

Specialist Teaching Assistant

☆ Level 5 £ £12,000 📅 24 months

1. What the role entails

Specialist teaching assistants work alongside colleagues to inspire learners to progress and achieve well. Specialist teaching assistants work across all age ranges, supporting a range of learners. For the Specialist Teaching Assistant apprenticeship they will specialise in one of three areas:

- special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- social and emotional wellbeing
- curriculum provision.

The broad purpose of the occupation is to assist the education of learners by providing specialist support. Specialist teaching assistants:

- plan, implement, and adapt activities in order to advance learning
- draw on research to develop a critical understanding of their specialist area
- establish relationships with learners, families, other professionals and external agencies to support the education of the learners they work with
- contribute to developing a sense of inclusion and belonging for the benefit of the learners within the communities that they serve
- draw on their specialism to contribute to the evaluation of learning and assessment activities, sustainability in their educational context.

2. On-programme assessments

Apprentices will typically spend 24 months on-programme and undertake the minimum required off-the-job training as per the apprenticeship funding rules. Apprentices must spend at least 12 months on-programme. Before entering Gateway, the apprentice must complete the following on-programme requirements:

- Level 2 English and maths or equivalent qualifications
- a Portfolio of Evidence to underpin the Professional Discussion.

3. Gateway requirements

The decision to take an apprentice through Gateway is made between the employer, Independent Training Provider (ITP) and the apprentice. The apprentice should only enter Gateway once the employer is content that the apprentice is working at or above the level of the occupational standard.

The apprentice must also have completed all the on-programme elements before they enter Gateway, including submitting a Portfolio of Evidence to underpin the Professional Discussion.

4. End-point assessment

The end-point assessment (EPA) for Specialist Teaching Assistant consists of two assessment methods:

Observation with Questions

The Independent End-Point Assessor (IEPA) will observe the apprentice in their workplace, completing their day-to-day duties under normal working conditions, and then ask questions. The Observations with Questions must last for 2 hours. The IEPA will observe the apprentice for 1 hour 30 minutes and then undertake a questioning session which will last 30 minutes. The IEPA will ask at least six questions as part of the questioning session.

The Observation with Questions is graded fail, pass or distinction

Professional Discussion underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence

The Professional Discussion is a 1 hour two-way discussion which gives the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) mapped to this assessment method.

The Portfolio of Evidence will be completed during the on-programme learning and submitted at Gateway. The apprentice must have access to their Portfolio of Evidence during the Professional Discussion where the IEPA will ask at least 10 questions. The apprentice can refer to and illustrate their answers with evidence from their Portfolio of Evidence; however, the Portfolio of Evidence is not directly assessed.

The Professional Discussion is graded fail, pass or distinction.

5. Grade aggregation table

	Grading			
Observation with Questions	Pass	Pass	Distinction	Distinction
Professional Discussion	Pass	Distinction	Pass	Distinction
Final Grade	Pass	Merit	Merit	Distinction

If an apprentice fails any assessment, the EPA will be deemed an overall fail.

6. Completion and certification

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

7. What next?

Completion of the Specialist Teaching Assistant apprenticeship may provide progression opportunities to more senior roles in the education sector. It may also be possible to progress to higher level apprenticeships such as the Level 6 Teacher.

Why NCFE?

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