



**Pensions
Management
Institute**

**GUIDE TO THE PMI END-POINT ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME
(for apprentices, employers and training providers)**

**WORKPLACE PENSIONS
(ADMINISTRATOR OR CONSULTANT) – LEVEL 3**

September 2021

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Introduction

The Pensions Management Institute (PMI) is the professional body which supports and develops the experts who run UK pension schemes. It has the broadest skills base of pensions professionals and trustees in the UK, with some 6,500 members dedicated to establishing, maintaining and advancing the highest levels of pensions knowledge.

PMI members are responsible for managing and advising some of the largest institutions in the world and taking key decisions on substantial financial matters. With some £1 trillion invested in UK pensions, PMI members have a vital role to play in shaping the nation's financial future.

With almost 40 years of successful operation behind it, the PMI is an organisation at the cutting edge of pensions. For full details of PMI's qualifications, membership grades and ongoing support services visit www.pensions-pmi.org.uk

The PMI is registered with the Skills Funding Agency as an Apprenticeship End-point Assessment Organisation and listed on the Register of Apprentice Assessment Organisations as an End-point Assessment Organisation for the following Financial Services Trailblazer Standard:

Workplace Pensions (Administrator or Consultant) – Level 3

This apprenticeship standard was developed in 2015. It is an entry level apprenticeship and includes options for aspiring administrators and consultants.

The full Apprenticeship Standard can be found in Appendix A.

The corresponding Assessment Plan can be found in Appendix B.

This document provides a guide to PMI End-point assessment for apprentices, employer and training providers and was first published in 2017 (revised 2019 and 2021).

Parties Involved

The following parties are involved:

1. **Candidate/Apprentice.** An individual undertaking a trailblazer apprenticeship.
2. **Employer.** An organisation delivering an apprenticeship and sponsoring a candidate.
3. **Training Provider.** An organisation engaged by an employer to deliver all or some of an apprenticeship,
4. **Professional Body.** PMI and a number of professional bodies are involved in these apprenticeships. All are associated with the relevant professional qualifications included within the Apprenticeship Standard. In addition the PMI is an End-point Assessment Organisation.
5. **End-point Assessment Organisation.** An organisation engaged by an employer to conduct independent End-point assessment of apprentices.
6. **End-point Assessors.** Individuals engaged by the End-point Assessment Organisation to undertake End-point assessment in accordance with these guidelines.

End-point Assessors come from a variety of organisations. End-point Assessors will not undertake assessments within their own organisation or within any other organisation where they have declared a real or potential conflict of interest.

“Gateway” to End-point assessment

The major components of the apprenticeship, as it evolves throughout the period, and the roles of each of the major parties are shown in the diagram overleaf – the timings are an example, assuming a 2 year apprenticeship period. Within this are contained the relevant professional qualifications, development of organisation specific knowledge, the skills and behaviours required to do the role from both the core and appropriate option, on-programme assessment and the End-point assessment – the focus of this guide.

Month	Apprentice	Employer/Training Provider (as appropriate)
0	Understand job role and apprenticeship commitment	Delivery of induction training, explanation of apprenticeship programme, roles, timetable and commitments
1-18	Works to role objectives/Key Performance Indicators/training plan and develops Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours	Monitors progress; identifies gaps; delivers apprentice learning and support as required. Manages as any other employee.
6-18	Studies and takes professional qualifications/exams	Provides support, training and coaching
17-18	Continues building required Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours	“Gateway” to End-point assessment: Review progress and agree whether Apprentice has achieved competency levels required in all learning outcomes.
18-19	Completes portfolio and submits for assessment	Sign off Assessment Plan requirements; review and grade portfolio before submitting for End-point assessment.
20-23	Prepares for Reflective Discussion	Supports apprentice’s preparation for Reflective Discussion
23-24	Takes part in Reflective Discussion with End-point assessor	

Registration for End-point Assessment

In order that PMI can ensure adequate resources are available for End-point assessment a candidate registration system will operate. Employers/training providers will register candidates at the point of attaining the “Gateway” to End-point assessment and prior to submission of the candidate’s portfolio for assessment.

A form is available for this purpose.

End-point Assessment has a particular meaning in the context of the trailblazer apprenticeship. It is distinct from any assessment activity that may form part of a PMI, or other, work-based qualification.

There are three aspects to End-point Assessment in the PMI End-point Assessment Programme.

1. Portfolio Assessment
2. Reflective Discussion
3. Final Grade Determination

1. Portfolio Assessment

An apprentice's portfolio will contain evidence from real work activity by the apprentice that is likely to have completed towards the end of the apprenticeship and will illustrate the application of the knowledge, skills and behaviours within the relevant Apprenticeship Standard synoptically. It will demonstrate the application of knowledge and competence in the work environment and is likely to cover the bulk of the Apprenticeship Standard. It may also draw on the apprentice's learning record created during the apprenticeship.

The types of evidence may include written work, small projects, performance review information, workplace observations, case studies, learning record entries, development plan content, emails, customer comments etc. There are likely to be several types of evidence within a Portfolio, designed so that they collectively demonstrate that the apprentice has learned and synoptically applied the complete knowledge, skills and behaviours of the Apprenticeship Standard. The evidence will differ between the two options with, for example, the Consultant likely to contain more project examples.

Further detail on the type of evidence that could be used is contained in the Assessment Criteria and Portfolio content document in Appendix C. In this guide there are two versions of this Appendix:

Appendix C1 – covers Administrator option only;
Appendix C2 – covers Consultant option only.

It is essential that candidates prove their competence by producing evidence of their ability to perform the role identified in the Apprenticeship Standard.

Each item of evidence should be clearly labelled or numbered and referenced to the relevant criteria. An item of evidence may be appropriate for more than one criterion and may demonstrate knowledge and understanding in several areas.

Evidence in the portfolio will include that provided by qualification performance as well as that provided by real work activity generated during the course of normal work towards the end of the apprenticeship. As End-point Assessment will also be synoptic it will focus on the chosen role and the competence of the candidate to undertake it.

The completed portfolio will be assessed against the requirements summarised in the Apprenticeship Standard and set out in detail in the assessment criteria.

The portfolio will initially be reviewed by the employer/training provider using an assessment template and an employer/training provider grade determined. Based on a template, the employer/training provider will also provide their rationale for the grade which may include additional information from in house performance management of the apprentice, to help inform the End-point Assessment Organisation in their subsequent review of the portfolio.

This End-point Assessment Organisation's review of the portfolio is carried out by an independent End-point assessor who makes their own judgement on the quality of the evidence.

The evidence contained in the portfolio will be assessed against all components of the standards, i.e.:

- Knowledge;
- Skills; and
- Behaviours.

The independent End-point assessor will examine the evidence in the portfolio for:

- completeness – the evidence in the portfolio, taken together, must cover the totality of the standard
- quality – the evidence must at least satisfy the minimum requirements for each area of the standard, as defined in the assessment criteria.

The independent End-point assessor may note particular aspects of the portfolio that they wish to discuss with the apprentice during the reflective discussion, either to confirm their judgement and/or provide further information on which to base their grading decisions.

2. Reflective Discussion

The Reflective Discussion is a structured interview between the apprentice and an Independent End-point Assessor, focusing on the softer skills of the relevant Apprenticeship Standard (e.g. verbal communication, relationship management), exploring what has been produced in the Portfolio, how it has been produced and how well they are performing in their role. This enables the assessment as a whole to cover the full range of knowledge, skills and behaviours from the Detailed Apprenticeship Standard.

The purpose of the Reflective Discussion is to:

- Explore evidence for areas of the Apprenticeship Standard that are best done face to face.
- Clarify any questions that the End-point Assessor has about the evidence submitted in the Portfolio.
- Discuss how the apprentice has progressed in their role, what they have done and their approach to work.
- Provide the basis for the End-point Assessment Organisation to make the decision about the grade to be awarded.

The Reflective Discussion will cover

- The evidence the candidate submitted in the portfolio
- the standard of their work, as evidenced in the portfolio
- how they approached the work submitted in the portfolio

The Reflective Discussion can draw on broader experience from the workplace, but the initial and the primary focus is on the evidence presented in the Portfolio.

The Reflective Discussion will be undertaken by an independent End-point Assessor. The same independent End-point Assessor will have assessed the Portfolio and will make the grading decision.

The Reflective Discussion will take place following the completion and assessment of the Portfolio and may be carried out face to face, or remotely using e.g. video conference, phone or Skype. Expected duration of Reflective Discussion – 45 minutes (+/- 10% of time).

It is only after the Reflective Discussion has been completed that the final grade will be determined.

Further detail on the Reflective Discussion is available separately.

3. Final Grade Determination

The combination of the assessment of the Portfolio and the Reflective Discussion builds a cumulative picture of the apprentice's performance against the Apprenticeship Standard. The apprentice is required to demonstrate the application of knowledge, skills and behaviours in an integrated manner to deliver the required outcomes, enabling the End-point Assessment Organisation to make an holistic judgement about how well the apprentice meets or exceeds the Apprenticeship Standard. Whilst the bulk of the evidence is expected to come from the Portfolio, it is the combined picture that determines the result.

Grading: Pass or Distinction

To achieve a Distinction the apprentice will need to have achieved a Distinction for all assessment criteria in 6 of the areas of Knowledge, Skill and Behaviour in the Standard, including at least one area in each of the Knowledge, Skill, Behaviour and additional competencies in the Option for the role. The areas are identified in the left hand column of the table below. The Distinction criteria are in addition to the Pass criteria. They will also need to achieve at least a Pass for all criteria in all other areas of the Standard.

Overall, to gain a Distinction the apprentice should:

- consistently exceed the learning outcomes set for the role (both what is delivered and how it is delivered);
- go beyond what is typically expected at this level;
- be able to perform well in difficult situations or when under pressure;
- be seen as a role model by others;
- be able to work upwards as well as with peers;
- show they understand the wider context of the work they are doing.

Confirmation of End-point Assessment Results

All End-point Assessment decisions are subject to moderation before results are confirmed to candidates.

As an additional check to verify quality and consistency, the PMI will reserve the right to make any additional investigations that may be necessary following the moderation process.

Resit/Regrade

Any Apprentice who fails the End Point Assessment will be given the chance to resit this component. The maximum grade awarded for a resit is PASS.

Complaints and Appeals

The PMI's Post Results and Complaints and Appeals procedures includes access to the independent PMI Appeals Panel. Full details of this policy and arrangements are in Appendix D; the associated Malpractice and Maladministration Policy is in Appendix E.

Special Consideration

The End-point Assessor will consider any requests/incidents requiring special consideration. Further details can be found in the Special Consideration Policy in Appendix F

Governance

The day to day operation of the PMI End-point Assessment Programme is the responsibility of the PMI Professional Standards team and the Head of Professional Standards. The Head of Professional Standards reports directly to the PMI Chief Executive. Ultimate responsibility for the programme lies with the PMI Board.

Contacts at PMI

If you have any queries or need further information please contact Neil Scott.

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The applicable Customer Service Statement can be found in Appendix G.

Schedule of Appendices

- A: Workplace Pensions (Administrator or Consultant) – Level 3 Standard
- B: Workplace Pensions (Administrator or Consultant) – Level 3 Assessment Plan
- C1: Workplace Pensions (Administrator or Consultant) – Level 3 Assessment Criteria and Portfolio content – Administrator Option
- C2: Workplace Pensions (Administrator or Consultant) – Level 3 Assessment Criteria and Portfolio content – Consultant Option
- D: Complaints and Appeals policy
- E: Malpractice and Maladministration policy
- F: Special Consideration Policy
- G: Customer Service Statement