

Payroll Administrator

★ Level 3

£ £9,000

📅 18 months

1. What the role entails

Payroll Administrators will typically have responsibility for setting up and operating the payroll within the organisation in which they are employed or on behalf of another organisation. The role may be located within a business/organisation or in a payroll bureau, bookkeeping or accounting practice, or professional services company. The job may sit within the HR or Finance function.

In medium to large organisations, a Payroll Administrator may work as part of a team, often reporting to a team leader, supervisor or manager. In smaller organisations, a Payroll Administrator may be a stand-alone role with sole responsibility for the payroll function. Additionally, and depending on their role within the organisation, a Payroll Administrator may also have responsibility for the accurate and timely completion of routine and non-routine payroll-related calculations and other information.

The main duties may typically include:

- Gathering, creation and processing of payroll-related information to ensure employees are paid on time and accurately. This will be via payroll software, though its use must be accompanied by the ability to perform this manually
- Compliance with legislative and contractual obligations
- Internal and external reporting of payroll information to deadlines
- Effective and appropriate communication with employees and relevant stakeholders
- Working to relevant ethical and professional standards in a legislative and regulatory environment that is constantly changing.

2. On-programme assessment

Apprentices must spend a minimum of 12 months on-programme and have a minimum of 20% off-the-job training. Before entering Gateway, the apprentice must complete the following on-programme assessment requirements:

- Level 2 Functional Skills English and maths or equivalent qualifications.

3. Gateway requirements

The end-point assessment (EPA) period should only start once the employer is satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard and they are deemed to have achieved occupational competence. In making this decision, the employer may take advice from the apprentice's Independent Training Provider (ITP), but the decision must ultimately be made solely by the employer.



[View the full IfATE Payroll Administrator standard](#)

4. End-point assessment

The EPA contains 3 methods of assessment as outlined below:

Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Test

This is a closed-book assessment, comprising of 50 equally weighted questions relating to the Payroll (core) and Payroll (pensions) knowledge criteria. Each question will have 4 answers, with only one correct option. All questions will attract one mark. The MCQ Test will last for 2 hours.

The MCQ Test is graded Fail or Pass.

Role Simulation

The apprentice will be presented with a series of tasks related to a fictitious organisation. The overall purpose of the Role Simulation is to synoptically test whether the apprentice is able to gather and analyse the necessary data to be able to perform manual payroll calculations down to net pay, assessing their payroll technical knowledge. Further, the Role Simulation will allow the apprentice to demonstrate that they can communicate payroll information.

The Role Simulation will last for 3 hours (+/-10%) across one working day. The apprentice may have up to 3 breaks, each with a maximum of one hour's duration. The assessment is open book, so the apprentice will be allowed to bring in any reference material which they believe may be appropriate, and will be allowed access to the internet for research purposes.

The Role Simulation is graded Fail, Pass or Distinction.

Professional Discussion

The apprentice will complete a structured discussion with the Independent End-Point Assessor (IEPA), to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) associated with this assessment method. The IEPA will ask 14 opening questions from a standardised question bank, to explore the apprentice's knowledge and experience. The Professional Discussion will last 60 minutes (with a 10% tolerance).

The Professional Discussion is graded Fail, Pass or Distinction.

5. Grade aggregation table

| MCQ Test | Role Simulation | Professional Discussion | Overall grading |
|----------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Fail | N/A | N/A | Fail |
| Pass | Fail | N/A | Fail |
| Pass | Pass | Fail | Fail |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | Distinction | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | Distinction | Pass |
| Pass | Distinction | Distinction | Distinction |

Assessments must be completed in this order. The apprentice will not be permitted to move to the next assessment method until at least a Pass is achieved.

6. Completion and certification

Once the IEPA verifies the apprentice has successfully completed all EPAs, NCFE will activate certification. Working with the apprenticeship certificate issuing authority, we'll ensure the apprentice receives their certificate.

7. What next?

Completion of the Payroll Administrator Apprenticeship may provide progression opportunities to more senior positions such as Team Leader, Supervisor or Manager within Payroll, or to move to related roles in departments such as HR, Finance or Pensions. It may also be possible to advance to the Level 5 Payroll Assistant Manager apprenticeship.

Why choose NCFE?

We're an approved End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) specialising in EPA delivery across health, education and care, digital, and business apprenticeship standards. We offer flexible and reliable EPA solutions supported by sector expertise, guidance documents and proactive service and support.