

End-point assessment organisation (EPAO) update for the hospitality, retail, aviation and travel sectors

27 March 2020

Covid19 guidance

As an approved EQA provider we have over the last two weeks made available guidance to EPAOs approved to deliver end-point assessments in the hospitality, retail, aviation and travel sectors to support them. We support and endorse current published government guidelines, in particular from the ESFA and the IfATE.

This guidance is part of our ongoing series of guidance and updates.

Assessment plans

We have identified a number of assessment plans where the use of exclusively remote assessment would be deemed reasonable as per the assessment plan and as a result have been identified as a Business As Usual (BAU) state, these include:

- Retail Team Leader.
- Retail Manager.
- Hospitality Manager.
- Aviation Operations Manager.
- Travel Consultant.

Observations

The remainder of assessment plans that People 1st International provide EQA services for include a form of observation. In line with IfATE guidance and due to the requirement that these are conducted in the working environment our guidance is that these must be rescheduled.

We are also mindful that current ESFA guidance identifies that “EPAOs may also propose to EQAPs modifications (rather than substitutions) to specified assessment methods provided that they do not compromise quality or the intention of the assessment.”

We are reviewing a range of suggested modifications to individual observations, however, the majority that have been proposed to date have been substitutions rather than modifications and as such have not gained approval.

We will continue to review the situation and seek approval for modifications that would be deemed reasonable and we welcome discussions with EPAOs on an individual basis.

Remote assessment

Where remote assessment is undertaken, this must be conducted in line with the requirements of the assessment plan.

Existing Internal Quality Assurance arrangements must be maintained or increased accordingly throughout, particularly where an EPAO is adopting remote methods during this time in place of usual face-to-face practices. Current and future social isolating requirements must be observed and maintained at all times.

Points to note

The following points should be borne in mind related to the IfATE guidance, 23 March 2020:

- The requirement for assessment methods to be completed in a set order can be relaxed to allow flexibility in delivery, where this is deemed reasonable and feasible.

Note: in a number of assessment plans carry-over of assessment criteria is permitted, EPAOs must ensure that this process is managed closely to ensure the integrity of the process and that this relaxation will not compromise this process.

- Some assessment methods require a manager or team leader to be present. This should continue to be the default practice, and should be delivered remotely where it is reasonable and feasible to do so.

Note: Where the presence of the manager or team leader is not possible, this must be noted and it must be confirmed that the apprentice is in agreement to proceed with the assessment on this basis.

IfATE working

Through this temporary period, we are working closely to ensure a consistent and aligned approach and actively working with the IfATE and across EQA providers to ensure consistency. However, it is important that this approach is aligned to the individual assessment plan requirements.

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