children and families to develop a healthy approach to making choices relating to personal care including eating, sleeping and physical activity.		✓

S7	Analyse and articulate how all children's individual learning can be affected by their current developmental capabilities, characteristics and individual circumstances taking into account all factors contributing to typical and atypical development.		✓
S8	Ensure plans fully reflect the individual development needs and circumstances of children and actively participate in the provision of consistent care, responding quickly to the needs of the individual child.	✓	
S9	Plan, carry out and guide appropriate personal care routines for individual children.	✓	
S10	Competently action and carry out safeguarding procedures, using their professional curiosity, knowledge, insight and understanding.		✓
S11	Explore and understand, challenge and question, knowing when to act to safeguard and protect children.		✓
S12	Encourage all children's participation, ensuring a sensitive, respectful and effective balance within the adult and child dynamic to facilitate play opportunities.	✓	
S13	Ensure staff are deployed effectively to suit and enhance the learning environment, prioritising the safety and wellbeing of all children.	✓	
S14	Cultivate professional partnerships with parents, carers, colleagues and other professionals, presenting their understanding of the child's journey within multidisciplinary teams to holistically support the child's individual needs.		✓
S15	Demonstrate the importance of the home learning environment, developing an effective and collaborative partnership to enhance opportunities for the child.		✓
S16	Provide a dynamic, evolving and enabling environment that reflects the current interests, motivations, and play of individual and groups of children.	✓	
S17	Use current and contemporary knowledge, research, theories and approaches to develop, enhance and articulate their own pedagogical approach and practice.	✓	

S18	Observe, assess, plan, facilitate and participate in play opportunities which include current curriculum requirements.	✓	
S19	Make use of formative and summative assessment, tracking children's progress to plan for future learning possibilities including early interventions based on individual developmental needs.		✓
S20	Take responsibility for supporting the key person in articulating children's progress and planning future learning possibilities including the safe use of digital technology to communicate effectively in both oral and written English.	✓	
S21	Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.	✓	
S22	Be a leaderful practitioner to support, mentor, coach, train, and guide colleagues in a range of educational settings, providing inspiration and motivation to engage others to develop their practice, supporting teams and guiding change.	✓	
S23	Identify, action, and competently challenge issues and undertake difficult conversations where appropriate.	✓	
S24	Use reflection to develop themselves both professionally and personally to enhance their practice.		✓
S25	Ensure the security and confidentiality of data, records, and information in line with current legislation.		✓
S26	Identify and act upon own responsibilities in relation to health and safety, prevention, and control of infection, carrying out risk assessments and risk management processes in line with policies and procedures.	✓	
S27	Apply the principles of sustainability and segregate used resources for reuse, recycling, and safe disposal.		✓
Behaviours			
B1	Ethical, fair, consistent and impartial, valuing equality and diversity at all times within professional boundaries.		✓

B2	Leaderful and motivating through consistent modelling of innovative and aspirational practice to other colleagues.	✓	
B3	Person centred, friendly and approachable, demonstrating caring, empathetic, and respectful qualities.	✓	
B4	Be authentic, playful, animated, responsive, creative, imaginative, and curious.	✓	
B5	Positive and proactive member of the team, being assertive and exercising diplomacy.	✓	
B6	Reflective practitioner, receptive and open to challenge and constructive criticism.		✓

GRADING & CRITERIA

Assessments contained within this plan will result in an apprentice achieving a Fail, Pass, Merit, or Distinction. This decision is dependent on whether they have met the standard and its End-Point Assessment criteria. In order to achieve a Passing grade, the apprentice must gain a minimum of a Pass in all components of the End-Point Assessment.

Grading results will be communicated to the apprentice within 10 working days of completion of the final component.

Assessment Breakdown

Grades allocated for each component will be Fail, Pass and Distinction.

The final grade will be decided based on the following combinations:

Assessment Methods 1: Observation with Questioning	Assessment Methods 2: Professional Discussion Underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence	Overall Grading
Fail	Any Grade	Fail
Any Grade	Fail	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Merit
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

The Pass and Distinction descriptors can be found in the tables below separated into Observation with Questions and Professional Discussion Underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence and Case Study with Report and Presentation with Questioning.

Grading Descriptors for the Observation with Questions

Theme KSBs	Pass Descriptors	Distinction Descriptors	Guidance Notes
The Unique Child K1 K5 K9 S1 S8 S9 S21 S23 B3	Advocates in the child's best interest to ensure the child's voice is always heard and respected, demonstrating an inclusive and ethical approach to practice which is responsive and respectful to the individual child and takes account of the social and cultural context. Continuously evaluates the quality of the childcare environment. (K1, S1, S21) Applies current and contemporary theories and approaches when planning and undertaking appropriate personal care routines for individual children to ensure respectful and nurturing care. (K5, S9, B3) Responds to a child's individual development needs and circumstances, through planning that reflects the child's need for consistent care, as well as adapting to the child's and families' needs during change, including transitions. (K9, S8) Identifies, actions, addresses challenging issues, and undertakes difficult conversations. (S23)	Demonstrates how their practice challenges both explicit and implicit discrimination, and actively supports children to advocate for themselves, by developing a sense of agency, autonomy, and the skills to impact their world. (K1, S1, S21)	**Pass** Explain how you consistently advocate for each child by listening to their voice, valuing their choices, and ensuring your practice is inclusive, respectful, and responsive to their individual social and cultural background. Show how you regularly evaluate the quality of the childcare environment, ensuring it meets the developmental, emotional, and physical needs of all children. Describe how you apply current theories—such as attachment or responsive care (ie Bowlby & Ainsworth) – when delivering personal care routines, ensuring they are nurturing, respectful, and tailored to the child. Provide examples of how you plan consistent care around each child's individual development and adapt during times of change, such as transitions or family circumstances. Finally, describe situations where you have addressed challenging issues or held difficult conversations (e.g. with parents or colleagues), showing professionalism, empathy, and a child-centred approach.

			Distinction Demonstrate how your practice actively challenges both explicit discrimination (such as biased language or exclusion) and implicit discrimination (like unconscious bias or stereotyped expectations). Explain how you promote equity and inclusion through your environment, resources, interactions, and curriculum—for example, by representing diverse cultures, family structures, and abilities in books and play materials, and by ensuring all children have equal access to learning opportunities. Show how you support children to develop a strong sense of agency and autonomy by encouraging them to make choices, express their views, solve problems, and reflect on their actions. Provide examples of how you have helped children advocate for themselves—such as learning to say "no," negotiate in play, or express when they feel something is unfair—building their confidence to impact their world in age-appropriate, meaningful ways.

Learning and Development S3 S5 S12 S16 S18 B4	Applies a responsive approach that is influenced by a range of strategies, to develop and extend children's learning and thinking. (S5) Observes, assesses, plans, facilitates, and participates in play opportunities with children that reflect current curriculum. (S18) Coordinates an exciting, dynamic, evolving and enabling environment, providing a range of fun, playful and engaging activities that reflect the interests, motivations, and play of individual and groups of children. (S16) Supports and promotes children's speech, language, and communication, adapting their practice to engage in authentic and quality interactions with the child or children to support verbal, nonverbal interactions, and engagement with written communication. (S3, B4) Encourages all children's participation and ensures a sensitive, respectful, and effective balance within the adult and child dynamic to facilitate play opportunities. (S12)	Leads and models practice within the environment to continually provoke, excite, and extend children's current interests and motivations. (S12, S16)	**Pass** Describe how you apply a responsive, child-led approach to extend learning—using a variety of strategies such as open-ended questioning, modelling, and scaffolding to support thinking and exploration. Show how you observe, assess, and plan play opportunities in line with the current curriculum, ensuring they reflect the interests, needs, and motivations of individual and groups of children. Explain how you create and lead a dynamic, evolving environment with engaging, purposeful activities that promote curiosity and development. Demonstrate how you support children's speech, language, and communication through high-quality, sensitive interactions—both verbal and non-verbal—and how you adapt your approach to suit individual communication styles. Highlight how you encourage all children's participation, maintaining a respectful adult-child balance that promotes autonomy and engagement. Show that you take a leaderful role by modelling excellent practice, coaching colleagues, and drawing on current theoretical perspectives to inspire others. Describe how you deploy staff effectively to match the environment and ensure children's safety and wellbeing, while maintaining positive, assertive teamwork.

			Include examples of how you apply contemporary pedagogy, (Montessori, Reggio Emilia or forest schools etc) support the key person role by contributing to planning and progress reviews and implement health and safety through thorough risk assessments and proactive risk management. Distinction- demonstrate how you actively lead and model inspiring practice that continuously builds on children's current interests and motivations. Show how you observe children closely and respond creatively introducing new materials, provocations, or challenges that deepen their thinking and curiosity. Give examples of how you provoke learning by setting up environments and experiences that invite exploration and inquiry, such as open-ended investigations, role play linked to children's fascinations, or extending themes from their play. Highlight how you coach and influence colleagues to do the same, using reflective discussion and shared planning to ensure the environment evolves dynamically in response to the children. This demonstrates that you are not only responsive, but also intentional and strategic in shaping an exciting, evolving space that keeps learning engaging, child-centred, and meaningful.

Leaderful Practice K18 S13 S17 S20 S22 S26 B2 B5	Demonstrates a leaderful approach within practice influenced by current theoretical perspectives and approaches. Inspires, motivates, and coaches colleagues by modelling innovative and aspirational practice to support and engage others to develop their practice. (K18, S22, B2) Deploys staff in a way that matches the learning environment, whilst prioritising the safety and wellbeing of all children. Acts as a positive and proactive member of the team, exercising assertiveness and diplomacy. (S13, B5) Demonstrates current and contemporary influences on their pedagogical approach and practice. (S17) Implements health and safety practices and carries out risk assessments and risk management processes in accordance with policies and procedures. (S26) Supports the key person in articulating children's progress and planning future learning opportunities. (S20)	Confidently applies current and contemporary theoretical perspectives and approaches when taking responsibility for supporting the key person in applying future learning possibilities whilst modelling innovative and aspirational practice to colleagues. (K18, S20, B5)	**Pass** Demonstrate how you take a leaderful approach by applying current theories—such as Froebel, Reggio Emilia, or Bronfenbrenner—to shape your everyday practice. Show how you motivate, inspire, and coach colleagues by modelling innovative strategies, sharing reflective thinking, and supporting professional growth through guidance and encouragement. Describe how you deploy staff effectively to meet the needs of the learning environment, ensuring coverage in key areas while always prioritising the safety and wellbeing of children. Provide examples of acting positively and proactively within the team, using assertiveness and diplomacy to resolve challenges and build a collaborative culture. Reflect on how current and contemporary pedagogical influences shape your decisions and planning, keeping your practice relevant and child centred. Show how you carry out risk assessments and implement health and safety procedures confidently and consistently. Finally, explain how you support key persons in understanding and communicating children's progress, contributing to meaningful planning and next steps in learning. **Distinction** Show how you confidently apply current and contemporary theories—such as Vygotsky's

			social development theory, the Reggio Emilia approach, or the Characteristics of Effective Learning—when supporting the key person in identifying and planning meaningful future learning opportunities for children. Explain how you take responsibility in guiding colleagues to reflect on observations and assessments, helping them link theory to practice when planning next steps. Describe how you model aspirational, innovative practice—such as using open-ended resources, child-led inquiry, or sustained shared thinking—to inspire and build the confidence of others. This demonstrates your leadership in ensuring learning is purposeful, inclusive, and grounded in up-to-date pedagogical approaches.

Grading Descriptors for the Professional Discussion Underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence

KSBs	Pass Descriptors	Distinction Descriptors	Guidance Notes
Legislation and Guidance K6 K10 K17 K20 K21 K22 S10 S11 S14 S25 S27 B1	Explains the role of the designated lead for safeguarding and assimilating findings of reviews and assessments of significant incidents or cases. Explains current legislation and guidance and how this is implemented through policy and procedure. Outlines their own responsibilities, knowing when to question and challenge others, including their own professional curiosity, regarding safeguarding and protecting children. (K6, K21, S10, S11) Evaluates the strategies they apply when collaborating and cultivating partnerships with parents or carers stakeholders and multi agencies. (K10, S14) Explains the importance and impact of inclusion, equality, and diversity and how to promote and embed consistent and impartial strategies that value equality in leaderful practice, within professional boundaries. (K17, B1) Explains the current administration and records systems they use and how they share oral and written information in line with the security and confidentiality policy, and current legislation. (K20, S25) Explains how they manage efficient and sustainable practice when using resources, applying reuse, recycling. and safe disposal principles. (K22, S27)	Justifies their rationale for decision making with regards to safeguarding and protecting children, drawing on policies and procedures and their professional insight and curiosity. (K6, S10, S11) Critically reflects on opportunities to recognise and challenge discriminatory processes, behaviours, and attitudes and how these impact the child and family. (K17, B1)	**Pass** Demonstrate your understanding of the role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) by explaining their responsibilities—such as overseeing safeguarding procedures, responding to concerns, and learning from serious case reviews. Show how you understand and follow current legislation and guidance (e.g., Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children) through clear policies and procedures, and how you apply professional curiosity to question or challenge concerns to protect children. Evaluate how you collaborate with parents, carers, and multi-agency professionals, using strategies that build trust, open communication, and shared decision-making for the child's benefit. Explain how you promote inclusion, equality, and diversity through fair and respectful leadership practices, modelling inclusive behaviour while maintaining professional boundaries. Describe the record-keeping systems you use, ensuring information is shared securely and accurately in line with confidentiality policies and data protection laws (e.g., GDPR).

			Finally, explain how you manage resources sustainably, applying principles like reuse, recycling, and safe disposal to ensure efficient and environmentally responsible practice. **Distinction** To meet the distinction criteria, you need to justify your safeguarding decisions by clearly explaining how they are informed by relevant policies, procedures, and legislation, as well as your professional insight and curiosity. Give specific examples of situations where you identified a concern, questioned what you observed or were told, and took appropriate action—demonstrating how you balanced professional judgement with safeguarding guidance to protect the child effectively. Additionally, critically reflect on how you identify and challenge discriminatory behaviours or systems—whether overt or subtle. Explain how these attitudes can negatively impact a child or family's well-being, inclusion, or access to support. Provide examples of how you have taken action—such as adapting your approach, challenging a colleague's assumptions, or advocating for fairer treatment—showing your commitment to equity and how you uphold inclusive, anti-discriminatory practice.

Health & Wellbeing K4 K14 S2 S6	Analyses theories of self-regulation, resilience and wellbeing and the importance for children's holistic development and life experiences. (K4) Explains the importance of considering pedagogy when evaluating the curriculum's intent, implementation, and impact and how strategies are developed and modelled to ensure the emotional, psychological, physical, and cultural needs of all children within the setting are met. (K14, S2) Analyses how they promote and support children and families to develop a healthy approach to making choices about activities and lifestyle. (S6)	Compares and contrasts different pedagogies, justifying the choices made, by illustrating the impact of decisions made on emotional, psychological, physical, and cultural development of children in the setting. (K14, S2)	**Pass** Analyse key theories around self-regulation, resilience, and wellbeing (such as those by Bowlby, Ainsworth, or Shonkoff), and explain why these are crucial to children's holistic development—including emotional, cognitive, social, and physical growth. Link this to how you support children through consistent routines, secure attachments, and opportunities to develop independence and problem-solving skills. Explain the importance of considering pedagogy—your approach to teaching and learning—when evaluating the curriculum's intent, implementation, and impact. Describe how you ensure the curriculum meets children's emotional, psychological, physical, and cultural needs, through inclusive planning, responsive practice, and modelling respectful behaviour. Analyse how your practice supports children and families to make healthy lifestyle choices—for example, through discussions about nutrition, active play, screen time, and rest—and how you model and promote these in everyday interactions and partnerships with parents. **Distinction** Compare and contrast different pedagogical approaches—for example, *Reggio Emilia* (child-led, environment as the third teacher), *Montessori* (independent learning through structured resources), *Froebel* (play-based learning), and *Te Whāriki* (holistic, culturally responsive curriculum).

			Justify which elements you adopt in your own setting and why those choices are suitable for your children. For instance, you might use a Reggio-inspired approach to support emotional expression through creative media, or a Montessori method to foster physical independence and resilience. Clearly explain the impact of your chosen pedagogical strategies on children's: • Emotional development – e.g., building confidence through child-led learning • Psychological development – e.g., promoting critical thinking through open-ended play • Physical development – e.g., encouraging fine/gross motor skills with practical tasks • Cultural development – e.g., embedding home languages, family traditions, or diverse stories
Continual Professional Development K13 K19 S24 B6	Evaluates how reflection influences their early years practice and drives their commitment to continuing professional development and action research. (K19) Explains how they use opportunities to reflect on their development both professionally and personally and evaluates how they respond to challenge and constructive criticism. (S24, B6) Explains how they incorporate theories from physiological, neurological, developmental and education into their development and practice. (K13)	Analyses the impact reflective practice has on their effectiveness as a lead practitioner and evaluates how reflective experiences involving challenge and constructive criticism enhance their professional competence. (K19, S24, B6)	**Pass** Demonstrate how you use reflection regularly to evaluate your early years practice—identifying strengths, areas for growth, and ways to improve. Explain how this reflection drives your commitment to continuing professional development (CPD) and motivates you to engage in action research to test and refine new approaches. Describe the opportunities you take to reflect both professionally and personally, such as

			during supervision, team meetings, or after challenging situations. Evaluate how you respond positively to challenge and constructive criticism, using feedback as a tool to develop your skills and practice. Explain how you incorporate relevant theories from physiology, neurology, child development, and education (like brain development stages, attachment theory, or learning styles) into your reflection and practice to make informed decisions that support children's holistic development. **Distinction** Analyse how engaging in reflective practice deepens your self-awareness and improves your effectiveness as a lead practitioner. Explain how regularly reflecting on your actions, decisions, and outcomes helps you identify both successes and areas for development, enabling you to lead your team with greater insight and confidence. Evaluate how experiences of challenge and constructive criticism have pushed you to critically examine your practice, adapt your approach, and build resilience. Describe specific examples where reflection on difficult feedback led to meaningful changes in your leadership style, communication, or decision-making, thereby enhancing your professional competence and positively influencing the team and children's outcomes.

Child Development K2 K3 K7 K8 S7 S15	Analyses how children learn and develop from conception to 8 years within the social, and cultural context and how this impacts their future. (K2) Analyses factors that can impact upon health, well-being, and early learning of children from conception to 8 and how children and families can make healthy and effective life choices. (K3, S7) Explains theories of attachment they use to promote effective relationships between staff and children. (K7) Explains how they develop effective and collaborative partnerships with parents and carers considering social and cultural context and influence, and the importance of home learning, and how that partnership enables a greater understanding of the child/children leading to enhanced opportunities. (K8, S15)	Evaluates approaches to children's development they use in their practice and articulates how they reach decisions in complex situations. (K2, K3, S7)	**Pass** Analyse how children's learning and development from conception to age 8 is influenced by their social and cultural contexts (family structure, socioeconomic status bilingual families), explaining how these factors shape their experiences and future outcomes. Discuss how elements like family environment, community, and cultural values impact children's growth across all development areas. Analyse the various factors affecting health, wellbeing, and early learning during this period, such as nutrition, emotional support, access to education, and family circumstances. Explain how children and families can be supported to make healthy and positive life choices, promoting long-term wellbeing. Explain the attachment theories you apply (e.g., Bowlby, Ainsworth) to build strong, trusting relationships between staff and children, which provide emotional security and support learning. Describe how you develop effective, collaborative partnerships with parents and carers, considering their social and cultural backgrounds. Emphasise the importance of home learning and how these partnerships deepen understanding of each child, enabling more personalised and effective learning opportunities. **Distinction** Evaluate the different approaches you use to support children's development—such as

			ecological systems theory, holistic development frameworks, or strength-based approaches—explaining their benefits and limitations in your specific setting. Describe how you apply this knowledge to make informed, evidence-based decisions, especially in complex situations involving multiple factors (e.g., diverse cultural needs, health challenges, or family circumstances). Articulate your decision-making process clearly, showing how you weigh risks, consider children's individual contexts, collaborate with families and professionals, and reflect on ethical implications to choose the most effective and inclusive strategies for each child's development.
Observation and Assessment Planning K11 K12 K15 K16 S4 S19	Uses theoretical knowledge of the importance of play, demonstrating how they support children to engage in a range of learning contexts, supporting confidence within social experiences, including how they stimulate children's creativity and curiosity and how this benefits learning. (K11, K12, S4) Evaluates how planning cycles and formative and summative assessments for child or children inform and improve practice in relation to needs-based assessment and early intervention. (K16, S19) Analyses the impact of design, resources, and engagement within indoor and outdoor environments to enable learning and development. (K15)	Critically analyses their choice of intervention strategies to create play, learning and development and social experiences for the child or children, including how these enable enquiry based active learning. (K11, K12, S4)	**Pass** Demonstrate your understanding of play theories (such as Piaget's cognitive development or Vygotsky's social constructivism, Fredrich Froblel) and explain how you support children to engage in diverse learning contexts through play. Show how you encourage their confidence in social interactions, stimulate creativity and curiosity, and highlight how these experiences contribute to deeper learning and development. Evaluate how you use planning cycles and both formative and summative assessments to identify children's needs and plan early interventions. Explain how this ongoing assessment process helps you adapt your

			practice to better support individual development and learning goals. Analyse how the design of indoor and outdoor environments, the choice of resources, and how you engage children in these spaces positively impact their learning and development. Emphasise the importance of creating stimulating, safe, and accessible environments that encourage exploration and growth. **Distinction** Critically analyse the intervention strategies you select to support children's play, learning, development, and social experiences. Discuss why you choose specific approaches—such as scaffolding, guided discovery, or open-ended questioning—and how these encourage enquiry-based, active learning. Examine how your interventions promote children's natural curiosity, problem-solving, and independence by creating opportunities for exploration and meaningful interaction. Reflect on the effectiveness of your strategies by considering children's responses, engagement levels, and developmental progress, and explain how you adapt your approach to meet diverse needs and learning styles. Demonstrate a clear rationale grounded in theory and observation, showing how your choices actively foster deeper understanding and social collaboration within a rich learning environment.

Re-sit / Re-take

If an apprentice Fails one or more component, they will be offered the opportunity to re-sit / re-take the component(s) at the employer's discretion. The apprentice's employer needs to agree that a re-sit or re-take is appropriate. A re-sit does not need further learning, whereas a re-take does. The apprentice should have a supportive action plan to prepare for a re-sit or a re-take.

The employer and the EPAO should agree the timescale for a re-sit or re-take. A re-sit is typically taken within 2 months of the EPA results notification. The timescale for a re-take is dependent on how much re-training is required and is typically taken within 4 months of the EPA results notification. Failed assessment methods must be re-sat or re-taken within a 6-month period from the EPA outcome notification, otherwise the entire EPA will need to be re-sat or re-taken in full.

Where any assessment method must be re-sat or re-taken, the apprentice will be awarded a maximum EPA grade of Pass. Re-sits and re-takes are not offered to an apprentice wishing to move from Pass to a higher grade.

MOCK OBSERVATION

It is the responsibility of the employer and training provider to complete a Mock Observation with the apprentice and to ensure they are ready for the End-Point Assessment.

A Mock Observation should take 90 minutes +10% and should include 60 minutes of direct observation, followed by 30 minutes of post-observation questioning.

MOCK PROFESSIONAL DISCUSSION

It is the responsibility of the employer and training provider to complete mock Professional Discussions with the apprentice, and it is the responsibility of the apprentice to ensure they have practised answering questions for the End-Point Assessment.

Professional Discussion materials will be given to training providers when registering learners with NQual.

A Mock Professional Discussion should take 90 minutes (+10% to give a final response).

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