

STEP 1: Information and Agreement

- To get started we will explain our EPA offer, agree with you when your first cohorts of apprentices will require EPA and then move on to sign a formal service agreement.
- This process can be carried out remotely or face to face.

STEP 2: Getting started

- Within 24 hours of receiving your signed agreement we will set you up on SEPA, the cloud based platform we use to manage our EPA service.
- SEPA allows you to register and manage your apprentices EPA.
- Your apprentices must be registered on SEPA at least 90 days before their EPA is due to start. We recommend you register them as soon as possible.

STEP 3: Onboarding support

- You will be invited to access support webinars and videos which provide information on:
 - Introduction to NCFE EPA
 - The SEPA Platform – how to perform key functions
 - Preparing for Gateway
 - Assessment Components
 - Guidance on each Standard.

STEP 6: Preparing for Gateway

- Once your apprentice has completed all on programme activity, including and mandatory qualifications, you will lead the gateway discussion. When you have documentary evidence that the apprentice, and their employer, agree with you that they are ready to undertake EPA you can complete the evidence checklist on SEPA, uploading all required documents and then use the 'Request EPA' tool to inform us the apprentice is ready for their EPA.

STEP 5: Programme support

- Once you have signed your EPA Service Agreement you can access a range of support services:
 - A dedicated Relationship Team
 - Detailed Standard specific guidance
 - Support materials and sample assessment resources
 - EPA Plus Help Desk.

STEP 4: Registering apprentices on SEPA

- To access our 8 week SLA you must register apprentices on SEPA at least 90 days before their planned EPA start date and select their EPA start date 8 weeks in advance. NCFE have no registration fees, but early registration allows us to manage our resources efficiently.

STEP 7: Gateway audit and IEPA contact

- Once you have requested EPA we carry out a 'Gateway Audit', checking the information you have uploaded for each apprentice and either providing feedback on anything that is missing, or incorrect, by email or starting the process to book EPA assessment components.
- When bookings are made, the apprentices will be given a specific date and time for each assessment method.

STEP 8: Results and feedback

- After each assessment method we'll publish results and feedback on SEPA in 5 working days.
- We'll work with you to arrange any re-sits.

STEP 9: Certification

- When an apprentice has successfully achieved their apprenticeship, we'll start the claims process. This is completed by the ESFA and the certificates are sent directly to the employer.

As you review the on-programme progress of your apprentices you will naturally review their planned EPA start date. Planning the EPA start date and recorded any changes in SEPA, in a timely way, ensures you can access our best SLA. NCFE uses an 'Approved EPA Period' (AEP). The AEP runs for 10 working days from their planned EPA start date, as recorded in SEPA. As long as your apprentice starts their EPA within the AEP there is no need to make any changes to the planned EPA start recorded date in SEPA. All apprentices must be registered on the platform for at least 90 days before requesting EPA. The planned EPA date can be changed at any time before EPA within the SEPA platform. Where the planned EPA date is amended to a date 8 weeks or more in the future the Gateway audit will be conducted in 4 working days or less and the EPA in 8 weeks or less. If the planned EPA date is amended to a date less than 8 weeks in the future, the Gateway audit will be conducted in 8 working days and the EPA in 12 weeks or less.

Get in touch with our EPA team on:

Call 0191 240 8950 **Email** epa@ncfe.org.uk **Visit** ncfe.org.uk

