

Early Years Practitioner v1.1

☆ Level 2 £ £5,000 12 months

1. What the role entails

An early years practitioner (EYP) works and interacts directly with children on a day-to-day basis supporting the planning of and delivery of activities, purposeful play opportunities and educational programmes within the ethos of the provision. An EYP works as part of a professional team ensuring the welfare and care for children under the guidance and supervision of an early years educator, teacher or other suitably qualified professional in the early years workforce. In their daily work, an employee in this occupation interacts with parents, children, colleagues and wider multi-agency professionals and partners such as health visitors, social workers and speech and language therapists. Individuals will undergo all checks as per the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements to ensure suitability to work with children.

EYPs will be responsible for supporting child-initiated and adult-led activities based around the needs and interests of each individual child, supporting children's learning and working as part of a team to make sure each child feels safe and secure. An EYP will also support the observation and assessment of each child, and contribute to their learning experiences while assisting with the care needs of the individual child.

2. On-programme assessments

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

- English and maths qualifications, if required (see DfE apprenticeship funding rules for full details)
- 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 Early Years Practitioner consists of two assessment methods:

Observation with Questioning

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 1 hour and 20 minutes. The IEPA will observe the apprentice for 50 minutes and then undertake a questioning session which will last 30 minutes. The IEPA will ask at least five questions as part of the questioning session.

The Observation with Questioning is graded fail or pass.

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

Observation with Questioning	Professional Discussion	Final Grade
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	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?

As well as ensuring full competency as an early years practitioner, this standard provides a foundation for potential progression on to a number of career paths or apprenticeships in the educational sector including Level 3 Early Years Educator, Level 3 Teaching Assistant, Level 5 Early Years Lead Practitioner or Level 5 Learning and Skills 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.