

Early Years Practitioner

☆ Level 2 £ £4,000 🗓 12 months

1. What the role entails

The Early Years Practitioner (EYP) works and interacts directly with children on a day-to-day basis, supporting the planning and delivery of activities, purposeful play opportunities and educational programmes within the ethos of the setting. An EYP works as part of a professional team, ensuring the welfare and care of the children under the guidance and supervision of an Early Years Educator, teacher, or other suitably qualified professional in the early years' workforce.

They'll 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 whilst assisting with the care needs of the individual child.

2. On-programme assessments

Full time apprentices will spend a minimum of 12 months on-programme before entering Gateway. Before taking the end-point assessment (EPA), apprentices must complete:

- Level 2 Early Years Practitioner Qualification
- A Portfolio of Evidence
- English and maths at Level 1.

3. Gateway requirements

The EPA period starts when 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 by the employer. The apprentice must achieve all of the required on-programme elements before they enter Gateway, including a Portfolio of Evidence that will underpin the Professional Discussion.

4. End-point assessment

The EPA for Early Years Practitioner contains two methods of assessment:

Professional Discussion underpinned by a Portfolio

A two-way discussion, lasting a maximum of 90 minutes, which involves both the Independent End-Point Assessor (IEPA) and the apprentice actively listening and participating in a formal conversation. It gives the apprentice the opportunity to make detailed and proactive contributions to confirm their competency across the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) mapped to this method. Questions will focus on the apprentice's depth and breadth of KSBs, with the apprentice using their Portfolio of Evidence to support their responses as necessary.

Grading: the IEPA grades the Professional Discussion as Fail, Pass or Distinction. It accounts for 50% of the EPA.

Knowledge Test

The Knowledge Test is a closed-book exam which features 40 multiple-choice questions carrying one mark each. The assessment will test the apprentice's knowledge requirements as outlined in the standard. The apprentice will need to pass 26 of the 40 questions to achieve a Pass, and pass 32 to achieve a Distinction.

Grading: the Knowledge Test is graded as Fail, Pass or Distinction. It accounts for 50% of the EPA.

5. Grade aggregation table

Professional Discussion	Knowledge Test	Overall grade
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Pass
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

If any assessment method is failed, the overall grade will be deemed a Fail.

6. Completion and certification

We'll activate certification once the apprentice has successfully completed all EPAs, and the IEPA has verified this. Working with the apprenticeship certificate issuing authority, we'll 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 Early Years Educator, Teaching Assistant, Learning and Skills Assessor and Learning and Skills Mentor or Learning and Skills Teacher.

Why NCFE?

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